Civilised

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Summary

He’d just about finished his noodles when Jeongguk excused himself rashly from the table, saying he needed to visit the bathroom. Seokjin’s eyebrow had skyrocketed, but he’d done nothing to stop the younger from leaving. It was only when Jeongguk didn’t return that Yoongi was assured of his initial suspicions.

Jeongguk was hiding something.
Trapped in a maze of decisions

“Let’s go again, we’ve nearly nailed it.”

Jimin said this as he was already getting back into position. The new choreography they were learning wasn’t their most difficult, but it still required perfect timing and synchronisation. Yoongi groaned aloud, earning a few laughs from the other members. He was never a dancer, or someone gifted with excellent coordination. The worst aspect of this fact, though, was that it was common knowledge. He was no stranger to the teasing smirks and smothered laughs the others made when he attempted learning new choreography.

At least he wasn’t the only one that struggled with the art of movement. Namjoon and Seokjin still sympathised with him, knowing fully well themselves just how hard dancing was for anyone not gifted in that arena. The dancers often reminded them that they were far from ‘gifted’, that they simply did what they loved and poured that passion into their craft. Seokjin often liked to remind Yoongi and Namjoon when they were alone that this was utter bullshit, and as much as Yoongi loved the younger members, he knew they were constantly skirting around the topic. In Yoongi’s eyes, you either had it, or you didn’t.

The unofficial ‘non-dancers’ group shrank when Taehyung decided to fully demonstrate his skills in the arena. Namjoon liked to joke that Taehyung had betrayed them by suddenly becoming a dance god in the course of a few months, and Taehyung in turn teased the three of them by saying that if he of all people could somehow entertain an audience with his moves, then any one of them could.

Seokjin pointed this out as bullshit, too.

“Everyone ready?” Jimin called out.

“I’m never fucking ready,” Yoongi replied with a blank expression.

He casually ignored Jimin’s feigned look of shock at the older swearing. Yoongi instead kept his stare fixed on his reflection in the mirror, seeing Namjoon’s wide grin from the corner of his eye. He couldn’t help the twitch of his lip at their leader’s reaction.

Jimin started the music regardless, Yoongi’s body going on autopilot as he tried his best to keep in time with the others. Dancing was hard enough as it was, without adding crippling exhaustion from
a previous all-nighter on top.

He wasn’t meant to pull the all-nighter. It had just happened.

His solution to restlessness was to do something productive with his time, so that’s exactly what he did. He set his recording equipment up and fiddled around with new layouts for a song he was hoping to finish before the end of the month, and before he knew it one hour turned into six. It wasn’t until Seokjin whined about the room being so bright at six in the morning that he realised he’d stayed up so late.

After that, Seokjin insisted that Yoongi try to get at least half an hour’s worth of rest, but the younger knew better. He wouldn’t be able to sleep since he’d been awake for so long. His eyes were dry, and his hands wavered when he held them above the keyboard. Looking back on the evening, Yoongi should have known better than to work so late, but it had been his only solution to his uneasiness at the time.

The method Yoongi usually used to distract himself had failed on this occasion, however. He could still feel a tingle of unsettlement from the previous night nestled in the pit of his stomach. He had hoped that by burying himself in his work, the feeling would dissipate entirely and leave him alone, but knowing his own luck it didn’t happen. Instead, he was left with dreary eyes and languish movements the following morning, alongside the same feeling of slight restlessness he’d tried to erase.

Ignoring it was the only way Yoongi knew how to deal with it. Too often for his liking the covert feeling sprung up on him, setting his consciousness on edge for days. He always felt like he was waiting for something drastic to happen. The sense kept him worrying and surprisingly tired, but typically the feeling was, to put it simply, frustrating. He wanted to get rid of it immediately whenever it surfaced, because he intimately knew the events that trailed afterwards.

Yoongi grumbled when the music started up again. He could think of millions of things he would rather do than practising the same choreography over and over again. He looked to his side to see Jeongguk drop to the ground in a move that made Yoongi question what part of the choreography they were up to.

Namjoon collided with him side on not five seconds later.

“Yoongi, you all good?” Hoseok asked as he halted his routine, genuine concern crossing his face for a moment. When Yoongi shot him a look the concern evaporated.
“Yeah. Yeah, I’m fine. Just got a little lost with the choreo.”

Yoongi sent them all his best cheesy smile. They seemed to buy it, and Yoongi released a breath he didn’t even know he was holding. It wasn’t as if he was hiding anything from the others.

It was at this point Yoongi noticed Jeongguk was still lying on the floor.

“Kook? Hey, Kook,” Hoseok asked as he knelt down next to the younger. The others quickly caught on.

“Hey, hyung, can we take a break?” Jeongguk just about whispered, Yoongi straining his ears to hear the usually chipper maknæe.

It was only when the youngest flipped himself onto his back that everyone fully noticed the bags under his eyes.

They were so dark they looked drawn on. His eyelids were practically drooping, and Yoongi had to contain his urge to ask if he’d actually slept at all in the past week. Sweat was dripping excessively down his skinny frame, more than Yoongi would have thought normal for a rehearsal. Jeongguk seemed blissfully oblivious to his worse-for-wear state, and Yoongi couldn’t make up his mind if this was a good or bad thing.

“Yeah, uh, let’s take five guys. We’ll go through it one last time later,” Namjoon commented, managing to slide a quick glance at Yoongi before collecting his water bottle. The implication was heavy on the rapper’s mind.

Yoongi didn’t wait any longer to approach Jeongguk. He was hastily wringing his hands over and over again, constantly looking around the small practise room. It was almost like he was attempting to avoid the other’s gazes of concern.

“Hey, you alright?”

It was the first question to pop in Yoongi’s mind. Jeongguk seemed to notice this, as a small smile appeared shortly afterwards.
“Yeah, hyung. I’m fine. A little tired, but nothing like you.”

Yoongi blinked while Jeongguk continued.

“I mean, you look like death itself. I’m sure I don’t look half as bad as you right now.”

“Forget I even asked about you,” he curtly replied, doing his best to keep a straight face.

“Love you too, hyung!” the maknae called out as Yoongi walked over to Namjoon.

“I think he’s completely fine, Joon. He’s still a smartass.”

Yoongi saw Namjoon surreptitiously peak a look at the youngest. He did it as if he was making an assessment on the other’s behaviours, and Yoongi had to hand it to him that he could do something so serious and look so casual when doing so. After a moment, the leader nodded.

“Yeah, I believe you. I’d be more concerned if he didn’t insult you.”

~

Yoongi was struggling to stay awake at dinner. The others dug into their meals, wasting no time in replenishing themselves after an exhausting day of rehearsals. Yoongi pointedly ignored the others and glared at his meal, willing his appetite to return to him. It was so unusual for him these days, what with the strenuous exercise he does and the hectic schedule he has. He’d almost be concerned if that stupid feeling of his wasn’t present.

It had gotten stronger as the day went on. It was no longer hiding in the depths of his body, in a place he could neglect for the duration of its stay. It was present in his toes, his fingertips, his fingernails even. It was everywhere, and it was consuming him.

Yoongi could vaguely recognise it as anxiety. The way it latched onto his thoughts and convinced him something was going to happen could lead him to no other explanation. It had to be anxiety.
But, growing up, his anxiety had only come out to play when something was stressing him out. He was lucky, in that sense. Some people got anxiety from absolutely nothing, and Yoongi’s heart went out to those poor people. He was grateful his anxiety only acted up when it had a reason to.

That left the question of what exactly he was anxious about.

“Earth to hyung? Hellooo?”

Yoongi shook his head viciously to bring himself out of his thoughts. He could see Taehyung waving his arms crazily while the others at the table held back laughter.

“Ah, he has returned to us! Tell me, hyung, how was the moon?”

“It was cool, thanks for asking.”

Hoseok’s cackle broke through the silence, leaving Yoongi’s badass persona as rubble. He snickered at the other’s amusement, with the rest of the table either suppressing giggles or doing their best to match Hoseok’s volume.

Yoongi at that moment spotted the bowl of Singapore noodles further down the table. He still wasn’t particularly hungry, but he knew he would most likely be starving by the time he was trying to fall asleep.

“Kook, can you pass me the noodles?”

Yoongi drank from his glass as he waited for the younger to respond. He saw Jeongguk lean over to pick the bowl up, but halfway through the action, he froze. Yoongi watched from his position as Jeongguk glanced down at his lap before ignoring the bowl altogether. The maknae was suddenly fascinated with his lap, and Yoongi knew the kid was probably just having another one of his moments, but he would really like to eat the noodles Jeongguk was going to pass him.

“Hey Jeongguk?”
His second calling of the younger’s name caught the attention of a few at the table. They looked to Jeongguk, who was still staring at his lap, and it wasn’t until Seokjin gently elbowed him that he reacted.

“S-Sorry, I g-got it hyung.”

He passed the noodles over without looking directly at Yoongi. The others went back to their various conversations, but Yoongi kept a wary eye on Jeongguk as he scooped food onto his plate. He lifted his chopsticks to his mouth and ate slowly, knowing he would be thankful for the food later that night. He looked down the table again to see his only hyung watching Jeongguk from the corner of his eye. Not that that surprised him; Seokjin truly acted almost motherly towards the other members.

Yoongi’s eyes met Seokjin’s briefly. The older wasn’t stupid, Yoongi knew. Seokjin knew that Yoongi had been worrying over the youngest. Their momentary eye contact indicated a conversation later that night, and Yoongi found himself almost grateful that he could at least bring up Jeongguk’s recent behaviour with someone. He wasn’t exactly one for direct confrontation.

As he shoved more noodles in his mouth, he noticed Jeongguk’s hands wringing. They’d known each other long enough to know that he only did that when he was nervous or excited, and Yoongi found it difficult to see anything Jeongguk could be excited about at dinner. So that only left him being nervous.

Yoongi progressed through his meal steadily as Jeongguk fiddled with the food left on his plate. He hadn’t finished his meal, and Seokjin had noticed this just as quickly as he did. He kept glancing at his lap, too, which made Yoongi think at first that he must have his phone or something down there. But Seokjin wouldn’t be examining the maknae the way he was if he was simply looking at his phone every two seconds. There was something else.

He saw Seokjin elbow the younger again, but for a different reason this time. He was whispering in the maknae’s ear, saying things he didn’t want the others to hear. By the wide-eyed expression on Jeongguk’s face, their conversation was exclusively personal.

He’d just about finished his noodles when Jeongguk excused himself rashly from the table, saying he needed to visit the bathroom. Seokjin’s eyebrow had skyrocketed, but he’d done nothing to stop the younger from leaving. It was only when Jeongguk didn’t return that Yoongi was assured of his initial suspicions.

Jeongguk was hiding something.
Pins and needles covered Yoongi as he sat down on his bed, Seokjin closing the door behind them. The older rummaged through drawers to find his pyjamas while Yoongi scrolled through his phone, hoping for his hyung to bring up the topic.

“Something’s up with Kookie,” Seokjin muttered, his back still to the younger.

Yoongi thanked Seokjin mentally for speaking first.

“Yeah, something’s definitely up. He’s not usually like this.”

Seokjin sighed to himself as he sat down on his own bed. There was a kind of resignation in his voice that was hiding something. Fear, possibly? Frustration? Yoongi wouldn’t put it past his hyung to mask his own emotions in order to look after others. “I’m just glad I’m not the only one who’s noticed.”

Yoongi put his phone down to view Seokjin. A look of concern he usually reserved was being displayed for Yoongi to see, and Seokjin never acts this visibly apprehensive unless it was something serious. His anxiety churned dangerously in his stomach.

“Look,” Seokjin continued, “we don’t know what’s going on, but I believe Kookie would tell us if it was really serious. We trust each other enough to talk about these kinds of things.”

The tone in Seokjin’s voice settled Yoongi slightly. It wasn’t much, but it was something. It was keeping him grounded in their conversation, absolutely, but he wasn’t sure if he could say it was keeping his anxiety grounded. He was beginning to think his anxiety was towards the Jeongguk situation, but this emotion had been boiling for days now. He would be lying to himself if he exempted his emotions because of Jeongguk’s behaviour.

Yoongi realised he hadn’t responded to Seokjin’s comment. He nodded at the older, crossing his legs on the bed and clasping his hands together on his lap. Seokjin’s lips pursed in thought.

“Now, I’m going to get to the second person I’ve been concerned about recently.”
There was another?

“You, Yoongi.”

Oh.

“Look, I know you regularly stay up late and work, because you mix and produce and do so much more behind the scenes for us, but it’s taking a toll on you.”

Yoongi fiddled with his fringe. “Toll?”

“Youngi, you’ve slept two hours each night for the past week and pulled an all-nighter last night. You’ve barely eaten anything recently, and you’re constantly just, zoning out.”

Huh. Yoongi hadn’t noticed.

“So, whatever’s going on, you can talk to me about it. Or any one of the others. They’d all listen.”

Yoongi bit his lip.

“Even if it’s nothing.”

There was a knock at the door.

Seokjin sighed, and turned his gaze to the floor. Yoongi didn’t move from his position; he couldn’t. He was frozen. His arms were tingling and his legs felt like jelly and why was he constantly feeling this way as of late?

Another knock sent Seokjin walking over, and when he opened the door Yoongi strained to hear who it was. Their hushed whispers were just out of earshot, but Yoongi could tell from Seokjin’s body language who it was.
Jeongguk entered their dorm, and Yoongi paused.

He was sweating profusely. Beads of perspiration ran down his forehead, and moisture glistened along his arms and legs. He was wearing nothing but a tank top and shorts, a severely inappropriate combination for the chilly Autumn day. He was still wringing his hands, over and over again, but the thing that really caught Yoongi’s attention was the obvious tent in the younger’s baggy shorts.

Jeongguk spoke before Yoongi could decide what to say.

“I-I’m sorry, I just didn’t know who else to talk to. I’m sorry, I really am, I just-”

“Kookie, breath,” Seokjin spoke softly, sitting on Yoongi’s bed while the other remained standing.

The maknae took in a few breathes before continuing. “I, um, when you spoke to me earlier Jin-hyung, I was really considering just telling you then, and I don’t know why I didn’t, because now it’s worse and-”

“Jeongguk,” Yoongi said.

“Right, yeah. Breath.”

He rocked on the balls of his feet and breathed in and out, a habit he’d gotten into doing before he performed. Yoongi motioned for the youngest to sit down on the other bed.

“Kookie, what’s wrong?” Seokjin gently urged, Yoongi noticing his mother-like instincts seeping into the way he spoke.

“I-I, um, I don’t know what’s wrong, but… I just know something is, hyungs! I-I haven’t slept properly in days, a-and I’m always hot and I don’t feel like eating and I’m always tired a-and I’m constantly sweating and my stomach hurts all the time a-and…”

Jeongguk paused, his cheeks burning a bright red. He brought his knees up to his chin and hid his
face, Yoongi thinking that if they were in any other situation he would’ve thought the action normal. But they weren’t and they needed Jeongguk to speak up.

“And… what?” Yoongi pressed, hoping Jeongguk would finish.

“And, and… something’s wrong with m-my dick.”

Jeongguk cradled his face with his hands, Yoongi recognising the younger’s embarrassment. At least he’d finished explaining everything.

“What’s wrong with it?” Seokjin asked, proving to be mature beyond his years.

The blank expression on the maknae’s face said it all. “I don’t know what’s wrong with it, it’s just, there’s, I don’t know! It’s swollen and it hurts, hyungs.”

Yoongi knew there were very limited options for them beyond this point. If Jeongguk really was in as much pain as he claimed to be in, then he may need to be admitted to a hospital. They just, couldn’t risk anything in situations like this. It was always better to be safe than sorry.

“Kookie, this is a very personal thing that I’m going to ask you to do, and you don’t have to agree with it. It’s completely your choice, okay? Do you understand?”

Jeongguk moved his hands away from his face, and looked at Seokjin with uneasy eyes. He nodded.

“Can I have a look?”

Yoongi sensed the hesitation and embarrassment from Jeongguk a mile away.

“You don’t have to show me, Kookie. Please remember that.”

It took several moments for the maknae to make a decision, but when he did he was confident. He nodded, standing up and hovering in front of his two hyungs.
“I’ll look away,” Yoongi commented, ignoring the look on Jeongguk’s face. When Yoongi saw it, he shrugged his shoulders. “I don’t have to see, and I trust Jin to make a call.”

There was another reason he didn’t want to see, but he would never voice it aloud. He was mortified his body was even reacting the way it was. The anxiety he’d felt build up over the past couple of days had somehow metamorphosed into arousal, of all the things in the world, and Yoongi was ashamed that he was feeling the way he was when Jeongguk was clearly in pain not even a metre away from him. He’d never hated his body more than in that moment.

He turned away from the scene and tried to keep his thoughts away from what was going on behind him. He heard the ruffle of clothes being moved and a motherly coo from Seokjin as he tried to see what was causing Jeongguk so much pain. At one point, Jeongguk gasped and held his breath, Yoongi joining the dots as to what Seokjin was doing. Around a minute later, Seokjin told him he could turn around.

There were tears in Jeongguk’s eyes.

“We need to get him to a hospital.”
Exhausted by all the different chaos

Yoongi was beginning to suspect that the youngest had come down with a fever. He was currently complaining about a pounding headache, and Yoongi had to resist the urge to pull off the highway and hold Jeongguk in any way. He knew his help wouldn’t be enough for the maknae in this situation. Things were well beyond both of their control, and they knew it.

When Seokjin had announced to the other members that Jeongguk was unwell, and needed immediate medical attention, a tension erupted throughout the room. Jimin stood up hastily and asked where the maknae was, while Hoseok was already leaving to alert a manager to the situation. Namjoon looked over at the eldest and gave him a nod in affirmation, before instructing Taehyung to pack a bag for Jeongguk in case he needed to stay overnight.

Yoongi watched on in silence, already knowing his role in this ‘operation’. He dashed into the bathroom, grabbing a cloth and a small lightweight towel while he was inside. He headed back to his and Seokjin’s dorm, bracing himself for the overwhelming smell of sweat he’d be sure to encounter when he entered.

He pushed the door open gently, noticing that Jeongguk had laid down on Seokjin’s bed while he was away. He was still conscience, which Yoongi hoped to be a good thing, but from where he was standing it looked like the younger was shivering.

“Are you cold, Kook? I can grab a blanket before we leave.”

Yoongi kept his voice nonchalant as he spoke. He knew that secretly, Jeongguk would appreciate it. He’d most likely have his head if Yoongi started treating him any differently because he was sick.

“Please no blanket, hyung. I-I,” Jeongguk shut his mouth with wide eyes when an uninvited whimper tried to scuffle up his throat. Yoongi kept his expression indifferent while his insides twisted at the knowledge that Jeongguk had to suppress a whine. “I-I’m burning up, hyung.”

The maknae made a point of sitting upright for Yoongi, but as soon as he made eye contact with the older he seemed to remember something. He swung his knees up to his chin to hide his rigid member, and it took a lot of self-restraint for Yoongi to not react to that.
The older held out the small towel for the younger to take. He was met with raised eyebrows and a slightly gaping mouth. Yoongi spoke before Jeongguk could open his mouth fully. “Just put this on your lap.”

Jeongguk’s eyes widened further, but he didn’t reject the offer. He flung the towel onto his lap, his cheeks tinted a light pink and his hands quivering slightly as they held the towel in place. Yoongi did his best to keep his gaze far from the sight.

A knock resonated throughout the room. Jeongguk’s head spun around, his fringe well and truly plastered to his forehead. Yoongi sighed, stood up with heavy legs, and answered the door to a flustered-looking Hoseok. If the way his clothes stuck to certain parts of his body was an indicator, Yoongi would’ve assumed he’d gone for a jog.

“How’s Jeongguk? Is he alright? We… we’re all worried about him, hyung.”

The worry apparent on Hoseok’s face was no stranger to Yoongi. It was expected for him and the others to be concerned over the maknae. Other than himself and Seokjin, nobody knew yet what was wrong with Jeongguk. They hadn’t even had the opportunity to check up on him yet. At this realisation, Yoongi leaned the door over to give Hoseok a better view of the younger. He watched the dancer as he made eye-contact with a shivering, exasperated Jeongguk, but when he saw the raw fear on Hoseok’s face at his condition, he subtly moved his body to fit the frame of the doorway.

“He’s ah, he’s been better,” was the only reply Yoongi could come up with. What else was there to say? It wasn’t as if Hoseok couldn’t see for himself the sheer amount of discomfort Jeongguk was suffering from, let alone the pain. Yoongi knew the dancer would’ve picked up on these things. He was good with reading people.

“Is there anything we can do? To help, or anything?”

As much as Yoongi didn’t want to, he shook his head. “Not really. We can’t do much for him here. He needs to be checked out by a doctor or something, it’s pretty serious.”

The slight nod Hoseok gave him in response was what convinced him that they were doing the right thing. Jeongguk’s groans filled the van, and Yoongi could tell from the silence that the others didn’t have a clue as to what to do. He could hardly be useful himself from the drivers seat, with Jeongguk being in the back row, and when Yoongi looked in the rear view mirror to see Jimin next
to Jeongguk, he couldn’t help but worry.

Jimin was obviously in a mild state of panic. His eyes were blown wider than usual, and the vein in his neck was more pronounced than usual. Each time Yoongi checked the back row he saw Jimin licking his lips frantically, a sense of stress seeming to overcome the vehicle gradually.

When they finally pulled up to the hospital, Jeongguk was a mess.

“Hyungs, it hurts, it hurts, please make it stop, please.”

Jeongguk was practically hauled out of the back seat, and an incredibly anxious-looking Jimin hopped out after him. Yoongi shut the engine off and hoped to whatever deities were out there that not too many fans would recognise them. The last thing they needed was to be swarmed from every angle by overenthusiastic fans on their way to the clinic.

Ignoring the violent churning in his stomach, Yoongi exited the car and locked it hastily. His head was pounding, and it was harder than it normally would be for his eyes to focus. He blamed the stress of driving Jeongguk and the others to the hospital as the cause of this sudden bout of sickness, and didn’t think too much more of it as he followed the others to the hospital entrance.

Cautiously eying the people around them, Yoongi drew up his mask. He knew that the others were told fairly hastily that they were leaving, so he wasn’t surprised to see Jimin and Taehyung without masks covering their faces. Another thing to worry about, Yoongi mused. It would be so much easier to recognise them without their masks.

Yoongi didn’t miss the subtle way Namjoon and Seokjin were supporting Jeongguk as they hastily made their way towards the entrance. It was clear from their body language that they half expected Jeongguk to collapse at any given moment, and Yoongi couldn’t blame them for thinking that way. Jeongguk had looked to be on the verge of unconsciousness for the duration of the trip.

Yoongi watched everything unfold from a few metres distance. He saw Jeongguk stumble, and heard a harsh curse come from Namjoon at the same time. Seokjin managed to react fast enough to stop the dancer from falling, but the way his arms had to basically pull Jeongguk to his feet did little to ease the surging in his stomach. For Jeongguk to stumble, Yoongi thought...

Just what exactly was wrong with the maknae?
When the sliding glass doors opened, and Namjoon and Seokjin practically carried the youngest through the opening, chaos ensued. Yoongi felt like an outsider as Hoseok approached the front desk rather calmly, and he felt himself move over to Taehyung’s side as multiple staff came to Jeongguk’s side at Hoseok’s instruction. Yoongi took in a deep breath when he saw a bed be wheeled down a corridor towards them, and when he looked to Taehyung he saw an expression similar to worry drawn on his features. It wasn’t unusual for Taehyung to express himself, far from it really, but the cracked mask he was currently displaying did nothing to assure Yoongi of his emotions. Was he stressed? Anxious? Not coping? Yoongi didn’t know, despite the fact that he could usually read Taehyung.

Another level of anxiety seemed to play with him at this fact.

Yoongi wiped his sweaty palms on the fronts of his jeans. He couldn’t appear nervous in front of the others; it just wasn’t something he did. It would be so out of character for him to suddenly bite his lips or peel his nails. He couldn’t break the image he has of himself framed in his mind; the tough, reliable Min Yoongi that simply dealt with anything thrown his way. He couldn’t break it.

It nearly broke of its own accord, however, when Jeongguk physically sobbed into Namjoon’s shoulder.

“Hyung, help me already, please do something hyung, anything, just do something. It hurts so much, h-hyung.”

The maknae’s sobs rang through the lobby, and it took the gentle prying of Seokjin’s hands to seperate Jeongguk from Namjoon’s shoulder. From there, Yoongi saw a few staff members help Jeongguk onto the rackety bed. It squeaked horrendously as it took on Jeongguk’s weight, and something inside of Yoongi crumbled as he saw their maknae travel down the corridor, away from his stressed hyungs. It didn’t take long for Jeongguk’s cries to be a distant noise in the background.

“What do we do now?” It was Hoseok who spoke, and Yoongi couldn’t help but notice the way the dancer kept glancing down the hallway, almost as if he was expecting Jeongguk to return to them soon. Hoseok’s cheerful attitude occasionally became unbearable to Yoongi, especially when he envied the happiness the younger seemed to achieve so effortlessly, but Yoongi couldn’t bear the thought of telling him off for being hopeful. At this point, even Yoongi found himself trying to be optimistic. Surely whatever Jeongguk was coming down with wasn’t permanent.

“I guess it’s up to you guys,” Namjoon replied, Yoongi noting the levelness in his voice. “I don’t know about anyone else, but I’m going to stay here until we’re given some indication as to what’s going on with Kookie.”
Yoongi couldn’t argue with the leader’s logic. When he subtly observed the others, he felt a sense of agreement from them, too. It seemed that nobody wanted to leave the hospital anytime soon, and for that Yoongi couldn’t blame them. He himself didn’t think he could leave the place their sick maknae was being kept in, either.

“I think we’ll all stay,” Jimin mumbled, and Yoongi said nothing as the dancer walked away from the rest of the group to sit down in a lobby chair. Their manager eyed Jimin momentarily before excusing himself to make a phone call, and Yoongi then realised he could be standing for hours waiting for news on Jeongguk’s illness, so he might as well take a seat, too.

He was in the process of following Jimin when a sudden, forceful spike of pain shot through his abdomen. Yoongi’s face screwed up at the feeling, but again he blamed the pain on stress. It was only normal that his body was reacting this way; he’d put far too much stress on himself over their upcoming comeback, and Jeongguk’s sudden sickness had only added to his worries. This was just his body’s way of coping, and he knew this. He shoved any other thoughts to the back of his head, and willed them to leave him alone. He was fine.

He sat down in a chair next to Jimin, and glanced at the younger momentarily. A single bead of sweat trickled down his forehead, and Yoongi failed to keep his thoughts to himself when he saw Jimin opening up their Twitter.

“Are you really gonna let them know?”

He wished he’d kept his mouth shut. He knew Jimin could be sensitive, knew that he was much more in tune with his emotions than possibly any other member, and yet he’d spoken so rashly. Yoongi felt like kicking himself when he saw Jimin’s face drop.

“I’d never tell them before Kookie’s family even knew. I’d never do that, hyung.”

Yoongi’s silence strained the air between them. Jimin sighed.

“I just wanted to check if someone’s spotted us already. I mean, it’s highly unlikely that we managed to get here without someone recognising us, but I just wanted to know...”

“I get it, it’s fine.”
Yoongi kept his gaze on the tiles, on the cracks in the floor, anything to avoid the hurt look in Jimin’s eyes. He shouldn’t have said that. Why did he say that?

“I’m sorry.”

The speed at which Jimin replied didn’t surprise Yoongi.

“Don’t be sorry hyung, we’re all feeling it. I understand.”

Usually, Jimin’s kind words would have eased Yoongi’s discontempt. He found that if he had an issue, any issue, regardless of its importance, Jimin was the best at understanding him and his position. He was the most sympathetic in the group, always had been, so Yoongi found that he sought his company whenever he came to the realisation that he was struggling. His words would calm him to an extent, and would soothe his worries and nagging thoughts to a manageable amount.

He couldn’t understand why Jimin’s words weren’t having that effect on him now.

“It’s not an excuse for me calling you out like that, though.”

Yoongi saw Jimin fiddle with a stray string on his jeans. “Well, yeah, but you apologised, so it’s okay.”

Something in Yoongi’s mind told him that it’s not, and he listened to it. This time, however, he kept the thought to himself.

“If you say so.”

He only just managed to squeeze the sentence out before another knife sliced through his stomach. His eyes widened slightly, and the urge to grab his abdomen was overwhelming. He swore the pain hadn’t been this strong minutes ago.

He clenched his knuckles when the pain refused to subside. Instead, a dull aching emerged from his lower back, and Yoongi clenched his teeth when what felt like a burning rod slashed through
his lower stomach. A grunt lay dormant at the back of his throat, but he refused to let it surface.

He couldn’t let the others know of his condition. He was in no where near as much pain as Jeongguk had been in when they’d last seen him, and Yoongi couldn’t escape the thought that it would look like he was seeking attention if he suddenly advised the others of his less than stellar condition. He was not an attention seeker, far from it, and he would hate to be thought of as one. He wasn’t going to attract their attention if it wasn’t necessary.

Namjoon, Hoseok and Seokjin were seated further down the row of chairs he and Jimin were on, and from where Yoongi was he could make out Taehyung speaking to their manager in the far corner of the lobby. The others all seemed to be doing something with their time, whether it be talking to each other or scrolling through their phones, but Yoongi took this break in their routine as an opportunity to watch others.

Dozens of people walked through the entrance each minute, some with casts, others in wheelchairs. A consistently, however, was that all of them had drained expressions on their faces; as if they wanted to be anywhere else in the world other than a hospital. Yoongi, after watching all of these people, came to the conclusion that he must be wearing a very similar face to everyone else. He raised his lip momentarily, testing out the feeling of a smile on his face, but it dropped just as quickly as it appeared. It felt wrong to smile when Jeongguk was in pain.

A stuttered gasp escaped his lips unexpectedly. Another rod had sliced through him, but there was no time for him to conceal his pain. The dull ache in his back had returned, and a warm, tingling sensation had spread down his arms and legs in rapid succession. His foot was bouncing maniacally in an effort to distract himself, but the pain...

“Yoongi-hyung? What’s wrong?”

Oh god. Jimin had noticed, Jimin was aware of Yoongi’s state, Jimin was going to worry over him. Yoongi grunted through his clenched teeth, suddenly aware of the tightening sensation in his lower abdomen. It was like a rope was being pulled around his waist and squeezed occasionally, and when he felt these squeezes it took more self restraint than he would have liked to avoid curling into a ball and cradling his stomach right then and there.

“Whatever the fuck Jeongguk has better not be contagious,” Yoongi murmured dangerously, earning a vividly concerned look from Jimin beside him. The temperature of the room seemed to have risen slightly, as Yoongi was disgusted to find his armpits and the backs of his knees soaked with unwanted perspiration. It was the last thing he wanted to be in the hospital lobby; hot, sweaty and in horrific pain. Despite a thought nagging at him to properly address Jimin’s concern, he remained silent in the younger’s presence.
“Yoongi-hyung, what is it? Please tell me already.”

Yoongi tapped his fingers impatiently against his thigh, willing the pain with all his might to just leave him already. He wasn’t sure how much more of this he could take. He was never one for crying, and everyone knew that. He was never the first to break down on award shows and it was practically unheard of for him to cry in their dorms. Yoongi could’ve laughed at Jimin’s shocked expression if he wasn’t in so much pain.

“Hyung, y-you’re crying.”

Jimin snatched Yoongi’s hand off his lap before he could react, and held it in his own clasped hands. To anyone else in the room, Yoongi assumed it would look like they were two lovers or something, but to the rest of Bangtan this was just their own way of expressing themselves. Physical touches went a long further in their group than words did most of the time.

“Are you hurt? Are you in pain? Yoongi-hyung, i-if you don’t tell me then I, I-I can’t do anything.”

“Jimin, I swear I’m f-” An unforgiving pain wrapped around his stomach and clenched, and Yoongi spewed swear words at the suddenness of the torment. His insides felt like they were boiling for a second, and Yoongi’s face screwed up when he felt... something in between his legs. Whatever it was disgusted him to no end, and Yoongi was determined to visit the bathroom as soon as the cramps, or whatever they were, subsided.

He’d momentarily forgotten Jimin’s presence during the episode.

“Hyung.” The lack of smile that usually came with that word had Yoongi on his toes. “You need help, you’re in pain. It’s not something to be debated over. It’s a fact.”

For Jimin to be so stern with Yoongi, his hyung... it was so rare that Yoongi couldn’t recall the last time Jimin had spoken to him that way. He bit his lip in an attempt to divert his attention from the merciless cramps, and for the first time noticed just how hot and sticky he was. If he thought he was sweaty before, then by now he’s practically drenched.

Yoongi heard Jimin call out to his other hyungs, but he didn’t do anything to stop him. He wasn’t sure if he could. His arms and his legs were tingling now, and the slightest of movements sent
shivers down his spine despite his scalding temperature. Yoongi didn’t know what to do.

He’d never felt this way before in his life. Sure, the constant anxiety he’d felt over the past couple of days he’d experienced before, but it had never built up to something like this. He’d never felt it manifest into something this painful, something this serious. It’d always remained in the pit of his stomach, not the forefront of his mind.

He vaguely heard Namjoon and Seokjin rush over to him, with Taehyung not too far behind, but he felt almost too numb to react. His body was suddenly sluggish with its every movement, and the cramps he was feeling earlier had turned into spiking, hot jabs. The grunt he made in response to the escalation in pain sounded so similar to a growl that Jimin practically jumped out of his seat, and Yoongi couldn’t help but laugh through his tears.

He gave up on hiding his pain when a violent jab to his stomach had him panting and struggling for breath. He curled in on himself, and wrapped his arms around his middle in an effort to ease his aches. His efforts were to no avail apparently, as another wave of cramps overcame him alongside another temperature spike. The urge to wipe his face of its tears was there, but he just couldn’t bring himself to care about his appearance to the others. Yoongi just wanted the pain to end already.

When exactly had everything gotten this bad?

If his obvious display of distress wasn’t enough for Yoongi to be worried about, there was another problem beginning to reveal itself. When Seokjin asked him something, something he couldn’t be bothered listening to in his state of suffering, he realised that there’s a very prominent tent in his jeans that he should probably hide.

Jeongguk’s symptoms from earlier rang loud and clear in his mind.

“It’s not contagious, is it? Because fucking hell.” It’s all Yoongi managed to say before he slipped out of his seat. The cool floor was a welcome change from his confining seat, but he doesn’t allow his composure to slip any further than it already has. His legs were tucked up to his chin to hide his hard on member, and he wants nothing more than to hide in a bathroom and sort out his ‘issue’ by himself.

Namjoon then rushed off somewhere, and all Yoongi could do was call out miserably after him, “I’m fine. I don’t need help.”
These were lies. He knew these were lies. But he said them out loud regardless. If he couldn’t convince the others he was fine, what chance did he have of convincing himself?

Taeyhung’s face suddenly came into his field of vision, and an impulse to hold him, hold him close, came from no where. Yoongi didn’t understand anything that was happening. He never wanted to hold the other members, especially in the manner he wanted to at that moment. He wasn’t a clingy person. It just wasn’t in his nature the way it was in some of the other members. So why did he suddenly want to pull Taeyhung in close and- allow him to comfort Yoongi?

A hospital bed was by Yoongi’s side before he could sit up from his slouched position. A hand grabbed his shoulder gently, and Yoongi physically curled into a ball and *whined*.

What the hell was wrong with him?

The cramps didn’t cease their onslaught, and Yoongi found himself unable to stand. He had to be pulled to his feet by several staff members, and Yoongi would’ve been embarrassed over the amount of attention he was receiving if he wasn’t in such unbearable agony. When he was eventually lowered into the bed, familiar faces crowded over him with similar expressions; Yoongi didn’t have to be a genius to tell that they were terrified.

When the coiling began in his stomach again, a primitive groan erupted from his throat. He didn’t have the energy to hide his pain anymore. Everything was just too loud, too chaotic, and Yoongi just wanted to get rid of his hard on before anyone could tease him about it later. He wasn’t asking for much.

He didn’t even feel the syringe until it’d left his arm, he was in so much pain. He hated needles. He’d never told anyone, because he knew it was such a childish, unexplainable fear to have, but he hated them. He hated the artificial sleep that was often associated with them, hated the sense of intrusion he got whenever one was used on him, despised the menacing appearance they always, always had.

But, as the world around him blurred, and the pain subsided immensely, Yoongi found that he was grateful for the darkness.

~

Yoongi’s first thought when he woke up was that he was no longer in pain. A sense of contentment
seemed to have come to him in his induced sleep, and while Yoongi hated the way the treatment had been given to him, it had been effective. He couldn’t complain about it from that perspective.

His second thought was that he wasn’t alone. After observing his room momentarily, he recognised the faces of Bangtan surrounding him. Namjoon and Jimin were asleep and leaning against each other in plastic chairs. Taehyung and Seokjin were talking to each other in the corner further from the small room’s entrance, but it was another’s presence that made him speak his first words to the room.

“Jeongguk? What are you doing here?”

Several pairs of eyes flickered over to meet Yoongi’s, but his gaze didn’t waver under the attention. Yoongi took in Jeongguk’s wide eyes at being addressed, but other than that there was little to notice different from usual. But that didn’t make any sense.

“Kookie, you were sick as all hell last time I saw you.”

An awkward chuckle resonated throughout the room. Yoongi saw Namjoon stir slightly in his sleep, but otherwise the room remained still. Weirdly enough, Yoongi suddenly picked up on a scent of some sort that hadn’t been there a moment ago, but he shoved that insignificant fact to the back of his mind without a second thought. The silence he was currently receiving commanded his full attention.

“Is someone going to fill me in on what’s been going on?”

Yoongi noticed that while he’d been speaking, Namjoon had properly woken up. He had a dazed look in his eyes, like he was waking up from a deep sleep, and then it came to Yoongi that he could have been. He didn’t know how long he’d been in his bed, hell, he didn’t even know what had been wrong with him earlier. Because there was definitely nothing wrong with him now. He was perfectly fine.

To emphasise this, he sat upright. “Can someone speak up, already?”

Yoongi had had enough of the silent treatment by the time he spotted the ‘Call Doctor’ button. He jammed it rather aggressively, hoping to get his mood across to the others at being kept in the dark. Their inability to inform Yoongi of Jeongguk’s health, or anything for that matter, had him grinding his teeth in frustration.
A middle aged female doctor entered the ward, and Yoongi knew he shouldn’t let his mood affect the way he treats the doctor. But, Yoongi realised despondently, he’d never analysed what he said to others before, so why start now?

“What’s wrong with me?” he all but demanded, knowing fully well just how rude he sounded. He was renown for his carefree attitude, so it shouldn’t be a surprise to the other members that he was acting so impulsively around a doctor. He just wanted answers, and if the members weren’t going to give them to him, then he’d simply force someone else to. He was not in the mood to take ‘no’ for an answer.

Out of the corner of his eye, Yoongi saw Jimin wake from his nap, or sleep, or whatever he’d had, with watery eyes. He didn’t know why, but he suddenly felt bad for waking him and Namjoon up. It wasn’t their fault the others hadn’t spoken to him.

His guilt was forgotten about just as quickly as it had manifested. He must look intimidating to this doctor, with his hands clasped tightly around the bed poles and his head dipped in an almost threatening manner. If the doctor was phased by his behaviour, she didn’t show it.

“You are Min Yoongi, correct?” she said instead. Yoongi nodded.

“Well, I guess I have some explaining to do to you. Would you like to talk in private?”

There was no possible way that was a good sign. Yoongi felt his grip on the poles tighten, and he found himself taking in a deep, measured breath to calm himself down a little.

“I, um, yes I would.”

Namjoon took this as his cue to stand, and Jimin, who had previously been leaning on him in his slug-like state, had almost fallen off his chair. Luckily, Namjoon seemed to have noticed his mistake and grabbed Jimin’s shoulder before he could properly slip from his seat. Taehyung’s muffled giggle filled the silence, and Yoongi waited with a quiet smile on his face for the others to leave the room. Some things, like Jimin’s clumsiness, never changed it seemed.

Once Yoongi and the doctor were alone, he realised just how serious his situation was. He didn’t have a clue as to what was wrong with him, and the fact that this doctor was about to confirm a health issue he had left a heavy weight in the pit of his stomach. He didn’t want there to be
anything wrong with him. He wanted to continue on with his days like this visit to the hospital had never occurred,

and that he and Jeongguk had never gotten so sick over seemingly nothing. He just wanted everything to go back to normal.

But from the expression on the doctor’s face, which Yoongi knew was doing its best to conceal pity, his life would never be the same again.

“Min Yoongi, the medical team discovered today that you have, for lack of a better word, presented. It isn’t really something to be concerned over, as your new status should only really affect you once every three months approximately, but it is important to note that key changes will occur now that you have presented, and that these changes will impact the rest of your life.”

Yoongi did his best to swallow. “I’ve presented?”

“Yes, Mr Min. You presented as an omega earlier today.”

Yoongi had never experienced the sensation of losing one’s voice. He could always find something to say, regardless of how ridiculous it ended up sounding. He just wasn’t one for empty words or silences. On this occasion, though, this rare, rare occasion, he found himself struggling to speak.

“I-I’m s-sorry to interrupt, Miss, but... what the fuck is an omega?”

Chapter End Notes

Hey guys! I was really motivated to write this chapter so I ended up finishing it rather quickly, but please note that not all of my updates will be this speedy! I think I was just hit with a truck of inspiration, so the chapter was finished quicker as a result. I hope you guys liked it regardless!
The inquisitive look this doctor was giving Yoongi had him on edge. He felt like he’d said something wrong, or stupid. It could be both, for all he knew. But he would rather sound stupid asking the question than be lost trying to follow the conversation. He’d never even heard of the word ‘omega’ as a medical term before in his life. Wasn’t it just a part of the Greek alphabet or something?

The doctor paused momentarily, Yoongi regarding her straight posture and flat lips. “An omega is, to put it simply, a biological status. It essentially defines the kind of fertility you have as an individual.”

Yoongi examined his fingers. “So is it kind of like, a sex or something? A gender...?”

The doctor excused herself when she let out a cough. “You could think of it as a second gender, if you prefer. You’re still male, and being an omega doesn’t affect your sex, but it does add another aspect to your, fertility, per say.”

“So I’m not dying?” and Yoongi usually would’ve kicked himself for again, saying something so dumb, but he needed to know.

“No, you’re not dying.”

Yoongi breathed in an exaggerated sigh of relief. He knew he was being dramatic, but the thought of death terrified him. Yoongi would even go as far to say that it was his greatest fear. The way death mercilessly snatched its victims with no remorse had his heart beat just a little faster, and the fact that he would never get over this fear hung heavy in his mind whenever the topic was brought up. He didn’t want to die, so he’d never heard such relieving words come from a doctor before.

“Okay,” Yoongi affirmed while trying to collect his thoughts. “What exactly is an, an omega did you say?”

The doctor smiled. “Yes, an omega. I’m probably going to have to give you a bit of background
Yoongi nodded. He’d much rather be well informed than completely clueless.

“A while ago, maybe 200 years now, there were three common biological status. You had alphas, that were typically strong and dominant, betas, who were usually pretty easy going, and you had omegas, which is what you’ve presented as.”

Yoongi nodded again in understanding.

“Now, with these statuses came a bit of a hierarchy. Alphas, due to their dominant nature, often held powerful positions in society. Betas took up the next position of power, as while their personalities weren’t dominating like alphas, they certainly weren’t submissive like omegas.”

Yoongi interrupted her before she could continue. “Submissive? What do you mean?”

He hoped he didn’t just see the doctor scratch her forehead out of apprehension.

“Omegas were very, submissive, towards others in society. They listened to those with higher power than themselves, and often did what was asked of them. They served others, to an extent.” The doctor must have sensed Yoongi’s mood before she continued. “Of course this wasn’t their only trait. They also cared for others, especially children, as omegas usually played the part of a mother in a household.”

Yoongi didn’t like the direction this conversation was going. “Omegas were, mothers? Like, they raised kids?”

The doctor wasn’t quite as professional when she spoke again, and Yoongi scolded himself for being so hostile. “I mean, yes, they raised kids, just as any one of the other statuses could, but omegas could- they could have children.”

Yoongi’s lips parted.

“But, that just goes for female omegas, yeah? Male omegas didn’t, they didn’t have kids.”
Yoongi knew what her response was going to be before she opened her mouth. It was in the now slight dip in her posture, the tightened clasp of her hands. She was about to deliver news she knew he wouldn’t like. Yoongi’s hands were trembling.

The doctor’s tone was level once again. “All omegas could have children, regardless of sex. While one’s sex is determined at birth, statuses tended to develop within an individual during puberty, with alphas usually taking the longest to present.”

“Wait, hold on. Why am I presenting now then? I went through puberty years ago, there’s no way any of this should be happening then. And what about other omegas and al- and other statuses? Why am I only hearing about this now?”

He should’ve felt guilty for cutting the doctor’s explanation off, but Yoongi felt that the more she explained the less he understood. He just wanted everything to make sense already. He didn’t want to be stuck in the dark.

“All reasonable questions, Mr Min, and I’m sure you’ll find plenty of answers online. I, um, unfortunately cannot disclose the reason as to why you’ve presented as an omega so late, as it would require breaching my responsibilities as a doctor.”

Yoongi was about to call her out and say how it was his own health, he had a right to know about his own health, before she continued speaking.

“What I can tell you, however, is that you being an omega is not something that’s occurred overnight. This kind of biology would takes years to formulate, and the actual act of presenting is only a small part of becoming an omega. You most likely would have noticed small changes in yourself over the years due to you being an omega, but because you hadn’t presented you had no reason to question these changes. I’m almost sure of it.”

There it was. The information Yoongi needed, but didn’t want to hear. This condition of his, it hadn’t just developed instantly. It had grown over the course of years, until for whatever reason it had decided to manifest into his presentation.

And the doctor’s little remark on his past... He hated the fact that it made sense. Hated the fact that this doctor was right, that she knew more about his condition though a speculation than he’d known his entire life. His increasing kindness towards the other members, his recent urges to actually act like the second oldest in the group and take care of them, his suppressed need to please
others despite him acting like he doesn’t need their approval. It all made too much sense.

A few more questions purged Yoongi’s mind. “So why aren’t omegas and you know, the other statuses talked about? Why have I never heard of any of this?”

The doctor looked like she was about to take in a deep breath, but she seemed to think better of it after looking at Yoongi. He knew his expression was slipping towards aggressive.

“At the time of alphas, betas and omegas being common, people were growing... a little worried over society. They viewed their secondary biologies, and the instincts that came with them, as animalistic. Too difficult to control. Which is understandable might I add, even from our modern perspective on history.”

The doctor turned away from Yoongi’s gaze, and he had to wonder to himself if she was to struggling to get this information across to him. She continued speaking regardless.

“So, hormone therapies of a sort were distributed. People used these therapies to suppress their instincts and the biological functions that came with them, such as the ability to carry children. After such widespread use over the course of many, many years, alphas and omegas practically ceased to exist. The suppressant had had a long term affect, and essentially I’d say these drugs ultimately led to pretty much everyone turning out to be betas nowadays.”

Yoongi found himself now turning away from the doctor’s eyes.

“I’m guessing betas are just like normal people?”

Yoongi assumed she nodded. “That they are. They don’t ever present, which is probably why everyone assumes that being male and female are the only biological options anymore.”

All of this was making too much sense. It was like earlier, Yoongi had been holding a single puzzle piece, but now he felt like he was at least able to make out the general shapes of the image. Granted, it was a blurry one, but at least Yoongi felt like he was getting somewhere.

He wasn’t done with asking questions yet, though. Yoongi had noticed the doctor’s shift to the historical side of this hierarchy, and he found it unusual that she hadn’t spoken of the medical aspect. She was a doctor, after all, and it was a little astounding to Yoongi that she’d barely
brushed the subject.

He found himself harshly putting forth this suspicion only seconds later. “So, what? That’s it? I’m an omega, who can have kids apparently. What’s the catch? Is there a period or something I’m going to get now? There would have to be.”

The doctor blushed, of all things, at Yoongi’s question. It was the last way he expected her to react due to the professionalism required in her business. “There is a cycle that your system goes through to- prepare you for children, yes.”

Yoongi cringed at the sentence. “And this cycle’s a period.”

Again, another blush. “It’s, in my opinion at least, a lot worse. You’ll get a heat once every three months instead of a period.”

Yoongi couldn’t be sure, but once every three months sounded much better than once a month. Maybe being an omega wouldn’t change too much in his life, after all.

“So, what’s a heat?”

There was no blush this time. Yoongi felt a shift of mood in the room, and realised that the doctor had been speaking to him informally this entire time in an effort to calm him, most likely. Her newfound professionalism had Yoongi curling his toes anxiously.

“A heat is a process your body will go through to ready yourself for pregnancy. You’ll feel aroused, and at times feverish, but the main thing to note about a heat is that while you’re in it, your fertility levels increase exponentially. As a result, you may get cramps in your lower back and stomach, and your penis may become incredibly sensitive as a result of you being a male omega.”

It was a lot of information for Yoongi to process at once, but it didn’t stop there.

“As well as this, you’ll desire a partner to share sexual acts with over the course of a few days that a heat usually lasts for. For omegas, this partner would almost always be an alpha, as they produce a knot as part of their biology to block off any seed from leaving the omega after intercourse. It is possible to spend a heat alone, but it would be less painful to do so with a partner.”
Yoongi licked his suddenly dry lips. He hadn’t expected any of that information. At all. He was still getting used to the fact that he, a man, could get pregnant in the first place. Now there were heats?

“Is there any way I can, you know, not get a heat?”

The doctor looked at him like she’d already answered his question. Then, he realised, she had.

“The hormone therapy is probably still around if you’d like to suppress your heats. However, from a medical perspective, I would advise against it. Your ancestors have likely been using these drugs for generations, and if you ever wanted to have your own children one day then taking the suppressant in the first place would dramatically decrease your chances at conceiving. The decision is entirely up to you, however.”

Yoongi didn’t hesitate. “I’d like the drugs, please.”

The doctor nodded in understanding. “I’ll see to it that these drugs get distributed to you immediately, if possible. For now, I think your friends would probably like to be let back in.”

The doctor walked over to the entrance, but a final question dashed through Yoongi’s mind before she could leave.

“Can you at least tell me why I presented in the first place? Like, why my status didn’t remain hidden forever?”

The sad smile he was sent answered his question. “I’m sorry, but under your particular circumstances I cannot. All I can say, really, is that your presentation was triggered by something. It’s a fact that without a trigger, you would’ve remained blissfully ignorant to your second gender for the rest of your life.”

“Okay,” is all he responded with. His brain felt like it had been overloaded with information. “Thank you, you know, telling me about all of this Miss, ah- sorry, I don’t think I ever asked for your name.”
He scratched the back of his head awkwardly, hoping the doctor, despite her persistence in educating him, would leave him already.

“Miss Lee. And it was not a problem. I’ll get a prescription sorted for you as soon as possible.”

With that, she opened the door and left the room, leaving Yoongi to his own thoughts momentarily.

Fuck.

He scrambled for his phone, which someone had mercifully placed in an easily reachable position on his makeshift bedside drawer. Once he’d opened up a browser, he was intent on looking at just what the internet had in terms of information on an apparently long forgotten societal hierarchy. Yoongi, to an extent, was shocked that this entire topic had never been brought to his attention. It sounded as if an entire civilisation had died with these statuses, and that a single-gendered society had permanently replaced the more complex and convoluted one. Yoongi couldn’t comprehend it.

On the other hand, however, if what Miss Lee has said was completely true, then he shouldn’t be surprised that humanity had tried to erase the entire concept from history. They’d certainly attempted to do so before with other events, Yoongi thought bitterly, so he sadly understood that they would do it again. If humanity didn’t like something they did, they tried to cover it up and pretend it had never happened. That was just the way they worked. And from the sound of it, this second gender system had been a victim of humanity’s purposeful negligence, too.

A sour taste formed at the base of his tongue when he read the headlines on the page for ‘omegas’.

The first few articles, written by journalists Yoongi realised, aimed to educate people on the old biologies. They were purely factual, and gave brief explanations of how the old hierarchy worked and how society had progressed over the years due to the hormone therapies. There were other, more personal works, that featured too. Stories of how certain alphas and omegas had lived together, little biographies of people from the time that openly discussed their statuses, even a few statistics to demonstrate the ratio of every alpha to every beta and omega. It was all fascinating, in Yoongi’s eyes, that this entire world had gone unseen by him for the most part of his life.

That didn’t mean he was fascinated by his own body’s new functions, though.

He shoved those thoughts away. He didn’t want to think about, about heats or sex or pregnancies. Because his body wasn’t made for that kind of thing. The things Miss Lee had described, they just
didn’t happen with guys. He was male, that was an undeniable fact, and he had a functioning penis and lacked breasts and he couldn’t *carry children*.

Yoongi took in a shaky breath. He was overreacting. He was making out that his new status or whatever, was going to change anything. The more he examined the thought, the more ridiculous it became.

Just because he was now an omega, didn’t mean everything was going to change. He wasn't going to stop performing anytime soon, he was sure of that, and he didn’t see his relationships with anyone else changing just because he had a new status. If he brought it up in conversation one day, they’d probably react the way he did when he first heard of the term. It wasn't like anyone was really aware of the old system, anyways. And now that he’d thought about it, he couldn’t see himself having to worry about... children, either. He wasn’t gay.

With a sigh, Yoongi laid back on his bed. He continued scrolling through the tag, little pieces of information revealing themselves as he dug further and further. Omegas and alphas usually ended up together, betas tended to stick to themselves, everyone in the past had had a second gender; Yoongi had trouble keeping up with the sheer amount of info.

He’d managed to stay clear of comments until he’d scrolled to the bottom of a more recent article. He wouldn’t say he disliked the comments section, as some people really did go out of their way to leave nice, helpful thoughts, but he would say he was always weary of them. He’d experienced his fair share of hateful comments over the years, so it didn’t phase him when he saw the worst of humanity in its digital masses.

He didn’t know what to expect from the article’s comments section, though. He assumed people would ask the author questions, at least. He was sure that if it had popped up on his feed and he’d read through it, he would’ve had an abundance of queries he needed answered. Or maybe people theorised over what life would be like today with these statuses.

He didn’t expect to see an abundance of hateful comments on the page.

After reading a few, Yoongi was assured of the general viewpoint his current society had towards omegas and alphas alike. His tongue felt heavy in his mouth.

“Abominations, huh.”
Not one person out of the thirteen who’d commented had said otherwise. Alphas and omegas were simply freaks of nature to these people, things they were glad to see erased from civilisation. They didn’t spare any hints to Yoongi as to just how strongly they felt about the topic, either. Long paragraphs were written by each user, and Yoongi’s eyes hardened at their hatred. It was like they were condemning an entire species for once living.

It took Yoongi a moment to realise that these comments were directed at him, and at what he was. They hated the ideas of ‘unnatural sex’, or ‘bitch’s heats’. Betas were left out of their remarks, and Yoongi guessed that must be because they knew they couldn’t hate on their own kind. These people were educate on the subject, Yoongi concluded with a sickening shudder. These people knew more about these biologies than he did and despised them for ever existing in the first place.

Yoongi swallowed the bitter taste in his mouth. He could never bring up his status to anyone after reading all of that. He quickly read through other article’s comments, hoping that someone, anyone, would say something that wasn’t loathsome or full of disgust.

His hope crumbled after visiting well over ten websites.

His status could never see the light of day. If he thought the comments on alphas had been filthy, the ones on omegas were absolutely repulsive. People wanted to do anything to omegas, from condemning them for being able to have children regardless of their sex, to wanting to see ‘how much they could take’. Yoongi’s mouth parted in disgust.

These people were sick. They were unreasonable, and unjust, and downright detestable. They hated aggressively and hated blindly, and Yoongi had never felt more degraded in his life. He didn’t show it, though. Min Yoongi didn’t show degradation.

A knock resonated through the small room. Yoongi closed his eyes for a second and tensed all the muscles in his body at once in an attempt to calm himself. He was fine. There was nothing wrong with him.

He hoped that if he repeated it enough times, it would become truthful.

Hoseok entered the room, followed by Namjoon and their manager, with a prudent look in his eye. Yoongi felt almost guilty under his gaze.

“Doctor Lee just told us you’re good to go home,” he said as he hovered in the doorway. Yoongi
didn’t have to be a genius to tell that they were all keen to ask about what the doctor had said to him. He ignored their unvoiced question.

“Cool. Let’s go.”

Yoongi stood up from the bed and took a moment to test his balance. He felt like he hadn’t stood up for days, and that could still be true for all he knew. He would have to ask later just how long he was out for it. He was still too tired to bother asking.

Namjoon shuffled his feet in Yoongi’s peripheral vision. “Are you okay, Yoongi? Like, what happened earlier?”

The words stung more than Yoongi would’ve liked them to. He debated, for a fraction of a second, on informing Namjoon and Hoseok on everything. He didn’t know what to do anymore, didn’t know how to proceed with this new information and his new status and the changes his body was going to go through. He didn’t know how to react.

So he didn’t.

“I’m fine, just got some crazy cold earlier.”

Chapter End Notes

Harro harro! I hope you guys liked the update. This chapter was a bit tedious to write, as I had to make sure I set up the abo universe correctly for the rest of the upcoming chapters. Other than that, though, it was fun to write!

The next update will be coming shortly, dear readers
The walk back to the van was tedious. Miraculously, despite their turbulent entry to the hospital, they hadn’t been spotted yet by any fans or journalists. Yoongi wanted to keep it that way, so he casually adjusted the mask around his mouth to cover his nose a little better. He would rather be safe than sorry.

Namjoon had told Yoongi that the others were waiting for him in the van, due to Miss Lee informing them of Yoongi’s ‘improved health’. Yoongi, funnily enough, trusted Miss Lee and any of the other doctors that had overseen his case to keep their mouths shut. It wasn’t every day he could say that, but it was probably because of the small reminder in the back of his mind that they would lose their jobs if any of his health records saw the light of day that reassured him.

Yoongi felt their stares before he saw them. Inside the van, the other members were watching him with empty expressions. It was easy for Yoongi to tell they were forced. Their lips were moving radically, as if they were trying desperately to finish their conversation before Yoongi arrived, and the action made Yoongi uneasy. He knew their conversation would die the moment he entered the vehicle. They knew he hated people talking about him behind his back.

He picked up his pace, unwilling to let their covert talk go on for much longer. His hand gripped the van’s handle tightly as he pulled the door open, and he quickly smothered any emotion that was present on his face until all that was left was a blank slate. He loved it when nobody, not even those as close to him as Bangtan, could tell what he was feeling inside. It brought a sense of security to him like no other.

The utter silence he was greeted with was expected. Yoongi knew they didn’t think he had seen their moving lips, their craning necks and crooked postures. Yoongi knew they thought he was oblivious to their words.

Yoongi was past the point of caring.

He buckled up his seatbelt, hoping that Seokjin would hurry up and drive them out of the hospital car park. Yoongi wanted to get out of the compressing space as soon as possible.

He considered plugging his earplugs into his ears as soon as they left the hospital. He didn’t want to hear the van’s white noise anymore. Or the other’s silences. They absence of noise was almost
as mood crushing as Yoongi’s hospital room had been.

“How are you feeling, Yoongi?” their manager asked. Yoongi raised his eyebrows.

“I’m alright.”

He returned his attention to the window, watching the city blur past him in an array of colours and chaos. It was beautiful in a way.

“Well, how’s your health? We can lessen your schedule if you need time to, well, recuperate. Your health always comes first, Yoongi,” their manager continued from the front seat, not once looking in Yoongi’s direction. They all thought he didn’t notice. He did.

“I just got a really bad cold earlier. I overreacted, honestly.”

Yoongi hoped their manager would take that as his cue to finish their talk on his wellbeing, if he could even call it that. He wanted the others to think he was ashamed of the way he’d reacted to his ‘cold’. Scratch that, he needed them to think that. Otherwise, his lies would tangle him.

Jimin’s ‘Ohh,’ from the back seat made him think for a moment he’d succeeded. His hopes dropped when he was addressed again.

“Kookie came down with the same thing, hyung! Ah, so it was contagious,” Jimin commented, Yoongi seeing Jeongguk from the corner of his eye fidget in his seat. “I’m glad whatever cold you guys had didn’t pass onto the rest of us. I couldn’t imagine what we’d do if we all got sick.”

Yoongi considered himself a fantastic liar. With just a few words, he could deter people from his truths and lead them down winding, twisted paths. Half the time he didn’t even create the pathway. He simply showed them a possible answer, and usually his victim would follow it out of curiosity and blind faith in Yoongi’s words. Yoongi could’ve laughed at how easy it was to fool people, sometimes.

That was probably why he felt so suspicious. Maybe Jimin hadn’t noticed, but the others, surely they would’ve. They’d practically raised the kid, so Yoongi could understand why he had caught on to the irregularity so quickly.
Yoongi knew they hadn’t taught Jeongguk to lie; it was why he was so bad at it.

Yoongi swivelled his head around to glance at Jeongguk, who had his eyes downcast and his leg bouncing madly. To Yoongi, it was glaringly obvious. The kid couldn’t lie. Waves of nervousness were rolling off of him, and when he met Yoongi’s eyes briefly he stilled. Like he had been caught in the act.

The older returned his eyes to the window beside him. He would talk to Jeongguk later. While he did see himself as the kind of person who tended to confront his issues head on, he wasn’t merciless enough to call Jeongguk out in front of everyone else. Yoongi had his own reasons for keeping his secrets. He suspected Jeongguk had his, too.

“Yeah, I couldn’t imagine it either, Jimin. It would be pretty ridiculous.”

He aimed the words subtly aimed at Jeongguk, but if the younger noticed he didn’t visibly show it.

Yoongi returned his gaze to the world outside. Skyscrapers that were once just outside his window had become pinpricks in the distance. A sense of contentment Yoongi hadn’t felt in days settled over him at the sight. It was Taehyung’s eyes in the window reflection that eventually dragged him out of his serenity.

Yoongi’s spine tingled. Taehyung wasn’t just giving him a fleeting look; Yoongi felt like he was being examined under that stare. He swallowed, and smoothed out his features to smother any emotions that had surfaced in the time he’d spent surveying the outside world. Yoongi knew that Taehyung saw things in people that no one else could see. He saw emotions in someone when they were wearing a blank face, read people’s thoughts without ever approaching them. Yoongi would’ve said he was excellent at reading people, like Hoseok was, but he knew Taehyung’s ability went beyond that.

There was something about him, Yoongi had concluded years ago. He could never put his finger on it, but there was just something about Taehyung that made him different from everyone else. Yoongi now thought that whatever it was that made him different, was without a doubt making him so nervous under his watchful eye.

Yoongi knew Taehyung was seeing things in him he couldn’t even see in himself. So, he made a mental note to avoid him for the rest of the day. Yoongi would rather confront Jeongguk immediately than be approached by Taehyung at all that day.
Sooner than Yoongi expected them to, they arrived back at their dorms. He wouldn’t say a heavy silence had settled over the group, as they’d known each other too long for something like that to arise from a hospital visit, but he would say an awkward silence had appeared. He wanted to think it was because nobody wanted to question the pair too harshly, as they had only both been discharged, but a nagging thought in the back of his mind told him otherwise.

He didn’t listen to that thought. At this point, Yoongi only had to worry about Taehyung. Nobody else had caught onto, well, anything yet. Even Yoongi had his doubts that Taehyung could read his and Jeongguk’s situation so easily.

He exited the vehicle slowly and stretched. Yoongi wanted nothing more than to lie down that second and take a nap, but he knew he had things to do. Approaching Jeongguk was his top priority, and he still had to finish two more songs by the end of the week. He groaned, both at the click he felt in his back and the thought of having to complete more work before getting a proper break.

And then there was his status he had to worry about. Him being an omega. He still had so much research to do on the topic. He felt the need to educate himself a little more, to be aware of every aspect of his second sex, because he felt so oblivious to this new part of himself. Yoongi concluded he was going to have to start learning sooner rather than later; hopefully before he was issued the medication for suppressing his... heats.

The thought made him shudder.

Once everyone was out of the van, they walked back to their respective dorms. Yoongi and Seokjin both gave a sigh of relief when they entered their room, after having spent the previous night in a place Yoongi assumed Seokjin liked as much as he did.

He left the dorm relatively quickly though, telling Seokjin he was going off to shower. It wasn’t really a lie, Yoongi told himself. He was going to shower.

After he’d paid Jeongguk a visit, though.

As Yoongi approached Jeongguk’s dorm, his thoughts drifted to the possibility of Jeongguk not being alone in his room. He did share it with Namjoon and Taehyung, and while Yoongi knew he could be brutal with his words, he wasn’t cruel enough to kick the other two out of their own dorm to talk to Jeongguk alone. And he couldn’t outright ask Jeongguk to talk to him privately in front of
the others. It would look so suspicious, considering Bangtan’s tendency to discuss issues within the group openly and honestly. Yoongi soon found himself outside of Jeongguk’s dorm entrance, and for a moment, he considered leaving.

Maybe Jeongguk wasn’t hiding something after all. Maybe Yoongi had accidentally used Jeongguk’s legitimate sickness as an excuse to cover up his status. It was possible.

But, Yoongi knew it wasn’t probable. He hadn’t mistaken the sunken shoulders Jeongguk had exhibited for the duration of the trip home. He didn’t imagine seeing the maknae fidget in his seat, and Yoongi had known the younger long enough to recognise his signs of nervousness. There was no doubt in Yoongi’s mind that Jeongguk had been uncomfortable with Jimin’s words in the van, and that fact propelled Yoongi to knock on the door rather adamantly.

He chewed on the inside of his lip when Namjoon answered the door.

“Oh, hey Yoongi-hyung,” Namjoon greeted, a phone in one hand and a pair of ear plugs in the other. He looked relatively cheerful to Yoongi, with his slight smile and gentle dimples. Yoongi quickly wondered to himself what it was that was making Namjoon so pleasantly happy before continuing.

“Is Jeongguk in here?” He kept his tone lighthearted. He didn’t want Namjoon, the group’s resident genius, to catch onto anything before he’d even spotted the youngest.

“Ah, yeah. He is.” Namjoon turned to look back into his room while Yoongi leant again the door. “Ya! Kookie, Yoongi-hyung wants you.”

Yoongi heard the sound of bedsheets crumpling before he was faced with a wide eyed Jeongguk, who stood rather awkwardly in Yoongi’s opinion behind the rapper. Namjoon must have taken their moment of eye contact as his cue to leave, as Yoongi heard him mutter an, “Excuse me,” as he walked past Yoongi.

Well, at least Yoongi hadn’t needed to act like an asshole to get Namjoon to give them some privacy.

“Can I come in?” Yoongi asked. He wasn’t one for formalities, but he didn’t consider himself rude.
Jeongguk gave him a quick smile. “Yeah, yeah, of course hyung.”

The maknae ran his fingers through his fringe as he stepped aside, allowing Yoongi to walk past him. It was a nice gesture from the younger, Yoongi noticed, but he didn’t dare say that out loud. He knew Jeongguk thrived off of compliments, and often antagonised anyone and everyone who had the courage to throw them in his direction. He was cocky when he wanted to be, so Yoongi refused to inflate that monstrous ego of his any more than he had to.

Yoongi sat down on Namjoon’s bed, and gestured for Jeongguk to do the same. He pretended to not see the apprehension in the younger’s eyes as he sat down beside him, and instead focused on the conversation he was about to have.

Again, he was never one for formalities, so he decided to get straight to the point.

“What did you actually come down with when we took you to the hospital? Because I know that whatever it was you got wasn’t just some common cold.”

The way Jeongguk’s gaze immediately dropped confirmed any suspicions Yoongi had on his sickness. Whatever he’d told the others about his illness, every fact and detail, had been a lie. An excuse to cover up the reality of his situation.

A sick taste formed at the back of Yoongi’s mouth at that realisation.

He... he and Jeongguk were doing the exact same thing.

They were both lying about their sicknesses, covering up their tracks and stories. Jeongguk was doing his best to keep others away from his truths, yet Yoongi had come across them, anyway. He’d crept along the path of Jeongguk’s truths, and eventually, he’d reached the end of the path. Jeongguk had no where to run now that Yoongi had confronted him. He had no where to hide his secrets.

But, did Yoongi have a right to these truths? Usually, he would’ve answered immediately that yes, he did, but these circumstances were completely different from what he was used to. He was hiding his own truths from Jeongguk. He was lying to others, faking stories to others, covering up his tracks in the hopes that nobody would follow them. He was doing the exact same thing as Jeongguk, yet here he was, asking Jeongguk to somehow answer his accusation. Did he even have a right to ask Jeongguk for the truth if he was hiding his own in the process?
Jeongguk’s voice didn’t even waver when he spoke. “I presented or something, apparently.”

Yoongi stared at him. “You, presented? What does that mean?”

Jeongguk shrugged his shoulders, and Yoongi waited patiently for him to respond.

“I’ve gone some weird body function now that I didn’t have before. Presenting was like, me finally finding out I even had this function? I’m not really explaining it that well, sorry.”

The younger tapped his feet against the floor rhythmically. Yoongi could tell that Jeongguk was trying to put up an indifferent aura about his ‘weird body function’ he’d just found out about, but the older could see through the cracks. His bottom lip was ridden with bite marks, and his feet just wouldn’t stay still.

“It’s fine, take your time. I’m in no rush,” Yoongi responded, secretly hoping that the younger would confirm his suspicions. Jeongguk took in a deep breath before continuing, and Yoongi found himself hanging on the maknae’s every word.

“I’ve got some second gender or something now. I’m an, alpha I think it was? Yeah, an alpha, that’s ringing a bell. Anyways, it’s not really that big of a deal. It’s barely going to change anything about me.”

Yoongi’s breath would’ve hitched if he’d been alone. With that one piece of information from Jeongguk, he suddenly had a clear image. He’d presented as an omega because Jeongguk had presented as an alpha. The younger’s own presentation, which had most likely happened naturally due to his young age, had triggered Yoongi’s own, more forceful presentation. The trigger was the reason Yoongi had presented at all, Yoongi remembered someone telling him.

Jeongguk was the reason Yoongi had become an omega in the first place.

Yoongi wasn’t sure what to do with this information.

“So wait, hold on a second.” Yoongi feigned confusion. “You’ve basically become an, an alpha, yeah? Well, what does this change about you? Anything we should know about?”
And Yoongi knew he was prodding for facts he already knew, but he couldn’t help it. He needed to hear this information from another source. It wasn’t enough for him to read about it online. He wanted to hear the words from Jeongguk’s own mouth, needed his knowledge to be confirmed through a different method. If Yoongi didn’t think about it too harshly, he didn’t question if he was manipulating the maknae. Because he would never do that.

“Oh, um.” Yoongi watched as any confidence or nonchalance Jeongguk had possessed earlier vanished at the mention of changes. Yoongi wasn’t as oblivious to the topic as he was letting on, so he knew where this conversation was about to go. He couldn’t say he was feeling awkward about it, though. He would say he felt more intrigued by Jeongguk’s upcoming explanation than anything. Again, Yoongi told himself it was because he was curious about hearing the information come from another source, but a single, defiant whisper in his ear told him otherwise. He didn’t acknowledge it.

Jeongguk continued struggling for words. “I-I, well. I don’t know a lot to be honest. I think I’ll get, ugh, what was it?” Yoongi remained silent as the younger attempted to remember. “I think she called them ruts. Anyway, I’m going to get them like, four times a year for a couple of days. Nothing much.”

Yoongi saw through Jeongguk’s calm facade. He couldn’t outright say he knew Jeongguk was skipping out on the details surrounding what a rut actually was, as that would give away just how aware he already was of the maknae’s second gender, and he couldn’t afford to do that. He was already in a precarious situation as it was by letting on to Jeongguk that he was completely oblivious to the terminologies the maknae was using, when in reality Yoongi could safely assume he knew more on the topic of alphas than Jeongguk did.

And for the first time since he’d lied about his second gender, he questioned if it was all worth it. Just what did he have to gain by hiding his omega status from Jeongguk, who in Yoongi’s eyes had so courageously owned up to his status as soon as he was confronted. Why should he bother hiding something he couldn’t change around someone that was in a similar position to him? The more questions he asked himself, the less answers he came up with.

There was no point in him hiding his status around Jeongguk, now that he’d thought about it. It wasn’t as if the maknae couldn’t sympathise with his scenario, and Yoongi knew him well enough that if he told him something like this, he would keep it to himself. He wasn’t one for gossiping, Yoongi knew. It was one of the reasons he assumed he and the others liked the maknae so much. If he was going to insult someone, and be his playfully cocky self about it, he was going to do it to their face.

Maybe that was why Jeongguk had had little trouble with confiding to Yoongi the truth of his
situation. He liked being upfront.

Yoongi found himself admiring Jeongguk’s honesty with him for a moment. Only a moment, though.

“And are ruts what I think they are?” Yoongi furthered questioned, at this point in their talk realising he just wanted to walk away and process things by himself. But he had to finalise his facts. It was a need of Yoongi’s now.

He didn’t miss the slight tinge to Jeongguk’s ears at the query. Sometimes Yoongi forgot just how young their maknae was. “U-Uh, they’re, um. They’re periods of time where I, um, where I’m going to be really h-horny.”

“Oh,” was all Yoongi said. He didn’t need to say much else to encourage the younger to continue.

“Look, I know it sounds bad, because you know, days of me being horny isn’t a good thing for anyone I don’t think. But! I was told that I’m not going to want to actually have sex with just anyone. I think it’s because I’m an alpha, and I might be wrong, but I’m pretty sure alphas only, you know, biologically want to have sex with the opposite, ah, secondary gender. I think they’re called omegas? Anyways, it doesn’t matter because there aren’t any omegas around anymore, so I won’t actually be having sex with anyone while I’m in a rut cause my alpha side apparently won’t be happy with anyone else.”

Yoongi stopped breathing.

“Sorry I, uh, repeated myself a few times. I just wanted to say it and get it off my chest, I guess.”

“Nah,” Yoongi just about choked out. “It’s good to get that kind of shit off your chest. Not talking about it can be really hurt in the future.”

What the fuck was he saying? He should listen to his own words and take his own advise. Who was he to tell that to Jeongguk when he was doing the exact thing he was warning him against? He disgusted himself momentarily with the thought that he was supposed to be acting like a role model for Jeongguk. Really, he was being more hypocritical than anything if he was being honest with himself, but he wasn’t about to correct his mistakes at the sake of his reputation. There was too much on the line now. There were too many risks.
Yoongi’s thoughts wouldn’t leave him alone. The words Jeongguk had spewed at him only moments ago were stuck on repeat, and the same fact rang through his mind over and over again for what felt like years.

‘Alphas only want to have sex with omegas.’

He knew Jeongguk would never, ever, use him. Ever. He was too kind to do anything of the sort to anyone, and Yoongi knew this. He’d known Jeongguk long enough to be absolutely definite on the fact. Jeongguk would never allow something to happen between them that Yoongi hadn’t consented to. It wasn’t in his nature, or his personality. He wasn’t like that. He would never use Yoongi like that. It wasn’t that thought that scared Yoongi, though. It was something much more terrifying.

It was the thought that it might not be Jeongguk who tried to use him in the first place.

He’d done his reading. He knew the basics of the system, knew why people had decided to live with their hierarchy, and why the hormone therapies had been so widely implemented in such a short span of time. The doctor at the hospital had said that people had feared the animalistic instincts that came with their second genders, but Yoongi knew the fear went much deeper than that.

People had been afraid of losing control.

And now Yoongi could perfectly understand what was once such an irrational, nonsensical fear to him.

Everyone had wanted to be a beta because with their statuses came almost perfect normality. Their instincts never came between them and their thoughts, and their emotions were never hindered by needs or urges. They had possessed full control over every aspect of their lives, and had lived happily in the knowledge that what they did, they did because they wanted to.

Alphas and omegas had craved for that level of control for centuries before the suppressants had even been developed.

Yoongi knew now why he was a lone statistic in the world. He understood why people had run away from what they were. He could now sympathise with their reasons, and didn’t judge them for their courses of action. For he was about to follow the same path as every omega before him had.
He was going to deny his nature. Because if he were to accept it, he would be denying Min Yoongi control.

And he couldn’t lose that little bit of control he currently had over himself. It might seem like nothing, but he’d read about what happened to omegas in heats; what happened to alphas in ruts. He knew what happened when the two came together, and he would do anything, anything, to not get to that point and lose every sense of control he thought he had.

He prayed to whatever deity was up there that he would be issued with his suppressants as soon as humanly possible.

A knock came from the door while Yoongi was in the midst of his thoughts. He watched as the door opened and Taehyung stepped through, with his hair wrung up in a towel and his clothes sticking to him from what Yoongi presumed was the result of a shower. Yoongi could’ve imagined it, as he was still relatively strung up in his own thoughts, but Taehyung’s eyes had hardened on him when he saw that he and Jeongguk were alone together. Again, Yoongi could’ve imagined it. Taehyung was always difficult to read.

“I’ll talk to you later, Kook,” Yoongi muttered as he stood up and walked over to Taehyung, who stepped aside as he approached the dorm’s exit. He didn’t hear if Jeongguk replied, as he’d already blocked out the sounds around him and focused on the sounds in his mind.

Yoongi found these sounds much easier to manage. After all, he could at least control what he focused on there.

Chapter End Notes

Heyo! Hope you guys liked the update. This is just a bit of a warning that this fic will definitely be a slow burn, since I’m a bit of a sucker for slow-developing relationships and plots.

And as always, thank you so much for reading! The next update will be up soon :)
Yoongi had been in his Genius Lab two weeks later when he’d received the call.

He had somehow managed to get those last two songs finished before his deadline. Granted, it had been due to him pulling another all-nighter, which Seokjin had again scolded him for, but it had been worth it. The songs he’d finished were ones he was legitimately proud of. The lyrics weren’t finalised just yet, as Namjoon had agreed to translate a few lines into English later, but for the most part they were done. Their next album was coming up nicely, and for once Yoongi allowed himself to be prideful. He was looking forward to seeing the final product in the coming weeks.

It wasn’t difficult for the rapper to decide on the part he liked the most about being in BTS. He had the luxury of doing what he loved for a living, and he wouldn’t trade his lifestyle for any other. Ever. Being able to work with his greatest passion was by far the most rewarding part of being in the group, and he would be lying if he said anything else he did as part of their work ethic came anywhere close. There was just an unbeatable amount of satisfaction he felt after composing a successful melody, and he kept chasing after that feeling with every song he made, with every album he produced. Music practically ran in his veins.

To say he’d nearly fallen out of his chair when his phone rang on full volume would be an understatement.

Cursing, Yoongi pulled himself back into his seat. His phone was still ringing, with each pulse from the machine making it vibrate against the desk obnoxiously. He groaned aloud.

“Who’ll this be?” Yoongi grumbled as he held the phone to his ear. His recording sat in front of him on the desktop screen, and Yoongi wasn’t sure how patient he was going to be with whoever the caller was. He just wanted to get his work done already.

“Hello,” he answered with tight lips. “Who am I talking to?”

“This is Doctor Lee Jisoo from the Asan Medical Centre. Am I speaking to Min Yoongi?”

A chill ran up Yoongi’s spine at those words. He hadn’t even thought about his visit to the hospital once since he’d left it two weeks ago. The visit had almost dissolved into the back of his memories,
like he’d chosen to forget it had ever happened in the first place.

“Yes, yes you are. How’d you get my number?” he asked, more out of curiosity than anything.

“I asked your company for it. Are you in a private location, Mr Min? I’d like to discuss some private health matters with you over the phone to save you the trip over here.”

Looking around him, Yoongi thought that he couldn’t be in a more private location. His studio was a bit of a sacred place to him, and although none of the other members said it aloud, they understood. They all had their comfort space, he could call it, and his was practically off limits to anyone but him. He hummed into the speaker.

“Yes, I’m in a pretty private place. Are you calling about my medication or... something else?”

The slight, ever so slight delay in response had Yoongi on edge. “I am calling in regards to your suppressants, yes. I have some, ah, unfortunate news to tell you though.”

Yoongi breathed. She wasn’t about to say what he thought she was going to say. It was going to be other bad news. Something he could actually deal with.

“The suppressants you’re after are no longer produced. The, um, the manufacturers last put the medications out nearly thirty years ago.”

A single, shaky exhale left Yoongi. The medications he wanted, no, needed, the medications he needed weren’t even around anymore. He felt his chest constrict and he struggled to draw in another breath of air because this couldn’t be happening, this couldn’t be happening.

“What do you mean? What am I supposed to do now?”

It was so difficult to keep the panic at bay. He used to be prone to panic attacks years ago, and the early signs of one were present in the way his hands shook and his lips wobbled. He could have another one any second now, and that realisation absolutely terrified him.

Yoongi didn’t know how, but the doctor on the other end of the line seemed to notice his distress.
“I can assure you, Mr Min, that going through a heat will not harm you. It might be uncomfortable, and yes, a little embarrassing given your circumstances, but it is something that you can manage. You’ll only be affected for a couple of days at most.”

Yoongi wasn’t quite sure what part of Miss Lee’s speech comforted him, but he found his breaths beginning to even out at her words. A couple of days every three months. That was all he was going to go through. It didn’t sound that bad when he put it that way.

“Yeah, okay. Yeah.” Yoongi paused to collect his thoughts. “Is there anything else I can do? Like,” he paused again. “I read up on, um, on heats and apparently I’ll, you know, smell differently the closer I get to the end of my, my cycle. So, um, I guess...” the words struggled to get out of Yoongi. “I guess what I’m trying to ask is if I can get drugs to get rid of the smell.”

“Ah,” Miss Lee replied. “I understand. Your job doesn’t exactly allow you a lot of time to yourself, and having an odd scent for a few days would definitely raise others suspicions. I’m under the impression that your status has remained a private matter?”

“Ah, yeah, that’s right.” Yoongi secretly praised the woman for reading in between the lines of what he’d said. He didn’t want to be embarrassed about discussing his second gender, wanted nothing more than to be accepting of what he was and what he was going to go through, but he just couldn’t. He wouldn’t say he was disgusted by his biology, because really it was just nature doing its job. The thing that got his toes curling was the fact that his biology was different to everyone else’s.

He was an anomaly. Well, he and Jeongguk if he was being accurate, and from what he’d read Jeongguk was going to go through a very similar thing to Yoongi called a rut, but Yoongi thought he was allowed to focus on himself for once. He was allowed to be concerned, and he was allowed to be worried about his now rare status and everything that came with it. He was different from everyone else in a way he couldn’t control, and Yoongi fiercely despised not having that control.

Yoongi had almost forgotten the doctor on the other end of the line until she spoke again. “Let’s see what we can do...”

It didn’t take long for the silence to be filled with the doctor’s words. “Okay, I’ve got a pill here called propantheline for reducing the amount of perspiration an individual produces, so logically that should reduce your scent’s strength up until your actual heat. Since you won’t be able to go on suppressants, this sounds like the best solution to lessening your scent up until the end of your cycle.”
Yoongi nodded before realising he was talking to her over the phone. “That should work. Anything else I can get or, is that everything?”

He really, really didn’t want that to be the only medication he received. If he could help it, he would’ve chosen to take medication for every aspect of his upcoming heat; something for getting rid of the cramps, something else for managing his temperature, and yet another drug for reducing his sex drive. Because really, Yoongi knew he wouldn’t be so embarrassed about being an omega if it weren’t for the ridiculous levels of arousal he was going to experience four times a year. He knew it.

Yoongi heard a faint few clicks through the line. “I’m sorry, Mr Min, but I don’t believe any other medication is necessary. What you’re going to go through is completely natural, and there are very few risks with heats that you’ll need to be aware of.”

He spun his chair around at hearing that comment. Very few risks with heats, huh. Yoongi knew that wasn’t true, especially now that he knew Jeongguk was... Jeongguk was an alpha. It also didn’t help that he knew alphas went into rut every three months or so...

Oh, fuck.

“Do you want me to email you the prescription so that you can pick up your medication at your local pharmacy?”

“Yeah, sure thing, that would be cool, thanks for ringing me. I’ve gotta go.”

He ended the call, because he was being immature and childish and he didn’t know what else to do. Jeongguk has presented the same day he had. He’d been the one to trigger Yoongi’s presentation in the first place. So Yoongi knew, he fine rightly knew, that Jeongguk was going to go into his rut the same day he went into heat.

Yoongi held a shaking hand to his mouth and bit his thumb.

What the hell was he supposed to do?
He hadn’t been met with as much suspicion as he thought he would be when he’d left their dorms the following day. When he’d told Seokjin that he was leaving, the older hadn’t even questioned him. He’d simply nodded in understanding, and Yoongi hadn’t had to endure his usually watchful eye when he left the complex. It was a nice change, but it made Yoongi wonder if Seokjin had something pressing on his mind. It wouldn’t surprise Yoongi if he did. His hyung was a bit similar to himself in the way that he kept his issues to himself.

In fact, nobody had even looked in his direction when he’d gone to collect his pills. He hadn’t thought his simple getup of a black mask and cap would disguise him too well, but he’d been proven wrong when even the pharmacist hadn’t recognised him. Maybe it was his lucky day. Or maybe the fact that he wasn’t surrounded by another six people diffused anyone’s intuitions about him. Probably that.

Regardless of the reason, it was nice not to be recognised for once. He’d been able to go about his business like any other normal person, and it had been a breath of fresh air for Yoongi. He’d felt like he was just another random person in that moment, and Yoongi hadn’t known he’d been craving that feeling until he’d experienced it. He’d enjoyed fitting in.

That small amount of solace dissipated, however, when he returned to their dorm.

As he entered his dorm, and found that Seokjin was out somewhere, he opened up the small white package that contained his medication with eagerness. Once he’d pulled out the glass container containing the pills, he read through the directions on how to use them.

He couldn’t exactly say he was shocked to learn that the drug was going to have to be taken daily for it to be effective. It was basic knowledge in Yoongi’s eyes that most medications needed to be taken frequently for them to work in the first place. There was only one problem with this, though.

He would have to take it at the same time each day for the drug to work, and he needed to have it every day for the sake of consistency.

There was no way the people at BigHit, including his fellow group members, would fail to notice him taking the medication on a daily basis. He needed an excuse. He needed to keep his tracks covered.

Yoongi glanced at his phone’s screen for the time, and saw that it was just past five in the afternoon. That would be a good time to take his pills each day, right? Just before any concert
performances at night, and just after any public appearances during the day. It was a good time, he concluded.

Shrugging to himself, Yoongi made his way to Bangtan’s shared kitchen. He might as well start taking it now. When he arrived in the kitchen, he noticed various ingredients spread out over the bench; a typical Seokjin habit that Yoongi couldn’t see the older getting out of anytime soon. He must be making dinner for them, then. Yoongi smiled at the thought.

He was in the process of unscrewing the lid of the pill bottle when a door creak echoed throughout the flat. Jimin walked into the kitchen, with sweat practically weeping through his clothes, and Yoongi could tell immediately that he’d been down at the dance studio practising. Knowing Jimin’s strict work ethic, Yoongi assumed the younger had been down there for many, many hours. His exhausted presence felt like a slap to Yoongi’s face, who hadn’t rehearsed any of their choreographies for two days now. And they had their comeback coming up.

Sometimes, Yoongi didn’t enjoy being an idol. The realisation that he would probably have to spend all of the next day practising choreographies made him for one of those rare occasions regret auditioning for BigHit in the first place.

Making and performing the music live, though, made it all worth it though. Yoongi couldn’t deny that fact for the life of him.

Jimin didn’t notice the pills as he pulled open a drawer and pulled a glass out for himself. Yoongi found himself doing the same, and he grabbed a cold jug of water from the fridge before standing in front of Jimin again. The look of utter appreciation Yoongi received was more than enough as recompense for the older.

Yoongi surprised himself by speaking first. “I’m guessing you’ve just returned from the hell that is the dance studio.”

That earned a laugh from Jimin, who was already pouring himself a glass of water. “Well, for those of us who can keep up with the music, dancing isn’t that bad.”

Yoongi’s face scrunched up. “See, this is what the fans don’t get to see. You being a cheeky little shit to your hyungs.”

Jimin pulled his best innocent pout. It had Yoongi rolling his eyes. “I’m not that mean, Yoongi-
hyung, am I?”

Yoongi poured himself a glass of water after Jimin finished. “No, you’re downright evil.”

Jimin giggled. “Ah, you’ve known me for too long, hyung.” He then took a sip from his glass.

“That I have.”

Jimin just about choked on his water, and Yoongi patted him on the shoulder as he coughed. Trust Jimin to choke on his own drink, Yoongi thought humorously.

While Jimin recovered from his coughing fit, Yoongi threw all previous fears of his out the window and unscrewed the cap of the pill bottle. He picked the first tablet his fingers came across and popped it in his mouth without a second thought. He pointedly ignored Jimin’s curious eyes as he brought the glass of water to his lips.

Yoongi swallowed the pill relatively easily, and screwed the lid back on before Jimin could see the label. Not that Yoongi thought Jimin would know what propantheline or whatever the medicine was called was. It was just a precaution.

He didn’t think Jimin would have the guts to ask about them, though. “What’re they for?”

If Yoongi had been asked to order the members of Bangtan from most nosy to least nosy, Jimin would’ve been put right at the bottom of that list, alongside Yoongi himself. While Yoongi knew Jimin appeared to crave the attention of others on camera, he was pretty respectful of personal boundaries when they were off camera. Yoongi had always assumed it was because Jimin didn’t want to consider himself rude and invasive, but on this occasion he’d proved Yoongi’s list wrong.

Yoongi looked at the glass. “They’re antidepressants.”

Understanding flashed in Jimin’s eyes, quickly followed by regret. Yoongi could read Jimin like a book sometimes.

“O-Oh, I’m sorry I-I asked. I just thought they were for a diet you’re going on or something...”
Jimin’s eyes widened. “Not that I think you need to go on a diet or anything!”

“Jimin, it’s fine. You’re allowed to be curious.”

Yoongi watched as Jimin’s shoulders deflated. “Still, I’m sorry I asked. It’s none of my business, really.”

“Yeah, and I said it’s fine, Jiminnie.” Yoongi predicted the small smile Jimin produced at the nickname. “Now, I’m afraid I’ve got to ask for a favour.”

At this, Jimin stood up a little straighter. Yoongi knew Jimin was always eager to please others, so he hoped the younger would help him out on this occasion, too.

“I literally avoided practising our choreo for two days now, and even I can tell I’m far off our usual standard. Well, our usual Min Yoongi standard, anyway.”

Jimin smirked at the offhanded comment.

Yoongi continued with a similar smirk on his lips. “So, I need a bit of help at the studio to catch up with everyone else. Would you care to aid an old man in need?”

That got a laugh out of Jimin. Well, more of a cackle in Yoongi’s opinion.

“Of course, hyung. It’s my responsibility to look after my elders.”

Yoongi shook his head. “I swear, you sound more like Jeongguk every day. You really need to fix that horrendous attitude of yours towards your hyungs.”

He walked away from Jimin with his glass of water in hand.

“Aish, Yoongi-hyung, you’re impossible sometimes!”
“I do my best, Jiminie.”

Chapter End Notes

Shoutout to my sister who beta read this for me! I’m pretty happy with how the story’s developing so far, and I can’t wait to post the next chapter. The pace is about to pick up, people. Buckle your seatbelts 😊
Yoongi wasn’t quite sure when he initially smelt Jeongguk’s scent, but the first time it noticeably stood out to him was while they were backstage for their first comeback stage that was promoting their latest album.

A makeup artist had been in the process of adjusting the amount of eyeshadow he had on when he’d first smelt... something. At first, he hadn’t been able to distinguish it from the other feint smells in the room. It had felt far away, somehow.

Then, it had gotten surprisingly stronger. Yoongi still had his eyes closed, but if anything the loss of the sense he relied heaviest on just helped him focus on the smell. And now that he had no other distractions, he could actually concentrate on it.

It was difficult to distinguish just what he was smelling. It wasn’t potent, from Yoongi was being honest with himself, but he couldn’t put his finger on what exactly the scent was comprised of. It wasn’t a manufactured scent, that much he knew. It was something natural, and something Yoongi found surprisingly comforting. He found himself gleefully inhaling the smell with every breath, and while Yoongi wouldn’t say he was chasing it, he was definitely enjoying it while he could. It was probably some stylist’s perfume or something.

He was told he could open his eyes just as the scent practically invaded his senses. It felt like whatever it was he was smelling was surrounding him and and holding him hostage. Not that he wanted to escape the soothing scent. He would even go as far as to say that the scent was easing him, in a way.

And the source of the smell had just decided to stand next to him, apparently.

Yoongi opened his eyes, expecting to see a hair stylist or something. Instead, his mouth dropped ever so slightly.

“Jeongguk?”

The younger faced him with wide eyes. “Mm, yeah hyung?”
“Did you put some fancy cologne on or something?” At Jeongguk’s narrowing gaze, he felt the need to elaborate. “Not that it doesn’t smell nice. Quite the opposite, really. It’s just... the smell’s a bit potent.”

Yoongi felt a little uneasy under the maknae’s stare. “Hyung, I don’t own any cologne.”

Yoongi pursed his lips. Maybe it was a decent smelling deodorant instead?

“Well, whatever it is smells good. Like...” Just what did it smell like?

The word hit Yoongi like a truck.

“Lavender.”

He was smelling lavender. He was certain of it now. The scent was enveloping him gently, and Yoongi felt like he was practically melting in it. It was just so, calming, to feel all around him. It was without a doubt putting him at ease for their upcoming performance.

Jeongguk crossed his arms at his statement. Yoongi raised an eyebrow.

“Hyung, I’m not wearing anything. And even if I was, well, I don’t think I’d choose to smell like lavender.”

Yoongi dipped his head. There was no denying the scent he was smelling. Now that he’d put a name to it, lavender of all things, he couldn’t stop noticing it. It was obvious to Yoongi that the scent was originating from Jeongguk. He just couldn’t understand how Jeongguk was oblivious to the dominating fragrance. Surely, he would’ve noticed the way he smelt already? It wasn’t exactly subtle in Yoongi’s eyes.

“Sorry, but you’ve put something on, Jeongguk. And you’ve known us all long enough to know that we wouldn’t care if you wore lavender perfume or something in your spare time.”
The blush Yoongi got in response was nothing short of adorable. Even though the maknae had said he didn’t really like doing aegyo, Yoongi often thought he acted too cute sometimes to dislike it as much as he claimed to. Yoongi wiped the fond grin off his face before Jeongguk could notice.

“I-I swear hyung, I-I haven’t put anything on.”

His little stutters could kill Yoongi if he let them. However, he still had to knock some sense into the younger. How he’d managed to remain completely ignorant to his own smell mystified the older.

Yoongi spotted his makeup artist coming back to polish her work. “Ah, Yeonwoo-noona, can I ask you something real quick?”

The makeup artist glanced between Yoongi and Jeongguk before answering. “Yeah, sure.”

Yoongi smirked. “What do you think of Jeongguk’s cologne?”

Jeongguk was pointedly ignoring the questioning look he was receiving from the woman. Yoongi had to smother his laugh. Sometimes, their maknae was just too precious. He was also too easily embarrassed around girls, but they couldn’t really hold that against him. Yoongi could understand that practically being raised by six older boys wasn’t the best way to introduce Jeongguk to interactions with the opposite sex. And if his blush was anything to go by, Yoongi would say that Jeongguk hadn’t changed that much in all the years he’d known him.

Something tugged at his heart at the thought.

The makeup artist made eye contact with Yoongi. “Sorry Yoongi, but I can’t smell it. I’m sure it’s nice though! Jeongguk here has good taste.”

She went back to work immediately, and Jeongguk didn’t waste any time before responding.

“Hah! I told you I didn’t put anything on!”

Yoongi quickly shoved away any concerns he had over his own senses. “Yeah, you did.”
Jeongguk smirked a little too devilishly for Yoongi’s liking at that acknowledgment.

“What, no apology? No, ‘I’m so terribly sorry for being wrong about you, Jeongguk’?”

Yoongi couldn’t erase his playful tone. “You’re pushing it, Kookie.”

Jeongguk’s smirk broke out into a wide, bunny grin that had Yoongi smiling immediately afterwards. “I know. But you still love me. I’m irresistible after all.”

Yoongi’s conversation with Jimin a few weeks ago sprung to mind abruptly.

“You know, I thought Jimin was becoming a bit more of a brat to his hyungs than you for a moment,” Jeongguk burst into laughter. “But you’ve proven me wrong. You’re still the most annoying, Kook, and you really should pat yourself on the back for that.”

“Oh yeah? And why’s that?”

“I’m sure you’re familiar enough with the other members to know that it’s difficult to claim the title of ‘most annoying’ among our bunch of toddlers.”

Yoongi wasn’t sure at what point Hoseok had started listening in on their conversation, but he burst into laughter beside him at his joking criticism. It wasn’t long before his remark was echoing through backstage.

Jimin’s voice filled the room. “Hey, Yoongi-hyung! I thought that conversation between us would remain private!”

Jeongguk shoved his face into his hands out of secondhand embarrassment, and Yoongi honestly felt like doing the same until he remembered it wasn’t in his character to do so. He would settle on an insult, then.

“And I thought you finally getting a growth spurt would increase your maturity, but I guess I was
wrong about that, too.”

Laughter filled the change room for a blissful moment, and all Yoongi could do was smile.

He didn’t think about Jeongguk’s scent for the rest of the concert. Surely it wasn’t that important, anyway. It was probably just some alpha scent he was developing now that he’d presented. Yeah, that sounded about right to Yoongi. He himself had an... omega scent, apparently, so it wouldn’t surprise him if Jeongguk turned out to have a lavender scent because of his new status.

He resolved for searching it up on the trip back to their hotel. He put ‘Alpha scents’ into the search bar and waited patiently for relevant results to pop up.

When they did, Yoongi would admit he skimmed through a lot of the information. Alphas and omegas have scent glands, well that was new, scent glands are where their smells are strongest, the act of mating is initiated by biting one’s scent gland and- Yoongi couldn’t believe how much he was still unaware of.

There. He spotted something on alpha scents. He clicked on the link and read through the article, hoping for an explanation he hadn’t found yet. His eyes read one line, however, that answered everything. A line that both confirmed his suspicions, and initiated his fears.

‘Alphas’ scents tend to only become obvious when they are nearing their rut.’

Yoongi swore silently.

~

Yoongi approached Jeongguk as soon as he was physically able to.

“Jeongguk, we need to talk.”

Yoongi felt a tad guilty for approaching the younger as soon as he exited the bathroom; actually, it must’ve looked a little creepy to the maknae now that he thought about it, but Yoongi did his best not to care. He wasn’t one for worrying about what others though of him, anyway.
Jeongguk was giving him a deer in headlights look that the older was quite familiar with. He often pulled the expression when he was confused, or simply absorbed in his own world, but Yoongi could tell he was making it this time because of the former. He must be puzzled by Yoongi’s sudden need to speak with him. Or, at the very least, he was seriously questioning Yoongi’s methods of talking to someone. Yoongi cleared his throat after a beat of silence.

He didn’t know what he was expecting from Jeongguk when he decided to wait outside his hotel room’s bathroom. Maybe for him to get dressed into his pyjamas inside the bathroom? Well, that certainly wasn’t the case.

Jeongguk only had a towel wrapped around his waist, and Yoongi did his best to keep his eyes off the well-toned muscles while he waited for a response. The maknae looked a little dazed, like he’d recently woken up from a nap, but Yoongi quickly realised that was to be expected. They had all just returned from a comeback performance, and if he was being honest they all returned to their beds wearily after completing one of those.

Jeongguk licked his lips. “Ah, yeah, sure thing hyung.”

He closed the bathroom door behind him, and began riffling through his suitcase for his pyjamas. If Yoongi didn’t know any better, he would say Jeongguk was attempting to delay their conversation for as long as possible. Yoongi wasn’t having any of it.

“Okay, so, you remember how just before we performed, when we were backstage and everything, I kept asking you about your cologne?”

Jeongguk turned to face Yoongi momentarily, revealing his defined abs in the process. It was harder than Yoongi would’ve liked to look away from them.

“Yeah, I remember.”

The younger’s curiosity at where Yoongi was taking this conversation was fairly obvious to him now. Yoongi would have to tell him someday how transparent he could be sometimes.

While Yoongi imagined how that talk would go, he realised he hadn’t expected to find it so difficult to express his worries to Jeongguk. Yet here he was, struggling to voice his thoughts with words that wouldn’t reveal too much.
“Well, you told me a little while ago now that you’d presented as an alpha.” The words made Jeongguk’s eyes widen. Why did he look so surprised at Yoongi mentioning the term? The older continued on regardless.

“And, I’m just wondering if your rut is coming up soon?”

Jeongguk swore to himself. In front of Yoongi. And all Yoongi could do was watch on silently as Jeongguk took a heaving breath of air before throwing his clothes onto the bed the older was sitting on. A wave of tension came over Yoongi after seeing Jeongguk’s expression of uneasiness. Had Yoongi read the younger incorrectly when he’d assumed he was just embarrassed by his biology?

Was Jeongguk actually terrified about the idea of a rut?

The maknae locked eyes with Yoongi. “What does the way I smell have anything to do with my, m-my rut?”

Yoongi interlocked his fingers and dropped his head. How could he explain this without looking... overly invested in Jeongguk’s status?

He knew the information because, well, he’d been curious about his own status. In the process of actually educating himself on something rather significant to him, he’d come across information he now knew was relevant to Jeongguk, too. And despite the maknae knowing about his own status, and the basic functions his body now had, he seemed so disconnected to the reality of his situation. Him swearing in front of his hyung only deepened Yoongi’s worries over the maknae. Just how much did Jeongguk know?

Maybe the better question to ask would be how little did he know.

“I, I’m gonna be honest with you Kook.” That was a lie. “I did a bit of research on, on alphas after you told me you were one. I felt a bit left in the dark, I guess? I wanted to know more.”

Jeongguk chose to drop his towel that very moment. Granted, he was slipping some boxers on, but the sight did nothing to aid Yoongi in continuing his explanation.
He’d seen Jeongguk naked countless times. Maybe not so often in their early days, when Yoongi could understand the younger being a bit shy around men that were all years older than him. But he could definitely say it wasn’t a rare sight anymore. They were all pressed for time as idols. They’d all changed in front of each other, shared dorms, shared showers even. It wasn’t even that unusual to see anybody naked around the dorm. Yoongi had gotten used to it, and had adjusted to the lifestyle over time.

Apparently he hadn’t adjusted well enough, as he could feel the colour rise in his cheeks as he stared at the maknae’s dick.

He knew it was large. He’d seen it many times over the years, and the sight wasn’t new to him. He’d never been embarrassed by it, either, or turned on for that matter. But Yoongi knew why he was blushing at the image, knew why he couldn’t stop staring at something he’d seen numerous times before.

He knew just what that dick was going to do very, very soon; when Jeongguk hit his inevitable rut. He’d be lying if he said he wasn’t trying to imagine what he’d read happen to Jeongguk’s dick right then and there. And it didn’t help that the image of his dick had burnt itself into his mind. That thing was going to produce a knot, Yoongi realised. It was going to harden, and pulse, and practically control Jeongguk’s mental state in a matter of days. And Yoongi was going to crave it.

That was the thought that terrified Yoongi. He knew what he was going to be like in his heat. He knew how he was going to act, and he was doing his absolute best to normalise himself with that reality. The doctor had said so herself; what he was going to go through was completely normal. He didn’t need to worry about it.

But he did.

Yoongi had kind of forgotten he was still in Jeongguk’s presence, and that he was still very openly staring at his dick. Yoongi coughed.

“So, I read up on alphas and found out that they produce a scent when they’re near their rut. And, Kookie, I’ve got to be honest with you.” Why does he keep lying? “I can still smell you now.”

Jeongguk was in the process of pulling his boxers up his sculpted thighs and— Yoongi really needed to stop looking down there. He forced his gaze to meet Jeongguk’s and found that the younger’s eyes were blown wide. Like he was in shock.
“But hyung, Yeonwoo-noona said she couldn’t smell anything.”

And, well, how was Yoongi supposed to ignore that fact? She had so outrightly said she hadn’t smelt anything, too. He couldn’t argue with something that was factual.

“Well, maybe she doesn’t have that good a sense of smell? I don’t know.”

But he did know, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to hide just how much he knew. The makeup artist was a beta, definitely. And because of her status, she wouldn’t be able to smell Jeongguk until he was a lot closer to his rut. Yoongi had read that apparently, betas had much weaker senses of smell; the ability to smell these distinct scents another instinct Yoongi guessed humanity had wanted to get rid of.

He knew he was smelling Jeongguk a lot earlier than anybody else would because of his status. It was a basic fact to Yoongi at this point. It was one of the reasons he’d been so strict with keeping up his medication, too. He didn’t want Jeongguk, an alpha, to catch onto anything. He wanted the younger to remain oblivious to his omega status, and to the functions his body could now perform. Because if he found these facts embarrassing to discuss with a doctor, it would be absolutely humiliating for anybody he knew personally to find out about his unique biology.

He just didn’t want to live with his status any more than he needed to. He wanted to ignore its very existence if he was being blatantly honest, and Yoongi realised that the sweat reducers were helping him do that in a way. But, they would only work for so long. His heat was fast approaching. And he still had to ask Jeongguk what he was going to do about his rut. He still had to come to the purpose of this conversation.

Why was it so hard for Yoongi to discuss this with Jeongguk? He shouldn’t care about what the younger was thinking, and he definitely shouldn’t care how he was going to deal with his rut. He had his own heat to be worried about already. So why was he checking up on Jeongguk? Why was he so deeply concerned over the younger’s wellbeing?

Yoongi observed Jeongguk as he pulled his boxers up to his hips. His dick was now hidden from sight, and Yoongi was slightly appalled to find that he couldn’t tell if he was happy about that or not.

“So, are you near your rut or not?”
And Yoongi knew the answer to this question, had known it the entire conversation, but he wanted an answer so that he could ask the more important question. What exactly was Jeongguk going to be doing during his rut?

Yoongi was glad he’d brought up the topic of taking a break from the dorms already with their manager. He’d used the excuse that he wanted to be in Daegu with his parents for their 30th wedding anniversary, and thankfully their manager hadn’t questioned his explanation. He didn’t know what he would’ve done if he’d said he couldn’t take the time off.

So far, his plan consisted of performing for the last time that month the day before his heat was supposed to begin. He knew that was a bit risky, but he can’t miss the performance. It was their last comeback stage, after all, and then their promotional work for the new album would be done. And he could survive one performance, right? All he had to do afterwards was go to his booked hotel room that wasn’t even that far away from their dormitories and wait his heat out. He could do that. He needed to do that.

For there was no way in hell he was going to spend his heat anywhere near Jeongguk.

Taehyung chose to enter the hotel room at that very moment, but Yoongi couldn’t allow his presence this time to interrupt their conversation. Yoongi would strangle this information out of Jeongguk if he had to, and he was getting pretty desperate for answers the longer their talk went on for.

Taehyung rose his eyebrow at the scene before him, and yes, Yoongi could see where he was coming from. Yoongi was fully clothed and watching Jeongguk rather attentively while Jeongguk was practically nude in comparison. Okay, Yoongi could definitely see why Taehyung was suspicious of him now. He didn’t exactly walk in at the best time.

Jeongguk quickly pulled on some baggy shorts and a light shirt while Taehyung moved to his own suitcase in the opposite corner of the room. He couldn’t really blame Taehyung for walking into the room, as Yoongi realised he was actually sharing the hotel room with Jeongguk, but he could blame him for stopping their conversation in its tracks. There was no way Jeongguk was going to continue talking to him with Taehyung in their presence.

It looked to Yoongi now that Taehyung was going in for a shower. He’d quickly chosen some random clothes and was walking over to the bathroom, and Jeongguk had this unreadable expression on his face that Yoongi just couldn’t decipher. Maybe it was suppressed guilt? Yoongi couldn’t tell.
Once Taehyung had closed the bathroom door, Jeongguk took this as his cue to look back at Yoongi.

“Let’s go to my room,” is what Yoongi ended up saying. He wasn’t sure if Namjoon would be in there, but at least there was a chance they could talk there without being overheard. Yoongi didn’t feel like taking his chances with Taehyung. He was far too observant for Yoongi’s liking.

So they went to Yoongi’s room, and on the way there they heard Namjoon’s voice from a room that wasn’t his own. He was talking loudly to someone, and after a few seconds they heard a comical windshield wiper laugh in response. Yoongi smiled to himself at the thought of his hyung laughing at something Namjoon said. Usually it was the other way around, so Yoongi found it a little sweet that the roles had been reversed momentarily.

When they’d entered Yoongi’s room, Jeongguk immediately sat down on Namjoon’s bed. His exhaustion from earlier had made a return, it seemed. Yoongi did his best to not feel guilty about the near interrogation he was giving Jeongguk in his tired state.

“So, your rut?” is how Yoongi broke their silence.

“Yeah, it’s coming up. I should get it in like, two week’s time.”

Finally, Yoongi could ask him what he was going to do when he his rut hit. It had taken them so long to get to this point, that Yoongi had felt like the maknae was going to fall asleep before they reached the crux of their talk.

Yoongi took his chance. “So, what are you going to do when your rut hits? Got like, a plan or something?” Because Yoongi really hoped he did.

The maknae glanced at the older. “What? No, hyung, I don’t have a-a plan. Why would I need one if I’m just going to be horny?”

Yoongi blinked. Slowly.

“Jeongguk, I’m beginning to think I know more about ruts than you do.”
“You’re probably correct. I haven’t done any research or whatever like you have. I, um, didn’t really see a need to.”

Yoongi knew he should be feeling surprised at Jeongguk’s sudden level of negligence, but he couldn’t really blame him for, well, ignoring his status altogether. Yoongi was guilty of doing the same thing, except he didn’t have the dignity to say it out loud. He admired Jeongguk in a way for being able to just, confess his thoughts to Yoongi. Even if it did take a little coaxing from the older to get him started.

“So,” Yoongi continued, “you don’t have any idea of what you’re going to do once you hit your rut?”

The short silence he was met with left him a little uneasy. Did Jeongguk really not have any idea of what he was going to?

“I-I thought I’d just lock myself in my dorm and kick the other two out, honestly. My rut isn’t that big a deal, Yoongi-hyung.”

It was at that point that Yoongi decided he needed to kick Jeongguk out of whatever world he was living in.

“Hey, Kook, I don’t think you realise just how different you’re going to be in rut. I mean, I looked it up, and you’re basically going to be a different person in the heat of the moment.”

Jeongguk actually yawned at that statement. Yoongi wanted to leap between the two beds and strangle him momentarily for not taking him seriously, but then he saw Jeongguk snuggle into his pillow and Yoongi chastised himself for wanting to do such things. The maknae was obviously tired. He probably just wanted to fall asleep where he was.

“Look, Kookie,” Yoongi began, but had to pause to admire Jeongguk’s soft smile at the nickname. “If you do that, and just kick Tae and Joon out of the dorm, I’m pretty sure they’ll figure out what you are. If you want to keep your alpha status secret, why don’t you like, I don’t know...” Yoongi pretended to ponder. “Why don’t you stay at a hotel or something to get away from the others?”

There, he had offered his solution. Jeongguk had heard his advice and would hopefully, listen to it. The last thing Yoongi wanted was for Jeongguk to have his status revealed on terms that weren’t his own, especially with Yoongi hoarding the information he did on the way alphas acted in rut. He
knew his status would be revealed the moment he went into rut in front of others. Or, at the very least, they’d figure out that something very wrong was happening to the maknae.

Jeongguk’s voice had become so quiet, Yoongi realised. “Yoongi-hyung, I’ve thought about it for a while now, and I think I’ve realised something.”

Yoongi saw how Jeongguk’s eyes were now closed. He looked so peaceful. Like he was so happy to have a moment’s rest during the chaos that is their schedule. Yoongi could sympathise with that feeling intimately.

The older did his best to match Jeongguk’s volume. “Yeah? What is it?”

Jeongguk let out a little sigh of absolute bliss. “I don’t think I care if other people know about my second gender.”

Yoongi wondered for well over a minute if he’d heard that correctly. Jeongguk, not caring about what other people thought? And Yoongi actually caring about what others would think of him if they found out about his omega status?

What had happened to the two of them? Had they switched personas or something?

“Wait, Ko-” but Yoongi never finished his sentence. He’d simply taken one look at Jeongguk’s relaxed expression, and immediately he’d understood. Jeongguk was on the verge of falling asleep, if he hadn’t done so already. He looked so positively tranquil in this state, and Yoongi couldn’t help the small smile that arose at the sight. Yeah, Jeongguk could just be too much for him sometimes.

Namjoon entered the room a few minutes later, but thankfully Yoongi hadn’t had to say anything for him to get the message. He exited the room moments later, and switched the light off in the process. Yoongi sent him a silent note of thanks before resting his own head on a pillow. He admired Jeongguk’s composure one last time before he closed his eyes and welcomed the beckoning darkness.

He’d been on stage exactly two weeks later when he’d felt something wet in between his legs.

Chapter End Notes
Okay, two things.

1. BTS’s acceptance speech at MAMA 2018 was so heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time (and I don’t think I’ll ever get over it) and
2. Today is Jonghyun’s 1 year anniversary, so I hope we can all help each other out today. If you need to talk to someone, too, I can listen  #YouDidWellJonghyun
It’s true baby

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Yoongi had known he was going to experience pre-heat symptoms. He’d anticipated it, even. Cramps, excessive sweating, a sex drive that would rival many animal’s; he was a still a bit disgusted by the idea of a heat, if he was being honest.

But, he’d just have to deal with it. There was no other option available to him. He was going to go through a heat, and that heat would be followed by many others, and Yoongi realised this all with a grimace. How had he been so absorbed with his immediate future to neglect worrying about the rest of his life?

Not that those thoughts mattered in the present moment, anyway. He’d realised just a few hours ago that the drugs he’d been taking had done their job for as long as they possibly could. He hadn’t expected them to work as long as they had, anyway. He had been using the medication to treat something it wasn’t meant to treat. Actually, Yoongi had been pretty lucky that the pills had erased his scent for as long as they did.

The moment Yoongi realised they’d stopped working was the moment Yoongi got his first look at the alpha within Jeongguk. And it was jarring, to say the least.

They’d been doing a sound check on stage in preparation for their performance later on. Yoongi, as well as the others, had quickly gone through a rehearsal of the choreography while testing their microphones, and to say it was tiring would be an understatement. Their rehearsals felt like concerts in themselves sometimes, and despite the fact that Yoongi knew why he was sweating a little excessively, he couldn’t help but question if the amount of perspiration he was producing was actually normal. It didn’t feel like it.

It didn’t help that Jeongguk was in a similar state to him.

“Hey hyung, can I please have some of your water?”

Jeongguk was standing before Yoongi with this look of utter exhaustion on his face. And Yoongi knew he never looked like this during a rehearsal. He must be going through his pre-rut symptoms at the same time Yoongi was going through his pre-heat’s. He didn’t dare say that out loud, though. He had his identity to uphold.
Yoongi handed him the bottle, the smell of lavender wafting through the air around him. “Yeah, go ahead.”

The water barely passed Jeongguk’s lips. There was at least half a litre left in that bottle when Yoongi had handed it over to Jeongguk, but he’d downed all of its contents in less than ten seconds. Yoongi knew that they would be feeling dehydrated, as it was just another symptom, but he didn’t expect the maknae to be this affected by his rut already.

Just how long exactly did Jeongguk have until his rut hit?

A chilling thought hit him that he didn’t know. It could hit the youngest any time in the next twenty four hours, alongside Yoongi’s own heat. And they still had to perform that night. In front of a good thousand people. With another few million watching online.

Yoongi swallowed.

Jeongguk eyed the empty water bottle in his hand before handing it back to Yoongi. “Ah, sorry hyung... I didn’t mean to drink all of it.”

Yoongi shook his head. “It’s not your fault, Kook. You’ve got your rut tomorrow, yeah?” Yoongi tried not to let on how amused he was at the maknae’s blush. “Well, that’s probably why you’re so thirsty.”

Jeongguk blinked quickly, as if he was doing his best to process the information. Yoongi sighed. “You really don’t know that much about ruts, do you?”

“I-I, yes I do!” was the response Yoongi got. Jeongguk really was a terrible liar.

“Just take it easy tonight. Okay Kookie?”

It had been a long time since Yoongi had seen the younger so... nervous. He was fidgeting with the sleeves of his shirt, and he wouldn’t stop rocking on his heels to the rhythm of a background beat. Jeongguk’s nerves were so atypical of him, that Yoongi couldn’t quite wrap his head around the image before him.
Jeongguk had been surprisingly easygoing in his discussions with Yoongi about his upcoming rut. Yoongi had, for the most part, assumed the younger was just going to take the next couple days in his stride. That was the way he dealt with things, usually. He was one for confrontation. He confronted his issues with a steel face and dealt with any problems that developed as they arose. He wasn’t one for hiding from his difficulties.

He wasn’t like Yoongi.

Jeongguk gave Yoongi this smile, this bunny like smile of appreciation, that had Yoongi nearly drop his water bottle. Why was the younger looking at him that way?

“Yeah, okay hyung. I, um, like the cologne you’ve got on, by the way.”

The maknae looked like he was about to dash as soon as he gave the compliment, but Yoongi wasn’t having any of that. This was the first indication he’d received of his medication not working. His heat must be so close now, if Jeongguk could smell his omega scent.

And it wouldn’t hurt Yoongi to know what he smelt like, right? He was allowed to be intrigued.

“Thanks Kookie. Can you, by any chance, guess what I’ve got on?”

It was such a forward question; maybe a little too forward. But Yoongi couldn’t find the energy in him to care about his wording. He wanted to know, and he couldn’t be bothered to tip-toe around the subject until an ideal time arose to breach the topic. He wanted an answer as soon as possible, because, well, he wanted his curiosity to be sated.

Jeongguk did his best to subtly sniff the air, but he looked a little too similar to a bunny with his scrunched up nose for Yoongi not to crack a smile. Jeongguk didn’t seem to notice the reaction.

“Is it like, mint? It smells like mint,” Jeongguk answered with his hands by his sides. “It smells good, hyung.”

Yoongi scratched his neck as Jeongguk seemed to zero in on the area. The younger sniffed the air a little less subtly this time, and in the process he began leaning forward. He even took a step
towards Yoongi, but the older took two steps back to put more distance between them. Jeongguk
still hadn’t opened his eyes.

“You smell so good, hyung.”

That was the tipping point for Yoongi. He was fine with blaming Jeongguk’s physical reactions on
his biology, but Yoongi was pretty sure he was still in control of what he said.

“Jeongguk, what are you doing?”

He knew he was being a little harsh on him, since he knew exactly why he was acting the way he
was, but he couldn’t not point out these actions. Jeongguk needed to know that this kind of
behaviour would not be tolerated by Yoongi for the rest of the day. Not only would it, well, look
very odd to onlookers to see Jeongguk constantly smelling Yoongi, but it would be particularly eye
catching if the maknae began complimenting the older for his scent in front of others. He couldn’t
afford Jeongguk, an alpha, to not rein in his instincts for at least another couple of hours.

Because Yoongi was an omega, the older admitted to himself mentally. And omegas react to
alphas, just as alphas react to omegas.

Yoongi made a point of ignoring Taehyung’s eyes as he looked at the scene before him fleetingly.
He had already moved his gaze elsewhere by the time Yoongi could really question it.

Yoongi hadn’t initially noticed it, but he could definitely smell it now. Jeongguk’s lavender scent
had, without a doubt, increased in intensity. It was impossible to disguise it as a simple cologne
anymore, it was so strong. What made matters worse was that Yoongi was pretty definite that
Jeongguk didn’t have an excuse for his oddly potent smell if somebody asked him about it.

Now that he thought about it, Yoongi didn’t think Jeongguk had bothered to put together any sort
of plan for his quickly approaching rut.

Well, Yoongi could at least find solace in the fact that Jeongguk no longer seemed to really care
about others finding out about his status. Because from where Yoongi was standing, it was almost
a certainty that at least the other members of Bangtan would find out about his status over the
coming days.
Yoongi had managed to lose himself to his own thoughts, so he failed to notice the confused expression on Jeongguk’s face as he observed the older with wide eyes.

“I-I’m sorry, hyung. I don’t know what, um, came over me for a second.”

Wait. Had Jeongguk’s scent just lessened in intensity? Because Yoongi could swear it had. He no longer felt like his mind was swimming with the intoxicating scent.

Not that swimming in it had been a bad experience. Quite the opposite, if Yoongi was being honest with himself. He had quietly been drawing the calming scent in and out, over and over again, and somehow he had been able to feel the exact moment the scent had changed to hint at a slither of arousal. No matter how small that slither had been, Yoongi had been able to detect it. Yoongi assumed some aspect of his omega biology must have chosen to act in that moment, and at the time Yoongi hadn’t minded the fact that this hidden part of him had chosen to reveal itself for a second without him noticing.

It hadn’t exactly done anything wrong by him. If anything, it had helped him identify just what Jeongguk had been feeling without him ever having to explicitly ask. It had been kind of reassuring to Yoongi, actually, that he’d been able to sense what the alpha had been feeling for a second. Some part of him he still hadn’t acquainted himself with had preened at the information that the alpha was enjoying the scent he was putting out, and in response all Yoongi could do was smile stupidly. He was happy. He was doing a good job.

And then, whatever it was within Yoongi that had so discreetly emerged, vanished. Yoongi took in a shaky breath, but otherwise didn’t alert Jeongguk to anything that had just happened. Because he couldn’t tell him. He couldn’t tell anyone about any of this.

He’d known all along that eventually, his omega side would take over. That it would dig its fingers into his mind and for the most part drive his actions for the course of a few days, but he hadn’t expected his omega side to feel anything like that had.

He hadn’t even noticed its presence.

“Yoongi-hyung? Are you alright?”

Yoongi blinked once, very slowly, to regain his composure. Was what he just experienced something Jeongguk had already felt? Because, if any deity above could hear Yoongi, he wanted
them to know that he never wished to experience that partial loss of control ever again.

He hadn’t even been in control of his thoughts. The one thing Yoongi had thought he would keep possession over.

Yoongi realised a moment too late that he’d spent longer than he should’ve responding to a simple question. The older knew the cause of this delay, though. The question in itself was too complex for Yoongi to answer immediately.

Was he alright?

“Yeah, I’m fine Kookie.” He threw the nickname in there with the hopes of it dissolving any worries the younger had over him. He was supposed to be worried about himself, damnit. Yoongi needed Jeongguk to worry about himself, and himself only.

Jeongguk’s eyes narrowed, but Yoongi held the stare without remorse. He tried not to care about how cold he might be appearing to Jeongguk. He’d already expressed his concerns over the younger; he didn’t need Jeongguk worrying over him in return.

The younger visibly bit his lip. “If you say so, Yoongi-hyung.”

And that was the end of their conversation. Jeongguk’s alpha side must’ve decided to continue hiding beneath the surface after that brief interaction. Maybe that was why Jeongguk still looked a little more composed than Yoongi. The older knew he appeared a little pathetic to any outsiders, with sweat soaking through his clothes and a dangerously obvious mint smell, apparently, surrounding him as he stood off to the side of the stage.

He could only hope that their performance later that night wouldn’t give Yoongi any more problems. He didn’t want any more issues. He just wanted to get through the comeback stage and head over to his hotel room before his heat really hit him. Because he was not going to stay anywhere near Jeongguk in his heat. He couldn’t trust him. He couldn’t trust an alpha.

It was all rather ironic to Yoongi, though. The moment Jeongguk had first revealed the alpha within him, Yoongi’s omega had decided to do the same. Then, as soon as the alpha had receded to the depths of Jeongguk’s mind, Yoongi’s omega had disappeared, too. A terrifying thought struck Yoongi at this realisation, despite his knowledge of it being inevitable.
He was so, so close to his heat now. And all he wanted to do was lock himself in his hotel room and never resurface.

~

Yoongi had been experiencing dull cramps all day, and for the most part he’d simply endured them. They were nothing like the ones he’d had at his presentation, and for that Yoongi was grateful. He never wanted to feel pain like that again. The cramps had been manageable for the majority of the day, and Yoongi would’ve patted himself on the back for keeping his condition hidden for so long if he’d been able to hold out a little longer.

Ten minutes before BTS were expected to walk out on stage, Yoongi groaned at a particularly sharp cramp in his stomach. He knew this was normal, and that he would just have to deal with them for the time being. But when another three cramps of similar intensity hit him in the span of a minute, Yoongi found himself quietly requesting one of his stylist noona’s to bring him a packet of pain killers. There was no way he was going to be able to get through this performance if he kept clutching at his stomach every few seconds.

Yoongi saw Hoseok approach him from the corner of his eye, and Yoongi pretended to be scrolling through his phone in an effort to put the dancer off of talking with him. Apparently, this did nothing to deter the younger. Well, did Yoongi actually expect it to do anything to Hoseok? He was known for being friendly and outgoing, and these traits weren’t just put on for the sake of a camera.

“Hey, Yoongi-hyung!” the dancer greeted happily. He never looked stressed to Yoongi before a performance. If anything, Yoongi would say Hoseok lived off the adrenaline a live show gave him. He assumed it was a perk of Hoseok genuinely enjoying what he did for a living, and he couldn’t really fault him for that. Yoongi may not technically call himself a dancer, but he could at least relate to the adrenaline rush Hoseok received whenever he himself served an audience a plate of his rapping ability.

Yoongi didn’t move his eyes from his phone’s screen. “Hi Hoseok.”

“Ack, what’s got you ignoring me, hyung? Was it something I did?” Hoseok said with a wide grin that displayed all his teeth for Yoongi to see. He didn’t look at them for long.

Hoseok released a breath of hair. “Hyung, what’s up? You’re not mocking everyone nearly as often as you usually do. Especially before a show.” Yoongi eyes don’t leave the screen, but he does turn the phone off at the words. He can’t bring himself to meet the dancer’s gaze.
“Not much, really.” Except for the life changing biological process he’s about to go through in a matter of hours, with the opposite secondary gender he’s supposed to be attracted to currently standing not even ten metres away from him. “Why do you ask?”

Hoseok nods, and Yoongi scratches his arm to feign nonchalance. He can’t have another person worrying about him before he even does anything worth worrying about. He didn’t think he’d even done anything worth drawing Hoseok’s attention to him. Then again, there was always the possibility that the younger had simply wanted to talk to Yoongi. He was a bit of a social butterfly, Yoongi had discovered over the years.

“Ah, am I not allowed to ask how you are?” Hoseok laughs at his own words. “You’re too serious sometimes, hyung. Loosen up a little.”

Yoongi hated, absolutely hated the fact that a cramp then decided to rip through his abdomen at that very moment, and he knew he didn’t have the pain threshold to avoid reacting to it.

“Hey, hyung. Hyung. What’s wrong? What’s happening?”

He screwed his eyes shut, and of course it was just his luck that the stylist he’d asked earlier to get some painkillers called out his name that very second.

Yoongi opened his eyes and shook his head vigorously, trying to ignore the way the room swayed slightly at the action. He had to hold out for another few hours. Just a few more. He could do that, he knew he could do that.

There was no waver in his voice when he spoke. “Nothing, Hobi.” He silently thanked the noona as she slipped a pill packet into his hand. “I just overdid it in rehearsal.”

He popped two painkillers out of the packet and shoved the rest into his jean’s back pocket. He assumed it wouldn’t be a bad thing to store them for later use. For if the jabs in his stomach were eliciting a reaction out of him now, what were they going to be like in a few hours time?

He didn’t want to think about that. At all.
Hoseok’s smile took a dive. “Are you alright to perform, Yoongi-hyung? I mean, from where I am, you don’t look too good...”

And there Hoseok was with his sometimes brutal honesty. Usually, Yoongi admired the dancer for being able to convey his thoughts and feelings so clearly and precisely, but on this occasion Yoongi just wanted him to take the question back. Of course he was able to perform. There was literally nothing holding him back, and if he used the excuse of a few pesky cramps to get off stage, then what kind of lowly person was he? He knew people had to endure much worse things than he did on a daily basis, and for a fleeting second Yoongi compared his cramps to the ones women received once a month with a sick feeling in his stomach. Is this what they felt? Is this what they had to deal with silently, with the fear of being judged for their reactions to something so mundane, something so common yet seemingly taboo?

Yoongi assumed this is what gaining another perspective felt like.

He scratched his eyebrow casually. “Yeah, I’ll be fine. We’re only doing two songs anyway.”

Yoongi smiled at the dancer, and somehow he received the sun’s rays in return. How could Hoseok always be so genuine with them all? Yoongi seriously questioned the younger’s strength of character at times like these, where he could come out smiling like that at someone he’d just discussed something fairly serious with. It amazed Yoongi how cheerful Hoseok could be on almost a constant basis. He was a bit envious of it, actually.

Hoseok’s smile hadn’t differed. “Okay, I believe you. But hyung, try not to overexert yourself next time we practise.”

He left with a cheeky as all hell smirk on his face, and Yoongi scoffed despite the lingering pain. How could Hoseok be so lighthearted and deadly serious at the same time? His duality drove Yoongi a little insane sometimes.

“Okay, BTS is on in five minutes! Let’s get moving, people!”

Yoongi sighed aloud before dumping his phone in his shoulder bag for later use. He had to get into position now in order for their performance to flow smoothly. He saw the other members pack up their belongings from the corner of his eye, and Yoongi frantically zipped his bag up as he rushed to stand with the others. They all then made their way down a long, glaringly white hallway that was on the verge of giving Yoongi a headache before arriving at their final destination.
Everything was dark. Yoongi could barely make out Namjoon’s face a metre away from him, and he strained to hear the leader’s words as chanting drowned out every other sensation. He could even ignore Jeongguk’s freakishly strong lavender scent for a second.

“How’s everyone feeling?” Namjoon asked the group, their heads huddled in together in an effort to hear the leader over the barrage of other sounds. He looked each member in the eye before continuing, but Yoongi could’ve sworn Namjoon had practically examined him. He didn’t need to be a genius to know that the leader was, at the very least, suspicious of his behaviour. And he really didn’t need another person to be questioning him. It was bad enough that Taehyung had been suspicious from the beginning, but now Jeongguk was worrying over him, Hoseok was wondering about him and Namjoon was analysing him.

Why the hell was he so bad at keeping things to himself?

A chorus of hardly heard hums reverberated through the group, Yoongi’s among them. Namjoon then nodded, like he was satisfied with the response.

“I know we’re all a little tired,” Yoongi barked a laugh, “some more than others.” And Yoongi heard multiple chuckles at that. “But it’s our last comeback show for this album. And we’ve worked hard on this album, and the choreographies, and the performances. We’ve done well.”

A few nods came from the group, and Yoongi watched with a faint smile as Namjoon held his hand out to the middle of the group.

“So, let’s finish this off as well as we’ve started it. Let’s give these people a great show, and let’s give them memories they’re going to cherish.”

Namjoon smiled gently at the rest of them, dimples and all, and Yoongi smiled back. Namjoon really was an excellent leader to the rest of them. Yoongi knew he could never take the initiative the way he did, and for that, he appreciated his presence so dearly. He wasn’t quite sure if he’d even still be in Bangtan if Namjoon wasn’t still by his side. He was such a vital, yet unspoken part of the team. It was like he was the glue that held them all together, and as cheesy as it sounded, Yoongi agreed with that metaphor. He really did keep them all together, even in their hardest moments. Yoongi knew some part of himself would always be grateful for the younger’s sense of initiative.

Yoongi put his hand on top of Namjoon’s fist first, and he did his absolute best to smile genuinely at the younger despite the pang of pain that had just ripped through his stomach. He needed to smile, keep smiling, don’t react, keep looking at Namjoon...
His usually composed expression tore at the sensation of another knife slicing through his organs. He could easily feel the dampness of his armpits and thighs as he moved closer to the centre of the circle. When his shoulders pressed against Jimin’s and Seokjin’s, he could also feel just how wet his upper arms were, too. Surely, he had more time before his heat hit than the amount of sweat he was producing indicated? He still had a few more hours.

Seven hands rose to meet the sky, and Yoongi sniffed at the smell of lavender before he could contain himself. He knew where the smell was coming from, already. If he could stop reacting to its presence, that would be lovely.

Yoongi distantly heard their music start in the background. Yoongi walked to his mark in the middle of the floor backstage before taking a deep breath in. He could manage this. A little rise in temperature, some cramps and a bit of sweat never stopped him performing before now, so why should he let it hold him back now?

The breath left him. The overhead lights dimmed, and Yoongi could see the wall in front of him shifting slightly to form his entrance. He looked at his feet as he tried to centre himself, and with one last, deep breath he wrangled his act together.

He burst through the panels that were opening before him, and immediately all of his initial fears were killed with hope as the spotlight shone on him, and him only. This was his moment, his life, and his omega status was not going to take this away from him.

He wasn’t going to let it dictate how he acted, either, until he felt a dreaded substance drip between his legs to the clothing of his pants.

Oh, *fuck him.*

He began to rap, somehow managing to successfully keep his rhythm and timing despite the horrific distraction. It was almost impossible to not look down there. What if there was a wet patch there? What if everyone could clearly see everything that was happening to him? Fuck, what if Jeongguk could see?

What the hell would he think?

He frantically ran over to the others as they got into their positions for the upcoming dance break.
His mind blanked completely when the scent of lavender filled his nostrils, but his body managed to go on autopilot and complete the choreography without too much difficulty. So what if he seemed a little less than enthusiastic to the audience? He just needed to get through these two songs, and then he would be out of there. He would be away from that awfully gorgeous lavender scent, and he would be able to deal with his own disgusting problems in the privacy of his own room before he knew it. He just needed to hold on, damnit.

That was seeming more and more impossible, though. He could feel the wet substance, slick he remembered with disturbing lucidity, gathering in his briefs. It was so warm, and so uncomfortable to feel as he tried to put some energy into his stage presence. He was trying to entertain these people, not freak them out. He didn’t want them to start questioning his wellbeing. Because as soon as they did, the other members and staff would too. And he couldn’t afford any more questions, any more worries.

Yoongi pulled the bottom of his shirt away from his stomach and shook it forcefully in an effort to deal with his abnormally high temperature. Hopefully the audience would assume he was just trying to cool down after an energetic dance break. He didn’t know what he’d do with himself if the action looked like something that warranted other’s concerns.

His second verse for the song was coming up, but Yoongi couldn’t contain the groan that escaped him when another pain slashed through his abdomen. He missed his cue for the verse ever so slightly, and oh, fuck. Seokjin was glaring at him with eyes that screamed concern. Seokjin had noticed. Seokjin had fucking noticed.

Yoongi’s voice was noticeably more gravelly when he began his next verse. He closed his eyes for half of the rap, praying that this wasn’t actually happening, that he wasn’t about to go into heat in front of thousands of people on stage. He’d opened his eyes to another cramp seizing up his internal organs, and it had taken so much self restraint to not so much as blink at the pain. The cameras always focused on whoever was singing or rapping at the time, and Yoongi knew that he had everyone’s eyes on him.

It was at that point that Yoongi noticed his omega scent for the first time. It had tremendously spiked in intensity in only a few seconds, and Yoongi really didn’t want to admit that he knew why it had. He knew it was because he was distressed, and that when omegas were distressed during their heat their scent’s intensity increased to match their mood. But he didn’t want to acknowledge that fact. It would just make everything happening to him that little bit more real.

He finished his verse with the urge to cry. He still had another song to perform after this. He wasn’t finished yet. Why wasn’t he finished yet?

He drew in gaping breaths of air, his chest becoming tighter and tighter with every second that
passed. No, he couldn’t have a panic attack on stage. He’d never had a panic attack on stage. Min Yoongi didn’t panic on stage.

Seokjin was looking at him again, but he wasn’t alone this time. Hoseok was also glancing his direction, as if he was trying to tell him something without specifically saying it into the microphone for everyone to hear. Then, Yoongi saw the rest of them in their positions for the second dance break, and Yoongi could’ve curled into a ball right then and there for being so stupid and forgetful.

Again, he ran over to the group. Lavender assaulted his senses, but he consumed the scent desperately. It was doing wonders for his stress. The moment the smell came in contact with his being, he had been able to draw in a proper breath and complete the rest of the choreography without a second thought. That smell... Yoongi shut his eyes to fully appreciate the calming nature of it. It was grounding him.

Someone hit his shoulder, and Yoongi irritatedly opened his eyes to change position. Why couldn’t he stay there for a little longer?

The smell disappeared completely, and Yoongi realised that was because Jeongguk was now standing at the opposite end of the stage to Yoongi. He was jumping up and down while harmonising with the other vocalists, and all Yoongi could do was stare. How the hell was Jeongguk so unaffected? And why the hell had nobody else caught onto Jeongguk’s rut? Why was Yoongi the only one being questioned?

He didn’t think he was that obvious with his condition.

The first song’s melody finished, and Yoongi dropped his head. One more song. He was so close to getting out of the public’s eye. Just one more song.

Yoongi walked over to stand by Namjoon’s side, and thankfully the leader wasn’t examining his every move anymore. He was looking out at the sea of faces before him with a grin in his eyes. Yoongi’s eyes followed the path Namjoon’s did, and then the reason he’d decided to go ahead with the performance resurfaced after being buried by so many doubts.

These people were grateful for him, and the rest of Bangtan. They were supportive, and caring, and rocking up to fill concert halls and stadiums was their way of demonstrating their boundless love. So he’d be damned if he didn’t show his love and appreciation for them in return; even if he was significantly lagging the energy to do so.
The second song went by relatively smoothly. As there was no choreography to go with it, the members had the simple task in comparison to sing and rap their hearts out while they toured the stage in front of their fans. Yoongi took this song as his cue to put as much distance as possible between him and Jeongguk, whose scent was now beginning to tickle Yoongi from halfway across the stage. Surely it wasn’t meant to be this strong before his rut. If it was this intoxicating before his rut even officially started, and Yoongi was struggling to control his reactions to it now, then what the hell was the alpha going to be like during his rut?

The song finished rather uneventfully. Yoongi stood on stage, dumbfounded for a moment, before realising he needed to join the others at the centre of the stage. He reached their position after a few exhausting steps, and before he knew it the platform was sinking to the underground network of hallways they’d use to get back to their dress room.

A staff member told them that their microphones had just been turned off, and Seokjin wasted no time in focusing his full attention on Yoongi then.

“Yoongi, what happened back there?”

There was no malice in his tone, but maybe that was what made his concern so stressful for Yoongi. His hyung only wanted what was best for him, yet he had no idea just how much Yoongi and Jeongguk were dealing with.

Yoongi cast a quick look at Jeongguk. He still seemed completely unaffected by his upcoming rut. Other than his constant, overpowering scent and his earlier thirst levels, to Yoongi he looked like he wasn’t really suffering from anything at all.

Was that because Jeongguk legitimately wasn’t suffering, though, or was that because he refused to let any of his pain or discomfort surface? Yoongi desperately hoped it was the former. He couldn’t image the maknae being in as much pain as Yoongi was without showing it in some form or another.

Yoongi tapped his foot against the lowering floor, the increasing wetness in his pants physically impossible to ignore. He needed to get out of here. He was going to be displaying a wet patch over his jeans any second now, he knew it.

“I’m just tired, hyung.”
Yoongi pretended he didn’t see Jeongguk’s hands turn to fists. Hoseok beside him shifted, causing Yoongi to change his focus so that he could look the dancer in the eye.

“I-I really don’t want to be digging into your personal life, hyung, but I know when someone’s struggling from a lack of sleep. And that wasn’t what I was seeing just then. You-” Hoseok sighed. “You looked like you were in pain, Yoongi-hyung.”

Jeongguk’s fists were shaking now. Yoongi couldn’t tear his eyes from them, despite his urge to look the younger in the eye. Was he in pain?

“Yeah, well, I already told you I overdid it in rehearsal.”

Yoongi needed that to be the end of their conversation. He couldn’t afford for anyone else to question him. He just needed to get away from everyone. He needed to get away from Jeongguk, already.

He had to get away from that goddamn alpha scent before it destroyed every last strand of his own self restraint.

Yoongi finally looked the maknae in the eye, expecting to see flashes of pain or discomfort. But oh, no. What he actually saw was so much worse.

There was a hunger in Jeongguk’s eyes that Yoongi had never imagined seeing in the younger. It wasn’t a look Jeongguk would ever give him, or anyone for that matter, and Yoongi’s stomach churned with terror at the realisation.

The alpha leaped at Yoongi before he could even react.

Chapter End Notes

Hey guys! So, first things first, merry Christmas! I hope you all have happy holidays

Secondly, I’m hoping to update this fic one last time before the end of the year, but I’m not definite that’s going to happen because a lot of celebratory shiz is going on in
the meantime. I will do my best to get the next chapter up asap though!
Yoongi knew the omega side of him was a goner the moment Jeongguk’s nose made contact with his neck. He’d only seen the term ‘scent gland’ in passing; he’d never really looked too much into it, as most of the information had regarded how alphas and omegas treated their scent glands during moments of intimacy. Yoongi had seen it all as information he didn’t need. He wasn’t going to be getting intimate with any alphas in the future, he’d thought. And he certainly hadn’t planed on, well, getting intimate with Jeongguk anytime soon.

Yoongi hated the fact that the universe didn’t care for his thoughts.

Jeongguk was pressing his face deep into the crook of Yoongi’s neck, and his breaths were getting increasingly harsher the longer he stayed there. Faintly, Yoongi could register shouts from the other members. They sounded so distant in comparison to the alpha’s rugged breaths against his skin. And yet, as much as he wanted to respond to their frantic words, he couldn’t. His mouth refused to open to speak.

He wanted to scream at Jeongguk. He wanted the alpha away from him, and he wanted the omega side of him that was relishing in the alpha’s actions to vanish. He didn’t want this, any of this. He wanted Jeongguk to come to his senses already, to realise that what he was to Yoongi doing wasn’t okay. He needed the other to come to his senses; for if Yoongi’s omega had any say over how he reacted to the alpha’s touches, he wasn’t ever going to start denying Jeongguk’s advances.

Hands grabbed frantically at Yoongi’s body, but the omega didn’t so much as acknowledge them. He was experiencing too many sensations to really notice the chaos erupting around him. Jeongguk’s scent was encapsulating, and the nose that was digging into the junction of his neck and shoulder made his legs wobble and the slick between his legs all that more noticeable. There was too much happening at once. He could only focus on the alpha attached to his body, and the irresistible scent that came with him.

Someone was yelling into Yoongi’s ear. He groaned at the pain he could feel developing there, but quickly the groan turned into a sigh when he felt a pair of lips brush against the base of his neck. He felt, more than visibly noticed, the alpha’s increased aggression at the hands that tried to pry their bodies away, and it wasn’t long after that Yoongi heard something like a growl come from the alpha. Yoongi tilted his neck ever so slightly at the sound, and then closed his eyes when the instinct to do so arose. It felt right to do this, he thought. Having Jeongguk’s lips against his scent gland felt right.

The moment was brutally torn from Yoongi seconds later. The omega gasped at the immediate sense of solitude he felt away from the alpha’s body, and Yoongi could not mistake the anger in
Jeongguk’s growls as he, too, was separated from Yoongi’s presence. The omega clawed and whimpered against the hands that held him away from the alpha, because Jeongguk wasn’t going to hurt him. Jeongguk would never hurt him. So why were the others keeping him away from Yoongi like they were afraid of what he was going to do to the omega? Didn’t they know the alpha was only trying to help him?

“Yoongi, come on! Stop it!”

The words barely registered in the omega’s mind. The alpha was being escorted, or rather dragged away from Yoongi, and the omega just couldn’t understand why they were taking the only person that could help him away. Didn’t they realise he was in pain whenever the alpha wasn’t by his side?

“Yoongi-hyung, please stop! You’re hurting us!”

Yoongi recognised that voice. He dared to take his eyes off Jeongguk to see who it was that had spoken to him, and when his gaze met the speaker’s he... paused.

“Jimin?”

There was terror written on the dancer’s face. He was holding onto the omega’s wrist with an iron grip, but that did nothing to hide the fact that his fingers were trembling. There was blood on the younger’s hands, too. Wait. Blood?

He stared at the scratches and small cuts on Jimin’s arms.

“I-I, what?”

Jimin visibly swallowed. He diverted his eyes from Yoongi’s shortly afterward, leaving Yoongi with a fairly good idea of just how those wounds were inflicted. The omega turned his eyes back to Jeongguk, who was nearing the end of the corridor he was being escorted down. He’d stopped struggling so desperately against their hold, and Yoongi could tell from the alpha’s wide eyes that he didn’t understand anything that had just happened.

Well, really, what could Yoongi expect?
It was normal for Jeongguk to be as confused by his own reaction as he was. For he wasn’t even aware of the way he would act in a rut in the first place, let alone how he would react to those around him.

But then again, Jeongguk had never been aware of the fact that Yoongi was an omega, either. And that was pretty detrimental information to their situation.

Jimin’s hold on him loosened, but Yoongi realised shortly afterward that his grip wasn’t the only one on him. There were many hands holding him captive, including a few staff members Yoongi barely knew.

The omega’s breaths quickened. “I’m so sorry, fucking hell, I’m so fucking sorry.”

A few hands left him at the apology, but some still held on. Yoongi couldn’t blame them for choosing to do so. He wouldn’t trust himself with his own actions, either. Not after how rabidly he’d acted when he and Jeongguk had been pried apart from each other’s arms.

The ghost of Jeongguk’s lavender scent haunted the set. With sudden clarity, Yoongi remembered the fact that thousands of fans were standing right above him, and that he’d managed to fully lose himself to Jeongguk’s smell such a short distance away from them. He’d been metres away from a scandal, for sure.

Yoongi dared to look at the people around him. He first spotted Jimin again, but the younger was doing an exceptional job of avoiding his gaze at all costs. He was glaring at the floor with hard eyes, and Yoongi took this as his cue to focus on someone else. It was obvious the dancer didn’t want his attention.

Seokjin’s eyes, however, were unmoving. They were locked on him firmly, and Yoongi felt the unusual urge to cower under the harsh gaze. It was clear to Yoongi that his hyung was beyond confused, and the flat line of his lips only further convinced him of this fact. But Yoongi also detected an undertone of concern written in the crease of his forehead. Huh. Seokjin wasn’t even trying to mask his emotions, apparently.

All of the hands on him finally released their grips, and a sense of shame abruptly overcame Yoongi at the realisation that multiple people had to hold him back in order to keep him and Jeongguk separated.
The whole situation was beyond humiliating. It’s exactly what Yoongi wanted to avoid going through, especially in front of so many other people, but in a twisted way Yoongi was glad he’d been around others when he’d been pounced. The pain in his stomach amplified at both the loss of his alpha, and the prospect of what could’ve happened between Yoongi and Jeongguk if nobody else had been around.

The worst part of that entire situation though, was the indisputable fact that Yoongi never would have left the alpha’s side. Any of his opposing thoughts and fears were disregarded by his body’s actions, as the omega in him never would’ve allowed him to escape the desperate clutches of an alpha. An alpha he knew, and should trust, Yoongi thought bitterly. The latter should be true. He knew Jeongguk, and he knew him well. He would never do anything to him, ever.

So why couldn’t he erase this stupid fear of his that Jeongguk was going to harm him?

Yoongi hated all of this. He hated the curious eyes of the staff, and the concerned gazes of the other members, but most of all, he despised the feral hunger that had been in Jeongguk’s eyes. Why the hell was Jeongguk capable of giving him that look? It wasn’t like his upcoming heat had been enough to worry about, no, because now he had to talk to Jeongguk about whatever the hell that entire encounter was. Because of course, Yoongi had kept the others oblivious to his status.

He was beginning to seriously regret that decision.

Was his identity that precious to him? Of course he didn’t want to be defined by his status, but would the others really do that to him? And would Jeongguk really treat him any differently because of his omega status? The maknae would probably understand better than anyone else how Yoongi didn’t want to be treated any differently from before he’d found out about his status. Jeongguk was in a very similar boat, after all. He’d hid his secondary gender from everyone other than Yoongi, too.

A hand gently pressed against his shoulder, like whoever it was touching him was afraid of damaging him. It nearly made Yoongi scoff. He didn’t want to be treated like glass. He didn’t want to be treated any differently than before.

Yoongi’s eyes followed the hand on his shoulder to the person it was connected to, and Yoongi hardened his own gaze when Taehyung’s eyes met his.

The younger’s stare wasn’t as menacing as he thought it’d be. Instead, Yoongi could see the gentle
droop to his eyebrows, and the slight tilt to his head. He looked like he was subtly examining the omega. Yoongi in turn pretended to scrutinise Taehyung’s actions; he didn’t want to be the only one feeling uncomfortable. It wasn’t fair for everyone to stare at him without him being able to return the favour, too.

Taehyung’s eyes then widened, ever so slightly. His lips tightened seconds later, and finally, he straightened his posture.

The hairs on the back of Yoongi’s neck stood on end.

“We need to get out of here,” Taehyung said as he beckoned the others to follow him. There was an aura about him, Yoongi decided, that more than suggested to the others that they should question his decision later. It radiated confidence in his course of action. It was like Taehyung was on top of the situation, despite his severe lack of information.

Yoongi tried to ignore how soaked the front of his pants were. There was no way he was going into heat in front of so many people; there was no way he’d just hideously wet his pants in front of everyone. This couldn’t be happening. None of this could be happening. He had an arrangement and everything to avoid this exact kind of situation.

Yoongi had never despised Jeongguk more than in that moment for destroying what little control he had over the situation in the first place.

But, there was still a chance he could make it to the hotel. If he blamed Jeongguk solely for the... situation, earlier, then maybe the others would believe him? He’d relied on his tongue to get him out of unfavourable dilemmas before. Surely, his words could work him out of this setback, too?

The omega struggled to speak without hinting towards his pain. “I’m getting picked up soon.”

Taehyung didn’t stop walking ahead of him, but Jimin slowed down his pace to walk in line with the older. His eyebrows were drawn together when Yoongi looked at him.

“You can’t be serious, hyung.”

The dancer’s eyes widened as he waited for an answer, but Yoongi decided he wasn’t going to give him one. He was struggling as it was to hold his physical composure together, so he didn’t need to
add his mental composure to that list. It wasn’t like his state of mind was in the best place, either, after having just given himself over so willingly to the omega within him at one touch of an alpha.

“Yoongi-hyung, you don’t look too good right now,” Jimin explained. “You actually look, ah, really sick. Wherever you’re going can wait until you’re feeling a little better, yeah?”

The part about him reacting so strongly to Jeongguk’s hold went unspoken, but that didn’t stop the topic from creeping up the corners of his mind. They were nearing the exit of the performing complex, and Yoongi was quickly running out of time to convince Jimin of his health. He needed to get across to Jimin that he was *fine*. Even if he wasn’t.

It didn’t help that Taehyung was with them, too. He could see through Yoongi’s carefully crafted stories on the worst of days.

Seokjin caught up with Yoongi and Jimin from behind. His expression wasn’t quite as obvious anymore, but Yoongi could still pick up on his hyung’s subdued curiosity. He wanted to know what was going on, but of course he wasn’t going to harass him about it. Whether that was because Yoongi looked as sick as Jimin thought he was, or Seokjin was too polite to ask until they were in a more private location, Yoongi doubted he’d ever know. Yoongi wouldn’t be too surprised if either turned out to be true.

Yoongi’s only hyung opened and closed his mouth a couple of times before he managed to say anything. It was a sign of Seokjin’s stress that Yoongi had picked up on over the years.

“How are you feeling, Yoongi?”

Taehyung opened the door to their secluded exit and led the way to their van in the car park. He seemed to be in a bit of a rush to get home, now that Yoongi properly observed him. It was like he was urging the others to get a move on, with the way he kept looking behind him to make sure they were following at an acceptable pace. Taehyung’s constant attention on them was concerning Yoongi, to say the least. He wanted the younger’s eyes to focus on anything but him.

Yoongi swallowed around the knot in his throat. “I’ve been better. I think I overdid it on that last dance.”

At least his story of being tired would match up with the one he told Hoseok earlier. Oh, Hoseok. Where was he? In fact, where were Namjoon and Jeongguk, too? Yoongi could barely remember
the rappers dragging Jeongguk down the hallway away from him. It was like there was a slight haze covering the memory, despite the fact that it had only happened minutes ago. Was that because his omega side had been in control in the moment? Was that why he was struggling to recall some basic elements of the event?

Taehyung was standing by the driver’s side of the car, watching them. He was probably waiting for the keys from one of their event coordinators. Yoongi could only hope that he convinced the others he was healthy enough to leave them before someone came with the van keys. Otherwise, he’d just end up back in the dorms. Two doors away from Jeongguk.

Two doors away from an alpha in rut.

Yoongi was repulsed by the wave of slick that leaked down his legs at that thought. He shouldn’t want to be near an alpha. Especially one in rut, while he himself was in his first ever heat. Why the hell was his body wanting that?

A cramp ripped through his stomach just as he reached the top of a set of stairs, and his knees buckled at the force of such pain. He saw Seokjin from the corner of his eye dart of to catch him before he fell down the stairs, but that did nothing to alleviate the pain he felt amplifying within his own body. A heat shouldn’t hurt this much, Yoongi thought indignantly.

The pain subsided a few seconds later. Yoongi took in a shaky breath, but otherwise let on be hadn’t been at all affected by the cramps that had overtaken him for a moment. He had to convince the others that he was okay, that he was capable of leaving them, that he was completely fine.

Because he wasn’t. And no one could know that he wasn’t.

Min Yoongi was never not okay in front of others.

Seokjin gently released his hold on Yoongi as soon as he tapped the older on the arm. It was supposed to be a signal that he was okay. Apparently, Jimin hadn’t seen it. Or maybe he hadn’t cared about it.

“Yoongi-hyung, what’s going on with you?” Jimin’s voice softened. “T-That kind of pain isn’t normal after a performance...”
No, not Jimin too. Jimin couldn’t be catching on as well. It wasn’t like Taehyung’s glare was bad enough, now he also had to worry about Jimin being overly observant. It didn’t help that Seokjin was witnessing the entire thing, either.

A whine remained at the back of his throat. He was not going to let stupid urges overtake him already. He still had time until his heat started. He should still have time.

“And um, hyung, I wasn’t going to ask at first but now, I just... I don’t understand anything.”

Jimin’s gaze was boring into his, and Yoongi’s urge to crumble right then and there was so freakishly strong that he had to look away from the dancer’s eyes. And Yoongi didn’t shy away from other’s looks. Could he be any more obvious with his status without just saying to everyone he’s an omega? He was practically already submitting to Jimin, with the way his head was dipped and his eyes were glaring at the dirt on the younger’s shoes.

“Why did you and Jeongguk... act the way you did earlier?”

Trust Jimin to pop the question. Really, Yoongi shouldn’t be so shocked that Jimin was the one to ask it. The dancer had asked about his sweat reducers weeks ago, even when Yoongi hadn’t expected him to. So why did he feel so mortified that Jimin had voiced the question everyone wanted answered aloud?

“It’s none of your business. And I need to get picked up.”

Yoongi began walking as quickly as he could. He didn’t care anymore if he seemed suspicious, or rude. He just wanted to get to that damned hotel room already. For he was sure that if he stayed one more moment, the others would force him to return to the dorm in the hopes that doing so would alleviate his ‘sickness’.

They really had no clue about how dangerous that would be for him.

He barely made it to the bottom of the stairs before he dropped to his knees and curled into a ball. The tightening in his abdomen was back, but that was far from the most mortifying part of the ordeal.

He felt empty.
Slick was gathering in ample amounts at his hole, and he’d never felt such a strong need to touch himself down there before. He’d never really explored himself, in that sense, down there either. He’d always been a bit embarrassed by it, if he was honest with himself. But now that he was in pain, and his temperature had well and truly exceeded a normal level, he couldn’t find it in himself to be embarrassed about how aroused he felt down there.

Yoongi collapsed onto his side, and drew his legs up to his chin in a pathetic effort to hide his ridiculously hard dick from the others. Because it wasn’t enough for them to all know that he was in pain, no. He just had to be turned on and horny and desperate too, because of course the universe didn’t care if that wasn’t what he wanted.

Seokjin was hovering over him immediately, but Yoongi really didn’t want him to be. He just wanted to be alone with his pain and misery. And he wanted to get rid of the aching feeling in his dick, and his hole, and he wanted something to come along and complete him already.

Scratch that, he wanted an alpha. He fucking needed an alpha. He needed something to make him feel whole, he needed the immediate relief a knot would bring him. He needed Jeongguk, really. Jeongguk was the only one he knew who could satisfy all of his needs. No one else would do. No one else could look after an omega the way an alpha did.

“Yoongi, what’s wrong?!” Seokjin asked frantically. “Please tell us so we can help you!”

But Yoongi knew they couldn’t help him. They weren’t alphas, and they didn’t have large knots or comforting scents. Their words were meaningless to Yoongi.

“W-Where’s Jeongguk?” was the only sentence his mind was capable of conjuring up. While the word, ‘alpha’ had been on the tip of his tongue, his ego had managed to prevent that word from being uttered out loud. The moment that word left his lips, he knew his secret would be no more. It wouldn’t take a genius to figure out what an alpha was if he was constantly calling out for one, especially with how accessible information was online. He couldn’t believe he’d managed to suppress that urge, if he was being honest with himself. At least he still had a shred of control over his actions.

“He’s far away from here, Yoongi-hyung,” Jimin answered distantly. Or maybe Yoongi only heard him distantly. He could be standing right above him and he wouldn’t know it. All he could think about in that moment was alpha, alpha, knot, alpha, and it was driving him crazy.
He didn’t dare focus on the pups that followed his train of thought.

And oh, Jimin had just said that Jeongguk was far away from him. Could his situation actually get any worse? The only person who could look after him was nowhere near, and he was surrounded by people he didn’t want anywhere near him. If he wasn’t going to get his alpha, then he was at least going to get a private place to look after himself. That much he would make sure.

Screw whatever plan he had earlier. What was it, even? Yoongi struggled to remember what his idea had been only minutes ago as he felt himself be lifted and carried through the car park. The amount of hands on him distressed him momentarily, but he managed to contain his whimpers for the time being. Min Yoongi was still in control, he convinced himself. He needed to be.

The whole trip back to their dorms was spent in relative silence. Other than Yoongi’s occasional groans of pain, silence constantly threaded through the van. Yoongi liked it that way. The less questions being thrown his way, the better. Because it was right about now that his initial plan came back to his thoughts and reminded him that he couldn’t be heading back to their dorms, he just couldn’t.

Yoongi finally smelt his own mint scent right before they exited the van to their dorms. It was a piercing kind of mint, Yoongi decided. It was begging to be noticed by others. Attention-seeking, Yoongi realised. His scent was seeking the attention of others.

And apparently it was seeking the attention of a particular alpha, whose lavender smell immediately assaulted him the moment he stepped out of the van.

“Jeongguk...” he whined, no longer caring about his appearances. He began rubbing his dick forcefully, trying to do anything to alleviate the severity of his arousal, but that wasn’t enough. He knew it would never be enough. He needed Jeongguk to help him. He needed the alpha to take care of him.

The alpha must be close by if Yoongi could smell him so strongly. The omega continued kneading his cock through his jeans as his scent permeated the air around him, but it was no where near enough. He was too hot, too turned on, and he was in too much pain. Why was his alpha taking so long to get to him?

He practically tore his belt from his pants before hands were all over him again. Why wouldn’t anyone let him have his way? He thought this as he was dragged away from the van and over to an elevator that would take them up to their dorms. Of course the others would want him to remain fully clothed. Of course they wouldn’t care that Yoongi’s skin was on fire, and that every
corrosion between his skin and clothing made him grimace with discomfort.

Yoongi’s mind cleared for a moment when they entered the elevator. Lavender was no longer striking him from every direction, and he could actually take in a breath without being affected by the alpha’s scent. It was a second of bliss amongst the chaos, but it was also a curse for Yoongi.

For now he realised that Jeongguk must have made his way back to their dorms some other way, for his scent wouldn’t be that strong in the car park otherwise. He was getting closer to the alpha every second he waited in the elevator, and he didn’t want that. His skin might want the touch of an alpha, and his hole may crave for a knot to fill it, but his mind in that moment was still very much his own.

And his mind was terrified of him and Jeongguk doing anything in their twisted states of mind.

He needed to get this across to the others. He didn’t bat an eyelid at the various staff in the elevator with him, but he did focus on the other members with a tinge of desperation in his eyes. For how else was he going to get his point across? He no longer felt like his body’s actions were his own, and to top off this thought his hips started thrusting into empty space. He couldn’t find the energy in himself to care about others seeing how miserable he was.

Seokjin would understand him, right? And he’d know what to do. He was older than Yoongi and everything. He would have a solution. He had to have a solution, for the omega’s sake.

“J-Jin-hyung, I need to get away from Jeongguk. I-I don’t want-”

He ended the plea with a high pitched whine, and Yoongi tried to ignore how wide the older’s eyes blew at seeing that. That was exactly what Yoongi had been trying to avoid. He didn’t want others to worry about him for his omega status, he didn’t want anyone to treat him differently because of it. He just wanted to be Min Yoongi, without always adding the subtitle ‘omega’ to his name. Why was it so hard to be something he wasn’t?

Taehyung’s arms wrapped around him, and it wasn’t an alpha’s touch, no where near as good as an alpha’s touch would be, but it helped. It comforted him for a moment, and made him forget about how blazing his skin felt and how tight his stomach was. And somehow, despite some of Yoongi’s greater fears, Taehyung nor the others commented on how soaked his pants were. It wasn’t just the front of them that was wet, anymore. It looked more like he’d dropped a cup of water on his pants and the liquid had then traveled down the course of his legs, except Yoongi knew it was all slick. He continued stroking his dick as he thrusted into nothing. Why the hell was there so much slick?
“Yoongi-hyung, it’s alright. Jeongguk’s in his room.”

Yoongi knew he must have visibly paled, because Taehyung felt the need to elaborate as soon as the words left his mouth.

“Namjoon-hyung’s made sure of it, okay? Kookie’s not going to jump you again.”

The older nodded frantically, hoping to the deities above that what Taehyung was saying was true. The others were going to help him, and protect him from Jeongguk. And they were going to protect him from himself, in a way. For surely, Yoongi prayed they realised the person he’d been when Jeongguk had held him was not actually him.

It wasn’t Min Yoongi who’d submitted to Jeongguk’s hold. It wasn’t Min Yoongi who’d whined and writhed once he’d been separated from an alpha’s grasp, and it certainly wasn’t Min Yoongi who was craving an alpha’s knot up his ass. None of that had been Min Yoongi’s doing, and that fact terrified him.

He’d already lost control over himself so many times in what felt like the span of an hour.

And he lost it again as soon as the potent scent of lavender penetrated his senses.

It consumed him, this scent. It was calling for him. The alpha’s scent was crying out to him, and Yoongi, being a good, obedient omega, ran after it.

Several yells followed him as he sprinted to the alpha’s dorm. His alpha needed him, and he needed his alpha so, so badly too. They were the only ones who could help each other, and just when Yoongi thought he’d reached the alpha, an obstacle presented itself at the dorm’s entrance.

Namjoon was sitting on a chair that prevented the dorm’s door handle from turning, and his eyebrows rose beyond his fringe when he saw Yoongi running towards him. Yoongi couldn’t care less, though. Namjoon was not going to be the one to stop him from reaching the alpha, whose cries of need had since turned to growls in the omega’s presence. No one was going to stop him from reaching his alpha.
“Yoongi-hyung! Come on, we need to get you to your own room.”

Yoongi purposefully ignored Taehyung’s words. The younger thought he knew what was best for Yoongi, but really he didn’t have a clue as to what was going on. Both him and Namjoon were so unaware of everything, and it angered Yoongi that he hadn’t told them about his and Jeongguk’s secondary genders before any of this happened. For if they knew the extent of the situation, surely Yoongi and Jeongguk could’ve helped each other out without the others butting in? It really wasn’t any of their business to stop him and Jeongguk from comforting each other, among other things. Yoongi then unbuttoned his jeans with surprising difficulty, and let out a quiet whimper when his pants dragged against his painfully rigid member. It was all too much.

“Seokjin, grab his arm for me!”

Two pairs of arms attached to Yoongi at the same time, and Yoongi screamed when he was pulled away from the closed door. Namjoon was staring at the omega with a kind of primitive shock in his eyes, like he’d never expected to see Yoongi act so animalistic in all the years he’d known him for.

That look had been what Yoongi had tried so hard to prevent from happening. But, he’d been given it anyway, despite his hardest efforts.

The door handle to Jeongguk’s dorm was shaking violently, as if the younger was hoping it would open through the use of brute strength alone. But Namjoon had been clever, and Yoongi realised that chair wasn’t moving anytime soon as Seokjin and Taehyung continued dragging him down the hallway. His alpha snarled and banged against the door desperately, but Yoongi knew his efforts were all useless. Yoongi was going to be alone for his first ever heat. And Jeongguk was going to be alone for his first ever rut.

To think, they could have spent them together, Yoongi thought despondently. Why did the others have to ruin everything?

He was shoved into his dorm immediately afterwards, but he didn’t barge against the door like he knew the alpha two doors down was. The others had probably already placed a chair beneath the door handle, and Yoongi knew that he couldn’t rely on his strength to force the door open like how Jeongguk relied on his. As an omega, he knew he was weaker. He also knew when he was supposed to accept his own circumstances.
The omega tore his shirt off his chest first, and the rush of fresh air he felt was beyond exhilarating. The prickles he’d been feeling all over his skin for the past couple of hours dissipated, and Yoongi was finally able to smile at his small victory. He went for his pants next, and pulled them down his legs as quickly as he was physically able to. For a second, he admired just how saturated his pants were. Around the crotch area, there was such an excessive amount of slick that Yoongi couldn’t help but dream of how good he would’ve been for his alpha if they’d spent their first heat and rut together.

The omega whined at the thought. He could have had Jeongguk in here with him, if only the others had been aware of the situation. They probably thought there was something terribly wrong with the two of them. They probably didn’t even realise they’d actually made Yoongi’s and Jeongguk’s problems even trickier to navigate by separating them this way.

Yoongi grunted as he kicked his jeans off his ankles. Only his boxers remained on his body, so Yoongi made quick work of removing the final barrier between his dick and his hand as he hopped onto his bed.

Yoongi’s cock burned as he slid his underwater over the rigid member. He never knew his dick could be this sensitive. Once his underwear were off, he dared to tap the tip of his penis. Only the tip though, because he wasn’t sure if he could take any more.

His finger lightly stroked the head, expecting himself to then wrap his hands around it as he usually did when masturbating. Except this time, Yoongi couldn’t bring himself to jump straight to the jerking off step. Instead, the moment his finger made contact with his cock, he whimpered deliriously.

It hurt so, so much to just touch it. He’d never thought that being an omega would change his sexual experiences so drastically, but this new discovery definitely altered his perspective. The omega decided to test out the waters of his newfound sensitivity, and began running two fingers along the underside of his dick. And oh, Yoongi wailed at that.

The faint smell of lavender wafting through the room only urged him to continue his activities. If he focused hard enough, he could make out the suppressed groans and grunts coming from two doors down, but for the most part Yoongi was too engrossed in his own world to take notice of those around him.

Yoongi couldn’t believe the lack of pleasure he was experiencing at touching his own dick. Wasn’t it supposed to feel good to stroke it? Then again, Yoongi was an omega in heat. A few simple strokes weren’t going to be enough to satisfy him.
So with that, he took his entire dick into his hand and pushed into the small space.

A broken cry escaped the omega at the feeling. Usually, this would turn him on. It would accelerate the pace of things and bring him closer to the edge he would eventually topple over, but right now, all he felt was pain.

He mewled when he thrust into his palm again. This was supposed to work. This was supposed to alleviate some of his pain, not increase it. Why wasn’t this working?

Like a busted record, he continued thrusting into his fist, occasionally pausing to stroke at the length and squeeze the base. But nothing was working. He was still rock hard, still struggling to deal with the agony he felt in his stomach, and to top it all off, he was still without an alpha.

Another cry ripped through him at the realisation that he was going to spend the next few days like this without an alpha.

What the hell was he supposed to do?

Tears began slipping from the corners of his eyes. His first heat wasn’t supposed to hurt this badly, was it? He could barely breath through the pain he felt in his stomach and cock.

It was then that Yoongi properly registered the wet substance dripping down his thighs.

He whimpered as he withdrew his hands from around his dick, but then he was at least finally able to draw in a proper breath of air. Maybe he’d been doing it all wrong? He was an omega after all, so maybe he wasn’t meant to be stimulating that part of his body.

And even though Yoongi felt confident that his instincts would guide him through it, a flicker of self doubt echoed through him at the prospect of fingering himself. He could admit that he’d never really thought about doing it before he found out about his omega status. After that had happened, well, fingering became a very probable course of future action. After all, how else could he please himself if he lacked an alpha’s knot?

Yoongi gently stretched his thighs open a little more before he took a proper look... down there.
And while yes, he was familiar with his own body and the parts he had, the appearance of his hole did manage to shock him.

It was covered in a ridiculous amount of slick, and the substance had managed to trail all the way down to his upper knees, too. The muscles around his hole had loosened up considerably, and the skin around his hole had developed an ugly tinge of red somehow. Yoongi didn’t question it too much. It was all normal for him being an omega, a voice reminded him at the back of his mind. It was probably supposed to look that way.

The omega tentatively lowered a hand down to the soaked region, curious as to how it was going to feel to touch himself down there. He’d never done it before, after all. He wasn’t sure what to expect.

After a second of hesitation, his finger touched the rim of his entrance and traced the outskirts of it delicately, not at all expecting the surge of pleasure he felt at the action. He immediately repeated the move, and oh, Yoongi was so aroused. He could feel how the slick gushed from his ass as he touched the skin around it, and a needy whine left his throat when he dipped the tip of his index finger into his hole.

He tested his sensitivity for a few minutes by wiggling the fingertip back and forth, and eventually Yoongi worked up the courage to add another fingertip in. Because he wasn’t sure if he was ready to push quite yet. He’d barely adjusted to the feeling of having something up his anus in the first place.

Yoongi felt the urge to do something with his other hand. While one was gently working him open and readying him for what he knew was about to come, the other was simply slack on his lap with nothing to do. The omega sighed at the wave of pleasure he felt momentarily at adding a third fingertip to the mix, before bringing his other hand up to nipple for a bit of an experiment.

He traced the edge of his left nipple gracefully, being sure to avoid the pink tip of it as he circled around its rim. Then, just when he felt confident enough to shove a fourth fingertip in, he tugged at the skin around his nipple and-

Yoongi moaned at the pleasure. He felt a familiar tightening begin in the depth of his stomach, and Yoongi sighed at what that meant. Finally, he was going to get a bit of relief. He hadn’t expected it to be so difficult to please himself without Jeongguk around, but at least the alpha’s scent could comfort him from a distance. Yoongi was at this point just glad he was near the alpha for his heat. For if he wasn’t, he couldn’t imagine how much more uncomfortable this whole experience would be.
The omega wailed when another bout of slick surged out of his opening. He could sense his organism approaching, with the way his balls had begun drawing closer to his body and his dick had become too sensitive to even move without causing unnecessary pain. He was getting close, closer, and Yoongi was blindly chasing after that relief.

Without a second thought, Yoongi shoved his fingers as deep as they would go and cried at just how incredible it felt to have something down there, filling him up and completing him. Except he knew he couldn’t trick his body, which was waiting patiently for a knot it was never going to get. Yoongi groaned as he felt himself edge on the border of pleasure and pain, but he didn’t want the latter to take over him.

So he twisted his nipple ferociously at the same time he twisted his fingers inside him, and Yoongi lost himself to the pleasure as he orgasmed.

He had never come that well in his life, and he had only been masturbating, too. It didn’t make any sense to Yoongi, who could finally think about things with a clear mindset. It didn’t make any sense that he’d experienced more pleasure from having a couple of fingers up his ass in comparison to how often he’d stroked himself for the duration of his life. None of it made any sense.

But Yoongi couldn’t find the motivation to think about the topic any longer, for his dick was still standing, proudly erect against his stomach.

Yoongi glared at the member in disbelief. The urge to cut his own dick off had never been stronger for the omega than in that moment.

Then, Yoongi swore to himself as he heard a knock at the door.

Chapter End Notes

Heyo! I uploaded this with my phone’s hotspot because I’m currently in a place without wifi, so I’m sorry in advance if I respond to comments a little later than usual!

That being said, this chapter is vv long for me. I can’t believe I wrote it tbh, it’s like 7000 words long. And oh! Happy New Year everyone! It feels like 2018 went by so quickly, honestly.

The next update will hopefully up soon. As always, thank you so much for reading. (And happy bday to our lovely Tae. We purple you  )
Can’t let go of each other’s hands

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Can I ever catch a fucking break?” Yoongi groaned as he scoured the room for his underwear.

He wasn’t sure if he could tolerate wearing any more clothing than what was absolutely necessary. His skin still itched with an insatiable ache Yoongi knew he couldn’t satisfy, so whoever it was on the other side of that door would just have to deal with Yoongi being near naked, save for his boxers. It wasn’t like they would expect him to be wearing anything else actually, now that Yoongi realised they’d probably all heard his grunting and whining from orgasming a few minutes ago.

The omega stared at the rather obvious tent in his underwear. He couldn’t believe his orgasm hadn’t changed his dick’s physical state. Sure, he’d read up on heats and done his best to prepare for them, but actually experiencing a heat was completely different to doing some research. His temperature was still through the roof, but at least the haze had lifted over his mind for the time being. Being able to come to his senses after orgasming was the only good part of his heat so far.

Yoongi half-heartedly wiped the various fluids on his thighs with some tissues he’d found on his dresser before making his way over to the door. He really didn’t want to answer it. He knew that in a matter of minutes he’d start to feel ridiculously aroused all over again, and while his dick was hard and straining against his boxers, he could at least think clearly and independently for the first time in what felt like hours. Yoongi knew from that moment on that he would treasure these moments of control during a heat amidst the chaos. They were quickly becoming beyond precious to him.

Another rhythmic knock echoed through the dorm. Yoongi groaned even louder. He wasn’t sure if he was making it obvious enough to whoever was waiting for him on the other side of that door that he wanted to be left alone. But, he knew he was going to have to answer it. Otherwise, Yoongi wouldn’t be surprised if whoever it was just barged their way into his room, and Yoongi really didn’t want to deal with the judging look he’d get due to the questionable state of the room. It was embarrassing enough that Yoongi had to talk to someone during his heat; he was not going to mortify himself even further by letting someone into the room he’d just masturbated in.

Without hesitating, Yoongi pulled the door open to reveal Hoseok. He was smiling at Yoongi, with little wrinkles around his eyes and everything, but Yoongi also noted his dimple-less cheeks and square posture. Huh. Yoongi very rarely witnessed Hoseok being this visibly uncomfortable, and if the way he cleared his throat before he spoke said anything, he very clearly didn’t want to talk to Yoongi any longer than necessary.
He did appreciate the dancer for trying to keep things from being awkward between them, but Yoongi knew that was practically impossible; especially given the fact that he was only wearing boxers in front of the younger, and was seemingly unashamed of the fact that he was ridiculously, uncomfortably hard.

“I brought you some, uh, water and black noodles,” Hoseok said as he dropped to the ground. Yoongi’s eyes narrowed.

“Why?”

Hoseok paused. The older watched on as Hoseok seemed to struggle with answering the question, and maybe Yoongi was being a little cold to him. The dancer had brought Yoongi, well, supplies he was definitely going to need for the coming days. Especially since he couldn’t see himself leaving the dorm anytime during his heat. Not with Jeongguk’s moans coming from the room two doors down.

Yoongi observed Hoseok as he gathered bottles of water in his arms. The bottles were lined up against the wall, and Yoongi could tell from just looking at the amount of them that someone knew what he was going through. There was no way Hoseok was simply giving him enough water to last at least three days. Somebody knew exactly what was going on.

The omega drew in a sharp breath.

Hoseok did the same moments later. Then, the younger looked him in the eye with not a smile in sight. His mouth was slightly agape too, like he was wanted to say something but couldn’t find the courage to say it.

He ended up speaking, to Yoongi’s surprise.

“Look, hyung. I don’t know the details of what’s going on between you and Kookie, and I’m not sure I even want to know what you’re doing in there.” Hoseok vaguely gestured to the room behind Yoongi, and despite the situation, and Yoongi’s position, and how awkward and embarrassed he was to be facing Hoseok with an erect dick, he laughed.

He wasn’t sure how he managed to laugh when he was feeling so terrible about everything, but he did. And Hoseok was giggling too, with a hint of a grin on his face, so Yoongi assumed it wasn’t too wrong of him to be laughing.
Hoseok was smiling at him now, any awkwardness from earlier apparently gone. “I was just told by Tae to drop by a store and get a shit ton of water for you and Kook. And you should have seen the van, hyung! It looked like I was preparing for the apocalypse or something, I had that many bottles!”

Yoongi laughed again, but this time it wasn’t quite as lighthearted. Taehyung had told Hoseok to get the water. And it was Taehyung who had always watched Yoongi with a wary eye, never once taking an action of Yoongi’s for granted. Of course it was Taehyung.

“But yeah, I’m going to give Kookie his water and noodles soon. He sounds like he’s uh, finishing up soon. Yeah.”

And how the hell had Yoongi been able to ignore the groans from two doors down until now? As soon as Hoseok had mentioned Jeongguk, the omega had swivelled his head to listen to the alpha’s grunts and-

There was slick gathering in his boxers again. As if they hadn’t been soaked already.

Yoongi sniffed the air rather obviously, and to his relief the alpha’s scent was still present in the corridor and still absolutely intoxicating. The omega closed his eyes and whined at the smell, imagining the alpha’s touches on his skin and the lavender scent smouldering him in his bed. Without even realising it, Yoongi began leaning the door open further.

“Oh, I shouldn’t have mentioned Jeongguk, should I?”

At the alpha’s name, Yoongi whimpered. His alpha was so close, and he could smell him so clearly. The scent was beyond enticing, and Yoongi’s legs gained a life of their own as he followed the source of the lavender. He had to reach his alpha. His alpha was the only one who could help him.

“Aw shit, I really shouldn’t have said anything.”

Yoongi launched himself past Hoseok, hoping to claw his way past the younger if he absolutely had to, because he needed his alpha. The ache was back in his lower abdomen, and he would do just about anything to ease it. But Hoseok had apparently been expecting him. The dancer’s sturdy arms latched onto his shoulders as soon as he tried to make a move, and Yoongi screeched at the
His skin burned where Hoseok was holding him, and not in a good way. He continued scratching at the younger as he pulled him back into the dorm, calling out for his alpha the entire time because he needed his help. He needed his alpha to get him out of his own misery.

“I’m sorry hyung,” Hoseok muttered as he dumped Yoongi on a bed and made a dash for the door. Yoongi sprinted after him, screaming curses of anger and defeat when the door shut in his face and no. He’d been so close to escaping his own prison, damnit. Yoongi howled in frustration.

His boxers were kicked off immediately, and Yoongi managed to get off to the sounds of his alpha two rooms away. He failed to notice the door opening slightly during his climax, but when he finally came to his senses he noticed the black noodles and bottles of water that had been left in his room beside the door.

Yoongi cracked a smile at that.

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It was a Wednesday when Yoongi checked his phone. He’d previously laid in bed with four fingers up his ass and his other hand held meticulously around his dick because he could not come for the life of him. The urge to was there, and the tingling on his skin had definitely still been present, but Yoongi just hadn’t had the motivation to finish.

His dick had physically ached, and Yoongi hadn’t wanted to even glance at his hole in fear of how damaged it would look. He had practically abused the part throughout his heat, with it having to constantly accomodate rough hands and demanding fingers, so he really didn’t want to see the result of his desperate actions. He wasn’t sure if he would ever confront them, actually. The entire heat had just been shameful for Yoongi when he was in a clear mindset.

So when he’d finally orgasmed with tears of pain in his eyes, he’d immediately checked the date on his phone, which miraculously hadn’t run out of battery yet. It was a Wednesday, apparently. Yoongi would have found the information helpful if he knew what day it had been when he’d went into heat, but everything beyond the comeback performance was just a mess in Yoongi’s mind.

He could recall things, yes, and he hadn’t actually forgotten anything that had happened, but the
images and sensations Yoongi remembered were all jumbled and out of place. He knew what he did, but he couldn’t place the events on a timeline no matter how desperately he tried to. Maybe that was for the best. He could at least fake some confusion when he was inevitably questioned over everything that had happened to him over the past couple of days.

It was just Yoongi’s luck that somebody knocked on his door as soon as he thought his heat had ended.

“Come in,” Yoongi grunted as he pulled the ruined blankets over his body. Over the past few days, the door had opened at various points to leave him hot meals, water and the occasional snack, and Yoongi wasn’t sure how to express his gratitude for such a caring gesture. He knew it was a Hoseok who’d done it the first time, but he wasn’t sure if the dancer had been the only one supplying him with food and water for the duration of his heat.

Regardless of whoever it was, he was grateful for their benevolence. He wasn’t sure how he would’ve survived his heat otherwise.

The door opened slowly to reveal Taehyung. He stood in the frame of the door, clearly cautious of Yoongi and his state of mind. The older sighed when Taehyung didn’t move from the doorway. Of course he’d decided to visit him.

“How are you feeling, Yoongi-hyung?”

Taehyung gradually approached him, like he was afraid of spooking Yoongi or something. Did he not realise Yoongi was back to being his normal self?

“Taehyung, I’m fine.”

“I’ve heard those words come out of your mouth so many times that I can’t tell when you’re being honest anymore.”

Yoongi’s jaw clamped shut.

“The others are waiting for you outside. I told them that you’d be finishing up soon.”
Taehyung then made his way back to the door. Yoongi’s mouth was hanging open slightly, but while he wanted to say something back to Taehyung, he didn’t know what there was to say. He was fairly certain Taehyung knew everything by now. He was just acting a little too confident around Yoongi to not know exactly what was going on. As for Jeongguk, well, Taehyung must know what was going on with him, too. There was no way one of them would escape Taehyung’s clutches if he’d already caught the other.

“Oh,” Taehyung said as he stopped outside the door frame with his back to Yoongi. “And please don’t lie to everyone again about what’s going on. Especially Kookie.”

The rest of the statement went unsaid, but Yoongi understood clearly. *Or I’ll tell everyone the truth.*

Yoongi had never felt more cornered in his life.

Everyone was going to find out about his status. Everyone was going to know. And Jeongguk... Jeongguk was going to know, too.

Yoongi didn’t question the churning in his stomach at that realisation.

Taehyung exited the room then, and all Yoongi could do was follow. The truth would sound better coming out of his own mouth than Taehyung’s, right? Yoongi hoped that was the case, anyway, as he made his way down the corridor slowly but surely. He shouldn’t be that surprised that Taehyung had managed to join the dots so quickly. Yoongi and Jeongguk hadn’t exactly been subtle about their statuses in the midst of their heat and rut. If anything, Yoongi should have anticipated somebody eventually finding out about his status. Because it was only going to be a matter of time until he or Jeongguk slipped up, especially when Yoongi considered the fact that Jeongguk had already been considering revealing his status to everyone before his rut hit him.

If that had ever happened, it would have made anyone finding out about his status that more judgmental of him. He could already imagine the questioning faces he would receive if that had happened, because why would he bother hiding something so essential to his existence from others who already knew of somebody with an alpha status? It wouldn’t make any sense to any of them. Yoongi even struggled to see Jeongguk understanding his position.

Because while Jeongguk could relate to him through his own secondary gender, he couldn’t possibly understand his wish to keep everyone unaware of it. For Jeongguk wasn’t the one who ended up begging for something to fill him every three months, and he wasn’t the one who had to suddenly deal with the very real possibility of a pregnancy if he ever let his omega side get its own
Yoongi shrugged these thoughts away for the time being. He had to confront everyone, whether he liked it or not, and Yoongi couldn’t see the others being particularly careful with their questions anytime soon. They were all likely losing themselves to their own curiosities in the lounge room, and Yoongi wondered briefly if Jeongguk would be waiting for him, too.

His hands clenched to fists as he braced himself to face the others, and he took in one last breath of subdued lavender before willing himself to round the corner.

He kept his expression perfectly blank as he entered the room and sat down on the couch, and he didn’t so much as blink when he felt six pairs of eyes land on him at once. So Jeongguk’s rut had finished. This conversation had just become so much harder to participate in, Yoongi thought.

Namjoon crossed his legs as he eyed Yoongi, and it was clear from that single action that Yoongi could expect nothing short of an interrogation from the other members.

“So,” Namjoon started with a quick glance to Jeongguk. “I think we’d all like to know what’s going on with you two.”

Yoongi’s eyes darted to Taehyung, but he was listening to their leader’s words earnestly. Like he, too, had no idea what was up with Yoongi and Jeongguk.

Jeongguk fidgeted awkwardly in his seat before clearing his throat.

“Before you guys drag Yoongi-hyung into all of this, I want to say that it’s my fault we caused such a scene, you know, in the first place. It was just, really stupid of me to think I could hide this from you all.”

Yoongi’s stare met Jeongguk’s for a moment, but that was all the time the maknae needed to remember something Yoongi had hoped he’d forgotten about.

“Actually, Yoongi-hyung was the only one who knew about this.” At that, the omega felt several gazes shift to him, but none of them bore into his soul the way Taehyung’s did. Yoongi felt a shiver climb up his back at the look.
“He, um, approached me about it because, well, I feel like Yoongi-hyung can see straight through me sometimes.” Jeongguk grinned at his own words. “Do you guys remember, three months ago I think it was, when I went into hospital for some crazy cold?”

A few members nodded their heads. “How could we forget?” Seokjin remarked playfully in an attempt to lighten the mood.

It seemed to work, because Jeongguk smiled. “Yeah, well, I kind of lied about that. I didn’t have a cold.”

Yoongi saw Hoseok lean forwards in contemplation. “Wait, so you didn’t have a cold but Yoongi-hyung did? Is that right?”

Jeongguk nodded, and when Yoongi remained silent he saw Taehyung open his mouth quickly to dispute the maknae’s words. Jeongguk, however, continued before he could interrupt.

“So, the real reason I was sick wasn’t because I had a cold. It was because I, um, I presented as an alpha that day.”

When Jeongguk was met with complete silence, Yoongi almost felt guilty for leaving the youngest with the duty of explaining their statuses all by himself. Almost.

But Jeongguk wasn’t blushing when he realised he had to educate the others on what exactly being an alpha meant. It made Yoongi do a double-take. He hadn’t expected Jeongguk to be so... relaxed about the situation.

The youngest was watching the others’s reactions as he spoke. “It’s like a second gender I have now, and it makes me kind of horny like, every three months. They’re called ruts, actually. The horny period of time I just went through is actually called a rut and, um,” Jeongguk’s voice lowers, “they’re pretty painful without having someone to spend them with. Oh! Also, being an alpha isn’t very common nowadays. It’s actually pretty rare.”

Yoongi in all honesty had expected Jeongguk to be blushing crazily during his explanation, but that wasn’t the case. Rather, he was composed and acting in such a mature manner that Yoongi almost couldn’t recognise that this was their maknae describing something so easily to everyone. Yoongi struggled to come to terms with his status in the first place, yet here Jeongguk was readily telling
everyone about his status with what looked like indifference. Like his alpha status wasn’t that big of a deal.

Yoongi knew he wouldn’t be able to muster the same amount of indifference when it came to his turn to speak. Because there was no way Taehyung was going to let him leave that couch without giving everyone a run down of why exactly Jeongguk had pounced on him that day. He wasn’t getting out of that room without telling everyone about his status, and even though Yoongi didn’t outwardly act like it, he was terrified.

Did he not have a choice in the matter? Was the control he’d been fighting so hard to keep in his life going to slip through his fingers no matter what he did? It sure felt like it when he spotted Taehyung staring at him again. He needed to speak up soon, before Taehyung did. Before Jeongguk got the idea in everyone else’s heads that he was completely innocent in their ordeals. Because since the end of his heat, Yoongi had realised something.

While he and Jeongguk might both be to blame for how they acted those few days ago, Yoongi had ultimately acted as the catalyst for events when he’d refused to tell anyone the truth about his status. For would they even be having this conversation if Jeongguk had been aware of Yoongi’s omega status? Would Jeongguk have refrained himself from jumping at Yoongi if he’d known the older was an omega, or would the idea of Yoongi being an omega simply accelerated the course of events?

Yoongi dipped his head in thought. He’d probably never know.

“Sorry that I’ve done a pretty terrible job of explaining what an alpha is, exactly,” Jeongguk said as he rubbed at his collarbone. Yoongi’s eyes followed the course of his chest for a moment too long, and it wasn’t until Jeongguk looked in his direction that he pulled his eyes away from the maknae’s chest. “I didn’t do a much better job of telling Yoongi-hyung about it either, to be honest.”

Namjoon waved his hands at Jeongguk. “Hey, don’t worry about it, Kookie. I’ll just search it up now. The term was alpha, yeah?”

Their leader took his phone out of his jean’s pocket at Jeongguk’s nod, and a silence crossed over the group as they waited for Namjoon to get some answers. Yoongi continued glaring at the floor, trying to calm his mind at the prospect of revealing to the others his omega status, and of telling Jeongguk that he’d been lying to him the whole time. Yoongi forced his breathing to even out, because he wasn’t about to have a fucking panic attack in front of everyone over a secondary gender. Not after how Jeongguk had just confessed everything so casually.
In. This wasn’t as big of an issue as he was making it out to be. He’d handled much worse things in his life, he told himself. He grappled with the hands of depression on a constant basis, and had dealt with his fair share of haters over the years to last a lifetime.

Out. He had this confession under control, if he could even call it that. Really, he was just admitting something that everyone was already suspicious of. It probably wouldn’t even come as that much of a shock to everyone, considering how he’d acted the past couple of days in front of everyone. Yoongi quickly shoved those memories to the back of his mind. He didn’t want to be reminded of how many embarrassing things he’d already done in front of the other members, let alone the rest of their staff and backstage crew. The thoughts of what he’d done in his omega state already made him cringe without remembering the minute fact that he’d done more than a few of those things in front of an audience.

In. Out again. Breath, Yoongi told himself. Overthinking it would just make things harder than they needed to be.

“It says here that alphas, as well as things called betas and omegas, were common secondary genders every person used to have. Uh, actually, wait a sec,” Namjoon mumbled as he brought the screen closer to his eyes. “The statuses of an alpha and omega did not rely on a primary gender, so male omegas and female alphas did exist and were relatively common.”

The leader rubbed his face as he skimmed over the website, almost as if he was in disbelief of what he was reading. Yoongi fiddled with his thumbs as he wondered what information Namjoon had come across to make him look as puzzled as he was now. It was probably facts on an omega’s biology, now that Yoongi thought about it. Alpha’s biologies weren’t that different to the average male nowadays, whereas omegas...

Yoongi grabbed his thigh and tightened his grip on it. Omegas had functions that no human being had any longer. They worked differently to any other animal Yoongi had come across over the course of his life, and the thought that he was the only person on the planet who begged for a knot to fill him with pups every three months petrified him. He had never wanted to be different in such a life changing and obvious way. He’d never wanted his character to change just because of some secondary gender he couldn’t control.

Their leader continued reading. “Alpha’s had the role of being dominant in society, and they were the ones to inseminate omegas with their offspring in most cases. Omegas, on the other hand, had the responsibility of producing and caring for offspring.” Namjoon looked away from the screen. “Now, if what I’m assuming from this is correct, your secondary gender is not determined by your sex?”

“Yeah,” Jeongguk affirmed. “Apparently, you could be male and get pregnant back then. Pretty
Yoongi had no idea why those words aggravated him so much, but to be referred to as something crazy, by someone he knew and cared for at that, just struck too many chords within him. Whether it was the omega within him feeling hurt at the words, or simply his own mind telling him that he would not stand for anyone calling him that, he wasn’t going to let those words go by without repercussions.

“Is it really that difficult to imagine me being both, Jeongguk? Male, and pregnant?”

An ugly silence came over the group, but Yoongi couldn’t find the energy to be upset about it. He’d been expecting this kind of response; one of shock, maybe even of disgust, but the emotion he’d really been counting on to make an appearance was disappointment. Disappointment at hiding something for so long, disappointment from Jeongguk that he hadn’t shared his omega status with him when the alpha had readily shared his. So far, as Yoongi scanned the faces of the group, he could only make out the first emotion being present throughout the group, save for Taehyung’s expression of pride. At least he wasn’t the one to tell everyone his dirtiest secret. Yoongi couldn’t even imagine how disastrously that would’ve gone if Yoongi hadn’t ended up saying anything.

Seokjin was running a palm over his chin, almost as if he was calculating his next move. Yoongi stared back, daring him to say something, anything at all to break the silence.

His only hyung responded to the challenge. “I’m taking it that you’re an omega, Yoongi?”

And when Yoongi nodded, albeit shakily, he didn’t dare move his gaze from Jeongguk’s. For really, it was his reaction he was after. Would he still think it crazy that male omegas could carry life when he realised Yoongi was one of those omegas?

He hoped he didn’t, for some inexplicable reason. Probably just because he didn’t want a group member to be disgusted by him for the duration of their contract. Yeah, that was it. Not because he cared about Jeongguk’s thoughts, or how he felt about him. That couldn’t be it. Min Yoongi didn’t care about what other people thought of him.

He told himself this, anyway, as he saw Jeongguk’s face drop.
“So you’re telling me, hyung,” Jeongguk began with narrowed eyes, “that you’ve been an omega this entire time? That you’ve known I was an alpha for months, and that I was going into rut, but you didn’t bother to tell me this entire time that the person I would be endangering the most in my rut was actually you? The same person I was trusting all of this information with?”

And Yoongi hadn’t expected Jeongguk to look at things from that perspective at all, so all the older could do was stare blankly back at the maknae, because what the fuck else was he supposed to do?

Why wasn’t Jeongguk angry at him for deceiving him for so long? And why wasn’t anyone else speaking up to announce their disgust at Yoongi for hiding something so stupidly essential to his life?

Why wasn’t anyone reacting the way he’d anticipated?

Jeongguk pulled at his fringe as he stared back at Yoongi. “Fuck me, Yoongi. Do you have any idea how horrible it would have been for you to be anywhere near me during my rut? I-I would have torn you apart, Yoongi! I-I would’ve ruined you.”

Yoongi diverted his gaze, because Jeongguk, their maknae, had just sworn in front of everyone while carelessly dropping honorifics, and it was unheard of for Jeongguk to do so much as half of that. When Jeongguk grunted in frustration, Yoongi further dropped his head because Jeongguk had never acted like this before.

Then, Yoongi snapped his neck back upright. Why the hell was he acting so submissive to Jeongguk? His heat had finished, and with that his omega traits were supposed to disappear. He wasn’t supposed to act all omega-like outside of his heat. Actually, he refused to.

“Yoongi-hyung,” Namjoon began slowly, because of course Yoongi was going to be treated differently now that everyone knew he was an omega. Namjoon has known Yoongi for a good portion of his life, and yet the leader was speaking to him like he was some child that was easily spooked.

Was their precious friendship no longer relevant to the way they acted around each other, now that Namjoon knew about his status? Yoongi prayed desperately to whoever would listen to him that that wasn’t the case, because if it was... Yoongi didn’t know what he’d do with himself.

Namjoon looked him in the eye as he spoke. “If the reason Jeongguk was acting, well, differently
these past few days was because of his rut, then why have you been acting odd, too?”

Jeongguk was still yanking at his hair in frustration, but he seemed relatively in control of him emotions for the time being. Yoongi could only hope that assumption was correct, anyway, as he realised Namjoon was not going to leave any stone surrounding his and Jeongguk’s situation unturned.

The omega had never known a better way of announcing anything than being blunt about it, so that was exactly how he dropped the bomb. Bluntly.

“Well, Joon, the truth is that the past few days I’ve been going through my heat. My painful, merciless, and disgusting heat. It’s like the omega version of a rut, except I’m begging for some alpha’s knot up my ass the entire time.”

Yoongi sent Jeongguk a measured glare, because he wanted the younger to know exactly what him going through his heat at the same time of his rut meant. He was counting on it, actually. He wasn’t about to spell it out for anyone anytime soon, as some wicked part of Yoongi wanted Jeongguk to connect the dots himself, and realise exactly what he’d done to Yoongi three months ago when he’d presented. Because the others didn’t know he’d presented because of Jeongguk. He doubted even Taehyung knew, who’d been strangely silent the entire conversation.

He didn’t pay the younger much attention, though. He’d given the members the confession Taehyung had wanted, so he can’t possible want anything more from him. And if he did want something else from him, well. Yoongi was going to try his damned hardest not to fulfil it purely out of spite. Because he knew Taehyung had taken the more responsible approach to the situation, and that he had been the one to initiate everyone getting on the same page surrounding their statuses.

Just because he knew Taehyung was right, though, didn’t mean Yoongi didn’t feel wronged by him.

Namjoon hurriedly scrolled through his phone while the others glanced blankly between Jeongguk and Yoongi. Then, Jeongguk decided to speak again, to Yoongi’s great pleasure.

“Well, Joon, I was in hospital because I’d presented that day.”

“Three months ago we were in hospital, hyung.”

“That’s exactly my point, Jeongguk. I was in hospital because I’d presented that day.”
And just because he was evil and feeling wronged by Taehyung as well as pressured into a life he didn’t want as an omega, he added to his explanation.

“All because of you. A doctor told me I never would have presented as an omega without a trigger, but then you presented as an alpha, Jeongguk. You were my trigger. And now I’m stuck as an omega for the rest of my life because of you.”

He added as much malice into his tone as he was physically capable of, because he was hurting so hideously on the inside. It only made sense to him that Jeongguk got a taste of just how ruined he was on the inside, and just how affected he was by the status he had tagged to his name, because it was pretty obvious to Yoongi that Jeongguk wasn’t anywhere near as affected by his alpha status as Yoongi was by his omega one. And it was only fair that Jeongguk hurt, too, for making his life miserable at that point in time.

“Yoongi-hyung, you can’t just blame Jeongguk for something out of his control,” Taehyung stated calmly, and Yoongi just about ripped his hair from his scalp because of the irony.

“Oh yeah, because you’re just so fucking wise about everything, aren’t you?”

“Hyung, you need to calm-”

“Jimin, shut the fuck up, this doesn’t concern you.”

Seokjin leapt to his feet. “Yoongi! What the hell has gotten into you? You can’t just yell at everyone you please because you’re mad. That’s not the way things work around here, and you know that.”

Yoongi dropped his eyes to the floor again, but this time he didn’t blame his omega side for doing so.

Seokjin sighed, exasperated. “Now, can everyone calm down before we talk again? There’s obviously so much we’re still unaware of,” and Yoongi pretended to not see Jeongguk’s daggers for eyes, “so I’d like to get through this conversation without another outburst like that. Okay?”
But Seokjin didn’t phrase it like a question. It was a command for them to all pull their heads in and carry on with their discussion like mature, well mannered adults. Yoongi sunk a little further into the couch when he realised that Seokjin had a point, and that he should probably listen to it unless he wanted a much harsher scolding later on. While Yoongi didn’t let on to others that Seokjin’s opinion worried him too much, he did respect the older and his way of going about things. And if his hyung ever had anything to reprimand Yoongi for, it was always with good reason.

Someone cleared their throat, and Yoongi looked up to see that Jimin was asking for everyone’s attention.

“So, is Jeongguk an alpha and Yoongi-hyung an omega?” When Jimin revived a few nods, he pressed on. “So they’re basically genders you guys have, and not really anything else, right? Like, not a lot about you two has changed because of your statuses, yeah?”

Everyone turned their head to Yoongi for some reason, and despite an overwhelming urge to crumble right then and there, Yoongi held their stares. He wasn’t about to act weak around any of them again if he could help it.

“Look,” Yoongi started off carefully, doing his best to relieve his voice of any enmity. “As far as I know, I’m only supposed to act differently and omega-like during my heat. And since I don’t have to worry about going through another one for like, three months, I’m going to do my best to make you all forget I have a second gender in the first place.”

At least he’d gotten that off his chest; that he didn’t want them to remember him as an omega from now on. He wasn’t sure about how Jeongguk wanted to be identified from then on, but he found that in the moment he didn’t care. He was still pissed off at the fact that none of this would have happened if it wasn’t for Jeongguk presenting, and while the rational part of his mind was screaming at him that he was being severely unfair to Jeongguk, a larger part of him just didn’t care.

Yoongi knew Hoseok to be nearly as observant as Taehyung was, so when he saw the dancer lean forward in his seat and rest his chin on his clasped hands, he felt something similar to anxiety curl around his throat.

“Hyung,” he started with no emotion clear in his voice. “You say that like being an omega is an awful thing.”

Yoongi tilted his head at the words. “Am I not allowed to think that?”
Jeongguk covered his face with his hands, and Yoongi took this as an opportunity to properly observe the other’s body language. He was leaning into his hands, and was awkwardly slouching to make his palms meet his face comfortably. The position didn’t last long though, as he sat upright just as quickly as he initiated the pose.

The youngest chose to then glare at Yoongi again before speaking. “Yoongi-hyung, I don’t know how exactly you want me to act right now, but I’m going to make it very clear that I’m not going to take the blame for all of this alone. I think,” Jeongguk continued with a fire in his eyes, “we can both take the blame for this getting as out of hand as it has.”

The maknae looked around the group, and when he didn’t see any visible signs of disagreement he pressed on.

“I mean, yeah. I’m sorry I was the reason you presented, but you can’t just blame me for that. Just like how I can’t blame you for being susceptible to my commands during a heat. It’s, you know, something out of our control.”

Yoongi looked at the other members, Taehyung in particular, to gauge their reactions to the maknae’s words. Because there was no way the youngest was handling the situation more maturely than the second oldest in the group. Yoongi was supposed to be the mature one, and Jeongguk the one losing his calm in the heat of the moment. It didn’t make any sense to him that their positions had reversed, but as he observed the others he realised that somehow, it made sense to them.

The omega swallowed. Why had his and Jeongguk’s roles in the group suddenly switched? There was no way his omega status could impact how he acted outside of his heat, right? There was no way the foundations of his personality had changed permanently after his first heat. Right? He was still calm and level headed, well respected and mature. Being an omega didn’t change these things about him. They couldn’t change these essential parts of his being.

Namjoon uncrossed his legs as he, too, leaned forward. “I think there’s an elephant in the room still left to address,” their leader stated, because Yoongi knew he was always the one to round things off cleanly and without conflict. “Your next rut and heat, yeah? They’ll be on at the same time again, and I’m assuming nobody wants a repeat of what happened last time?”

Jeongguk released a loud breath of air with a hint of a smile on his lips. It wasn’t a kind smile. “You can say that again.”
The older ignored the way Jeongguk’s eyes were fixed on him. He hoped that if he told himself enough times that he didn’t care what Jeongguk thought about him, he would actually stop caring. So far, to Yoongi’s great disappointment, that hadn’t been the case.

Since when had he cared about what other people thought about him, much less what Jeongguk thought about him? His opinion shouldn’t matter to Yoongi. It really shouldn’t.

Yet it did.

Namjoon glanced between Jeongguk and Yoongi one last time before asking the question everyone else wanted answered. “So, how are you guys going to manage your next heat and rut?”

Yoongi barked a laugh, because who’s business was it how he dealt with his heat? He should tell them that he had a plan to get away from Jeongguk during his last heat, and that again, if it hadn’t have been for Jeongguk he would have gotten away with hiding his status from everyone a lot longer than he actually had.

Surprisingly, Jeongguk did not speak up. Instead, his head dropped in thought and his hands locked together on his lap. Yoongi wasn’t going to say anything, either, because it was his own damned business how he managed his heat. It was embarrassing enough to admit to everyone else that he was an omega. He was not about to give an in-depth explanation of what he was going to do during his next heat for the life of him.

For one of the few times during the conversation, Taehyung spoke up and Yoongi- Yoongi wanted to strangle him the moment the words left his lips, because how dare he even suggest something like that?

“Well, if your heat is really that painful Yoongi-hyung, and Jeongguk, if your rut is really that unbearable, why don’t you just spend the next heat and rut together?”

Yoongi’s mouth dropped, and apparently Taehyung had a death wish personally written by Yoongi as he continued speaking with a blank face.

“You’d just need to sort out all the consent business beforehand. Cause we really don’t want a repeat of last time, right?”
I’m back from my holidays! I’m trying to get as much of this fic done as possible before school starts back up for me, because this year assessment starts to get really serious 😊

On a different note, I hope you’re all enjoying the story! It’s definitely going to be a long one, so I hope you’re strapped in for the ride. Feel free to hit me up on Twitter if you wanna talk btw! I’m always up for a conversation there.

As always, thank you for reading and be sure to have a great day today!

https://twitter.com/mbookworm02/status/107633059098774850?s=21
“You can’t be serious,” are the first words out of Yoongi’s mouth. What the hell was Taehyung thinking, suggesting something like that?

Yoongi wasn’t about to have sex with Jeongguk out of necessity. He was stronger than that, better than that. He didn’t need to resort to using Jeongguk like that. And Jeongguk would surely be feeling the same way. That they would endure their bodily functions separately, because Yoongi could not imagine anyone seeing him at his most vulnerable. Ever. Not after how ashamed and disgusted he’d felt when the haze had cleared from his mind after orgasming. He could never show that weak and helpless side of him to anyone, because that wasn’t Min Yoongi, and that would never be Min Yoongi.

Besides that, the idea of someone seeing him like that made anxiety coil in his stomach.

Jeongguk hummed. “I don’t have a problem with that.”

Silence overcame the group again.

Yoongi stared at the maknaes, because just how exactly could Jeongguk come to that decision so easily? Did he not think that having sex with Yoongi for days on end was a big deal? He must think that. Why else would he agree so readily to Taehyung’s absurd suggestion?

Jeongguk seemed to have sensed Yoongi’s dismay. “That’s just me, though.”

And then everyone’s eyes were on Yoongi again, and he forced himself to not cower at the intensity of their gazes. Were they seriously expecting him to have a response to Taehyung’s crazy idea already?

Yoongi clenched his jaw. “I need some time to think about anything before I rashly make a decision.”

He could have snickered at how tense the atmosphere became then. Everyone was doing their best
to subtly avoid his eyes, and Yoongi nearly cackled when Namjoon started picking something off his hands in order to do anything but look at the older. It was laughable how quickly the mood had changed when he’d practically shut down Taehyung’s suggestion. They deserved the silence, Yoongi thought. Hopefully it would teach them a lesson on trying to pressure him into making a decision so quickly.

Yoongi leaned back into his chair, finally finding himself at ease now that everyone else was uncomfortable.

Out of the corner of his eye, Yoongi saw Jimin shift in his seat. “Okay, well, I’m sorry if this makes you uncomfortable Yoongi-hyung,” the younger began with a hint of apprehension in his tone, “but how exactly can you get, um, pregnant? Like, your body is different to a woman’s, so how is it even possible?”

To his own surprise, Yoongi didn’t fault Jimin for asking that kind of question. He hadn’t really tried to explain anything about his biology to them, and had rather just shoved a piece of information in their faces without explaining all the facts that came with it. He didn’t feel guilty about it though, because well, if he was being honest with himself, he hadn’t really looked that far into his omega status either.

He hadn’t wanted an abstract idea to become an actuality, Yoongi discerned. He’d tried to avoid information on omega body parts and pregnancies because he didn’t want to think that deeply about his status, but now that Jimin had brought it up in front of everyone he was just going to have to face the facts.

Yoongi addressed Namjoon when he spoke. “I don’t know any of the terminology or anything Joon, so can you just search it up?”

Namjoon nodded, looking a little confused with Yoongi’s sudden change in attitude, but truthfully Yoongi couldn’t be bothered to put up a pretence of anger for the remainder of their talk. It was exhausting having to speak about something in front of a bunch of people he didn’t exactly want to share such information with, but he understood now that it had to be done. It simply would have been impractical for everyone to not know about their statuses, Yoongi had realised sometime during their conversation.

While he still would have preferred to keep his omega side hidden away from them, at least there were less lies he had to tell everyone now that they all knew. Honesty had never been Yoongi’s strong suit, but maybe his admission was a step in the right direction.
The leader let out a little, “Ah,” before leaning back into the couch. At least some of the earlier tension had dissipated enough for their leader to feel somewhat at ease again.

“Okay, it says here that female omegas have pretty much the same biology as women nowadays, but male omega’s biology is- woah, okay. That’s pretty incredible.”

Yoongi listened carefully for Namjoon’s next words.

“It says here that male omegas do in fact, have a womb. Their wombs are attached to a cervix, and that during an omega’s presentation a passageway forms between the cervix and the rectum. God, hyung,” Namjoon paused, running his hand through his fringe. “It says here that the pain a male omega feels during his presentation is similar to that of contractions during childbirth.”

Yoongi saw Namjoon’s eyes widen considerably. “Apparently this pain is due to the muscles around the cervix rearranging themselves to form the passageway to the anus. That’s just- wow, that’s crazy hyung.”

The omega looked around at the faces around him, and saw similar expressions of disbelief on their faces.

“I um,” Hoseok started as he leaned closer to Yoongi, “I’m sorry you had to go through that.”

He rubbed Yoongi’s shoulder reassuringly, and usually Yoongi would have ignored this kind of affection. But today, maybe he was feeling just a little too under the weather to care about the way he accepted the reassuring touch. Call him selfish, or misleading, but maybe this tiny show of physical comfort was all Yoongi needed to take a proper breath of air.

Hoseok’s hand left him far too quickly, but the action had done its job. He could tell he was calmer now, more in control of his emotions. All he’d needed was someone to support him, even if it was momentarily, just to tell him that they still had his back and still supported him. As irrational as it sounded in his mind, he couldn’t help but think that a member secretly hated his secondary gender just like those people online had. But at Hoseok’s gentle hand, he’d suddenly felt relieved in a way he didn’t know he’d craved.

Realising he had yet to respond to Hoseok’s comment, he replied with a curt, “It’s fine,” before risking a glance in Jeongguk’s direction.
He was watching Yoongi with these eyes full of intent, like he wanted to say so many things to Yoongi right then and there. For whatever reason, though, he was refraining himself from doing so. Like he didn’t want to say it in front of the others. Yoongi couldn’t blame him for holding back, really. He was probably in for a more personal conversation with Jeongguk later, but for now he allowed himself to forget about the alpha in the room.

“Yoongi-hyung, your biology is so fascinating,” Jimin exclaimed, looking at Yoongi with eager eyes. Almost like he was excited at the prospect of his hyung being an omega. “You’re like, what, one in a billion? If that? I’ve never even heard of omegas before now, that’s so cool.”

Not knowing what else to do, Yoongi shrugged. He could see things from Jimin’s perspective because yeah, it was pretty fascinating that his status was literally one in a billion, but other than that he couldn’t see anything else worth being excited over. Maybe if he wanted kids at some point he would be thankful for his biology, but as it stood he was still a bit repulsed by the idea of he, a male, carrying a child for nine months.

He wondered for a moment that if he would ever change his mind on that opinion, but he quickly discarded the thought. In that moment, the idea shocked and appalled him. So for the time being he was going to stick with that, and not wonder about his future thoughts. It wouldn’t help now to keep speculating about the future.

“Wait, so Jeongguk,” Seokjin began. “Are alpha biologies different too?”

Jeongguk had done a fairly good job of remaining calm and collected for the duration of their talk, but as soon as Seokjin mentioned his own biology he dipped his head.

“Um, Joon-hyung, could you search that up for me too?”

Laughter rang through the room, and Yoongi found his own cackle among it. A lighter atmosphere had replaced the previous, more pensive one. Yoongi was silently thankful for that.

“Yeah, yeah. Not a problem, Kookie.”

A content silence finally filled the room, and Yoongi’s mood softened. He didn’t need to confess anything else, or at least he didn’t think he needed to. He was fairly sure there were no more secrets of his that hadn’t seen the light of day anyway, but he could think about that depressing fact another time. In that moment, all he wanted to do was bathe in the relief of not having to discuss
his omega status any longer.

“To answer your question briefly Jin-hyung, alpha biologies are different from ours. Not by a lot, but they are different.”

Yoongi watched Seokjin’s eyes widen.

“How so, Joon?” Hoseok asked, a hint of curiosity in his voice.

Namjoon shifted in his seat. “It says here that when alpha’s are in rut, they produce a knot that develops at the base of their penis. It acts as a plug to keep semen inside an omega for as long as possible to increase the chances of that omega falling pregnant.”

How Namjoon had managed to finish the paragraph without stuttering was a mystery to Yoongi, but a blush was evident on his face by the time he’d finished reading. Everyone then kept glancing towards Jeongguk, who looked like he himself was struggling not to turn pink at the sudden attention he was getting in relation to something so personal. Yoongi nearly laughed at the situation. He was just thankful he wasn’t the one being risked glances by everyone else.

“Oh!” Seokjin exclaimed dramatically. “Kookie, was it your knot I saw when I asked to check you out before our trip to the hospital?”

A beat of silence passed before both Jimin and Hoseok burst out laughing, and while Jeongguk was doing his best to keep a straight face, the hint of a smile still couldn’t be fully smothered.

Seokjin was waving his hands around maniacally as he spoke. “Oh, you guys know I didn’t literally mean I checked Jeongguk out! Get your minds out of the gutter!”

Even Yoongi struggled to not cackle. Sometimes, Seokjin knew exactly when humour was needed amongst their group, and Yoongi couldn’t deny that he admired his hyung for being able to lighten the mood of any situation within a few moments. He was sure that if he ever wanted to possess one of Seokjin’s traits, his ability to make other’s laugh was the trait Yoongi would choose to have every single time.

The laughter eventually died down, but not before Seokjin squeezed in another line. “How is it that neither of you are the actual maknae of the group?”
Yoongi couldn’t hide his cackle at that.

~

After that, everyone had been relatively quick to leave for their respective dorms. Yoongi had walked into his with the smallest of bounces in his step, because he was relieved. Nobody had been disgusted by his status, or Jeongguk’s for that matter, but what was even better was that once Yoongi had subtly told the others off for trying to pressure him into making a decision, they’d left him alone about the topic. Hopefully they’d realised how ridiculous it was to expect a response from him so quickly in regards to something so personal and complex. Or maybe the idea of having sex with Jeongguk during his heat was only complex to him.

To the others, was getting intimate with Jeongguk something meaningless? Something to be shoved aside after a heat, and to never be thought of until the next one? Because Yoongi knew that wasn’t how his mind functioned. He found sex and other acts of intimacy as something that should be cherished, and something that should have a greater meaning than just basic need. He couldn’t see himself having sex with Jeongguk out of need alone, even if he’d recently discovered that heats were unbearable and painful without someone to spend them with.

Could he really just forget about having sex with Jeongguk immediately after their mutual desires had been met?

Seokjin entered the dorm minutes later, and he began collecting clothes for what Yoongi assumed was for a shower. Even though Yoongi was on his phone, he could tell Seokjin was acting fairly normal around him. Yoongi thought he must have found a four leaf clover somewhere because there was no way he was lucky enough to have everyone treat him exactly the same as they always had after finding out he was an omega. He wasn’t this lucky. There was no way he was this lucky.

His only hyung abruptly stopped sorting through his dresser. Yoongi quickly put his attention elsewhere, but Seokjin had already sighed before he could cover up his tracks.

“I know you don’t want to talk about it, so, I-I won’t force you to.”

Yoongi wasn’t quick enough to disguise the frown that appeared at those words. Seokjin’s voice just sounded a little too raw for his liking, and that slight stutter in his words assured himself that Seokjin was being brutally honest and sincere.
It was rare for his hyung to speak so genuinely to him. It was like some personal barrier had been breached between them, and that there was no longer anything separating himself from his hyung. Maybe this was the feeling he was supposed to get after confessing anything of personal importance, Yoongi thought.

The younger didn’t reply. He didn’t see a need to, not when Seokjin already knew how he felt about the matter. Or, well, how he vaguely felt. He still hadn’t really expressed anything other than hatred towards his status, when in reality there were so many other things he felt and thought towards his status that he needed to express somehow. It’s just, nothing was coming out the way Yoongi wanted it to, especially after how horrendously he’d managed his confession in front of everyone.

He’d gone for honesty in his confession, but being considerate towards others had not been high on his objectives list in the moment. He’d just wanted to get his thoughts out there as quickly as possible, because to be sitting in front of so many people he cared about while they expected him to confess something had driven his anxiety mad. In hindsight, Yoongi had no idea how he managed to keep up a calm facade when he admitted he himself was an omega.

But then again, the facade hadn’t lasted for long. He’d said what was on his mind, but he could admit to himself that he could’ve said those things in a more... considerate manner. He hadn’t cared about how he expressed his feelings, and he certainly hadn’t cared about the other’s feelings as he did so.

Yoongi threw his phone onto his bed.

He bared his teeth, because how could he have been so insensitive to everyone earlier? He hit his fist against the mattress, and he did it again, because usually this would dispel any pent up anger he felt and he would be able to move on with his life. But this time, it didn’t do anything. The anger still coiled in his mind, waiting on a victim to pounce, but Yoongi forced this anger to focus on himself. He couldn’t be angry at the others any longer. It was immature of him to blame someone else for his own situation, and Jeongguk... Oh fuck, Jeongguk.

Yoongi needed to apologise to Jeongguk.

He’d thrown so much of the blame at the maknae, so much unnecessary blame, and Yoongi’s hand both clenched to fists at the realisation. How could he have made himself out to be the only victim when the other victim was being dealt with the blame? His own blame, at that.
“Jin-hyung,” Yoongi said with a measured voice, afraid that if he didn’t monitor his tone he would come out as a stuttering mess. “I’ve fucked up.”

Seokjin immediately threw his clothes on his bed and sat down next to Yoongi. He brought his hands up, probably to hug the younger, but they stayed hovering mid-air for several seconds before he seemed to think better of it. Yoongi wasn’t sure how to feel about that.

His hyung poked his tongue against his cheek, looking deep in thought. “Is this about earlier?”

Yes, Yoongi wanted to say. It was definitely about their earlier conversation, but it was also about the previous three months he’d spent hiding his omega status from everyone, in particular Jeongguk. He wasn’t sure if the all consuming guilt he was beginning to feel was normal in his situation, but he decided to simply cop it on the chin and get over it because he deserved to feel at least guilt towards his actions as of late. He deserved to feel a lot more, probably, but he didn’t say that out loud. He knew better than to say such self depreciating things around other people.

“Yeah. Yeah, it is.”

Seokjin glanced at the clasped hands in Yoongi’s lap. Yoongi felt another set of hands wrap around his own, and an indescribable sensation of safety overcame him then. He felt safe here, and comfortable. Seokjin wasn’t going to judge him, nor was he ever going to judge him. Yoongi wished he’d realised this earlier.

The hands around his own shifted slightly. “Yoongi, we all say things we don’t mean. It’s normal.”

Something within Yoongi tightened at those sentences. He didn’t feel quite as sheltered anymore, not when Seokjin was looking at his reactions like that. It worried Yoongi that he wasn’t the only one thinking along those lines, either.

“No, hyung. You don’t understand.” He paused, but threw away his fear before could think twice. “I meant every word I said.”

Seokjin looked away from him then, and oh, Yoongi had made him uncomfortable. Of course that’s what Yoongi did, that’s all he was good for, anyway.

To his own surprise though, Seokjin’s hands around him tightened.
“That’s normal, too.”

Yoongi found his own eyes glaring at the floor then, for he couldn’t bring himself to look Seokjin in the eye after that. He didn’t deserve Seokjin’s understanding, not after how he treated everyone earlier, not after how horrendously he’d treated Jeongguk.

“Hyung, I just-” Yoongi let out a breath he hadn’t realised he’d been holding. “I mean everything that I said, but I... I-I hate that I mean it.”

Seokjin remained silent, so Yoongi took this as his cue to continue because he wasn’t sure if he was ever going to gain the courage to speak up again.

“I meant it when I told Jimin to mind his own. I don’t want people digging into my business, and when Hobi asked me if I really hated being an omega I felt like- choking him or something. Like, was it not obvious to everyone already that I hate being an omega? So then he had to bring it up like that, and just, Jeongguk.”

The younger halted in his rant, because that’s what it was to him. Nothing more than a rant.

“I’m so fucking angry at Jeongguk. I’m an omega for the rest of my life because of him. I can’t just, forget that fact and move on because I hate what I am now. Jin-hyung, you have no idea how awful my fucking heat was, you’ve got no fucking idea. And I have to go through those days of hell every three months because of him.”

Yoongi sighed, eyes still on the ground. “But I hate that I’m so angry at him, hyung. I don’t want to feel angry at something he can’t control. It’s not fair of me. I just, I don’t, argh!”

Seokjin’s hands left his own, but there was no hesitation when he wrapped his arms around Yoongi. And for once, Yoongi didn’t mind being hugged. He didn’t lean into Seokjin’s touch, or wrap his own arms around his hyung, but the action did touch him. Seokjin cared, and Yoongi couldn’t believe he told himself otherwise for so long.

“Yoongi, I-. Your feelings are your own, and I know you can’t really control them, but,” Seokjin hesitated finishing his thoughts, as if he was afraid of Yoongi’s reaction. “The way you express them can being controlled.”
Yoongi’s voice was strong when he replied. “I know that, hyung. That’s why I hate how I acted earlier.”

The arms around him tightened, like he was afraid of Yoongi storming out of the room at his words. And for a moment, Yoongi seriously considered it. But then, he remembered why he’d opened his mouth around Seokjin in the first place, and he still hadn’t brought that up yet. He kind of needed to, Yoongi realised. He could only imagine himself asking Namjoon or Seokjin this, and with Seokjin so close to him, so engaged in his thoughts and feelings, it would be stupid of him not to take the opportunity that had presented itself.

When he didn’t make a move to leave Seokjin’s embrace, his hyung pulled away with some unreadable expression written on his face. Yoongi wasn’t lying to anyone when he said he found it difficult to read Seokjin sometimes, as moments like these repeatedly proved to him that he didn’t know the older’s mindset as well as he would have liked to.

Yoongi’s mouth opened and closed a couple of times before he managed to say anything, a little lost on how to bring up the topic without disclosing too many of his thoughts. Then again, he’d already spilled so many of his opinions to Seokjin since they’d returned to their dorms, so he did have to wonder if it made any difference to try hiding anything else from his hyung.

“Hyung, I’ve got to fix this, I need to apologise or something. I was just so, so... unreasonable with everyone earlier. And Jeongguk, too. Yeah, Kookie especially. I need to do something.”

Yoongi had purposely phrased his words to sound more like he was voicing his thoughts aloud rather than asking for Seokjin’s advice. For if he directly asked, he wasn’t sure if his ego could handle it. He never asked others for advice on anything, unless it was a new track he’d been working on for the group and he wanted feedback. Other than that, Yoongi struggled to think of occasions where he’d requested anyone’s specific advice on something. He just wasn’t that kind of person. He didn’t feel the need to have his opinion assured by other people, and he certainly didn’t rely on others to come up to solutions to his problems.

On this occasion, though, Yoongi’s mind drew up blank.

Seokjin pursed his lips and then glanced at the bed sheets, like he was pondering what to tell Yoongi. That alone was enough to scare the older as to what was going on in his mind.

“You already know what to do, Yoongi,” Seokjin finally commented with a candor in his eyes
Yoongi rarely saw. “It’s just a matter of doing it.”

With that, Seokjin stood up and collected his clothes from his bed again.

“I’m gonna take a shower before all the hot water runs out. And I know you’re obviously not too keen on Taehyung’s, um, suggestion earlier, but can you please consider it? Even if it’s only for a moment.”

Yoongi blinked several times before coming to his senses. “Wait, what? Why?”

Seokjin had already reached the door, but he did turn around to face Yoongi before responding. Somehow, such a simple thing as eye contact did wonders for Yoongi’s respect for Seokjin. It demonstrated to him that Seokjin wasn’t afraid of expressing his thoughts, and was then able to explain them face to face afterwards without the fear of backlash.

Seokjin’s expression softened. “I never want to see you and Jeongguk in so much pain ever again.”

Yoongi’s mouth parted.

“But please remember that at the end of the day, it’s your decision. I need you to know that, because, um... Tae’s suggestion was a bit rude and inconsiderate, and I’m probably going to have to talk to him later about it. He just, he didn’t really have a right to-”

“Hey hyung, it’s fine. He was just saying a solution that was on his mind. There’s no harm in that,” Yoongi interrupted, hoping for that to be the end of their conversation. Thankfully for Yoongi, it was, as Seokjin then nodded and left the dorm for the bathroom.

An inner conflict existed within Yoongi when he tried to decide whether he was happy Seokjin had ended their talk or not. He couldn’t really tell, his thoughts too often colliding with themselves and creating a horrid mess in his mind. He needed a moment to himself to collect his feelings and store them in separate boxes, for there was no way he could distinguish which feeling was meant for what experience with the clutter in his head.

He fell back onto his bed and tucked his arms behind his head. He stayed in that position for hours, even after Seokjin came back from his shower and announced he was heading out for dinner with Namjoon and Taehyung. It was only after they’d left that Yoongi realised Jimin and Hoseok were
the only status-less people left in the dorm, and not even an hour after the other three had left they
told Yoongi that they were heading down to the studio to practise some new moves for upcoming
choreographies.

So that only left him with Jeongguk. Yoongi had to scoff at how subtly the others had attempted to
give the alpha and omega some ‘alone time’, because really it was all a bit excessive to him. It
wasn’t like what he and Jeongguk were eventually going to have to discuss was anything that
personal, now that everyone practically knew everything there was to their situation.

Sighing aloud to himself, Yoongi decided to make himself a cup of coffee. Hopefully, the caffeine
would keep him up for long enough to edit a few tracks he had lined up for their next album. While
they still had a while until it dropped, Yoongi knew the time truly flew by with how hectic their
schedules were.

It was when he wrapped his hand around the doorknob of his door that Seokjin’s words from
earlier rang through his mind. Of course Seokjin would tell him something along the lines of him
already knowing what to do. That entire statement was complete bullshit to Yoongi, because in all
honesty, he was at a complete loss as to how he should approach Jeongguk.

Would it be weird of him to simply not speak to the younger while he still decided how exactly to
respond to Taehyung’s preposition? Yeah, it would definitely be more than weird. Jeongguk would
probably see it as a sign of his complete unwillingness to cooperate with him.

He pulled the door open, and the smell of coffee haunted his senses. He really needed a cup,
Yoongi thought as he made his way over to the kitchen. How could he approach Jeongguk though?
Without making it too obvious to him that he cared more about their relationship than he liked to
let on.

Because if Yoongi was truthful with himself, which he wasn’t very often, only half of his reasons
for not wanting to spend his next heat with Jeongguk were because of how vulnerable and out of
control he would be at the time. The other half, however, was a much darker aspect to the
equation.

He didn’t want to damage his and Jeongguk’s relationship, and Yoongi really couldn’t think of an
easier way of doing that than by having sex with each other out of need rather than want every
three months.

It was a guaranteed recipe for disaster to Yoongi, and he was going to avoid it at all costs if he
could.
So, how could he face Jeongguk with these thoughts plaguing his mind? It didn’t help that
Jeongguk had already shared his position on the suggestion, either. Yoongi groaned. How could he
even look at Jeongguk with these ideas running through his mind?

Yoongi rounded the corner to see Jeongguk standing in the kitchen with a kettle in hand.

_Oh, come on._

The older tapped his hand against his thigh as he made his way over to the kitchen. He wasn’t
about to avoid Jeongguk after the maknae had noticed him. That would just further the idea of him
being a weak omega to everyone. So he strode over to the kitchen and plonked himself onto one of
the stools underneath the kitchen island. He watched Jeongguk as he poured hot water into two
cups before briefly remembering that they were the only two left in the dorm for a reason.

They had to talk about everything eventually, and as much as Yoongi hated even the idea of it, it
had to be done at some point. Now or never, were the words at the tip of Yoongi’s tongue.

“Milk or sugar? Or both?”

Yoongi looked up at Jeongguk, and had to force himself not to pull away from the younger’s gaze.
Yoongi really didn’t want to notice the concern in his eyes, because that would just make his task
that much harder to complete. He just wanted to escape the conversation unscathed, but from the
worried look the maknae was giving him he didn’t think that was going to happen.

The older straightened his shoulders. “I’ll have neither, actually.” A sour laugh escaped him. “The
more bitter it tastes, the longer I’ll be able to stay up for.”

Jeongguk nodded with a smile. “Fair enough, hyung.”

He pushed the cup towards Yoongi, and the older had to pause for a moment to assess what had
just happened. Jeongguk had two cups already out when Yoongi came into the kitchen, so did that
mean he had already intended on making him a coffee? Not seeing any other reason for Jeongguk
to make two coffees, Yoongi assumed that was the case. Something within him buzzed at the
thought of Jeongguk making him a coffee without him having to ask, but he shoved that feeling
aside. People made cups of coffee for others all the time. It didn’t mean anything.
“Hey, thanks Kook,” Yoongi mumbled against the cup as he held it to his lips. He took a calculated sip before deciding it was still a bit hot to drink, so he left it sitting on the kitchen island for the time being.

“No problem, hyung.”

Jeongguk then made his way over to Yoongi’s side and sat down on another stool before bringing his own cup to his lips.

Yoongi did his best to hold back a laugh when Jeongguk pulled a face. He gagged for a moment before putting the cup back down.

“I forgot milk,” Jeongguk said as he went up to the fridge. Yoongi couldn’t not grin.

“Of course you did. You were so worried about making mine that you forgot about yours.”

The maknae cracked a grin as he took the milk out of the fridge and poured some into his coffee. “You could say that. Really, though, I was afraid of angering my hyung if I got it wrong. Because we both know he can be quite moody when it suits him.”

Yoongi laughed. “Watch what you say, Kookie. It could come back and bite you in the ass if you’re not careful.”

Their smiles mirrored each other for a moment before Jeongguk’s faded.

“I’m guessing you know the others left us alone for a reason.”

Yoongi’s smile fell flat. “Yeah, they weren’t exactly subtle about it.”

Jeongguk nodded, and took another sip of his coffee. He didn’t wince this time.
“Hyung, I-” the maknae started, seemingly stuck with his words. “I want to talk.”

Not a sound was made in the dorm as Jeongguk waited for a response. Dozens of replies spun through Yoongi’s mind, and he could say any one of them and they probably wouldn’t get his feelings across properly. Yoongi licked his lips, again and again, trying to think of the right thing to say and the right time to say it, but after seeing Jeongguk’s face of confusion he decided to screw overthinking everything.

“I’m sorry for being an asshole earlier.”

They stared at each other for several moments before Jeongguk took in a gaping breath.

“I- hyung, it’s okay. I get that you’re angry. I, um.” Jeongguk’s lips were wobbling. “I think I would have acted similarly in your position.”

Yoongi pondered over this new information. Jeongguk was being honest for a reason, he had to be. He wasn’t just saying that to assure Yoongi that he was forgiven. There had to be another reason for his words.

“But that’s the thing, Jeongguk. You were in a similar position earlier. You’ve got a status that you had to tell everyone about earlier, and yet, I-.“ Yoongi couldn’t look Jeongguk in the eye. “I acted really horribly about it, I guess.”

The maknae shifted on his stool. “Hyung, I swear it’s okay. We all say things in the heat of the moment, right?”

Yoongi could’ve groaned at how similar those words were to Seokjin’s. He knew now that both of them were only doing their best to reassure him, but that was exactly the issue. He didn’t need to be reassured that what he’d said was meaningless, because it wasn’t. It never had been. The only thing he could admit, was that he’d shared his thoughts inconsiderately with everyone around him. For instead of stating his thoughts in a calm matter, he’d struck out at whoever had bothered speaking to him, and it had taken his only hyung’s words to bring some sense back to him before he made too great a mess of everything.

The older gritted his teeth. “Kook, I don’t think you realise that I meant what I said.” His voice softened. “I’m only apologising for the way I said it.”
Yoongi still hadn’t raised his head to meet Jeongguk’s eyes, but he could only imagine confusion or disappointment swirling inside them. He wasn’t sure if he could handle seeing either of those emotions, so he kept his gaze downcast. He sure as hell wasn’t about to storm out of their talk because he couldn’t handle a few negative feelings from the younger.

Jeongguk leaned down from his stool so that his head was visible to Yoongi. His eyes were wide, but Yoongi would be blind if he said they weren’t wide with concern. Something tugged inside his chest at the look.

“Hyung, that’s fine. You’re allowed to feel however you like.”

There was a gentleness in Jeongguk’s tone that wasn’t there before. Yoongi had to carefully analyse the maknae’s face to determine that it was, in fact, Jeongguk he was talking to. Yoongi stared at the wide orbs looking back at him, and did his best to decipher the meaning behind his sudden tenderness. Was he acting this way because of something Yoongi had said?

Jeongguk tilted his head slightly. “Yoongi-hyung, I know you don’t like people I guess, asking about you this way but, well. I feel like I need to, with how I don’t know, out of character you’ve been recently? Like, you were really um, angry and aggressive towards everyone earlier, so…”

The maknae’s lips drew together in a thin line. Yoongi had to force a neutral expression to remain on his face, because he was afraid of how broken he would look if he allowed a natural emotion to surface. He couldn’t look like that to Jeongguk, not now, and not ever. It was his job to look after the maknae, and he couldn’t ever imagine forcing those roles to reverse. That would just further prove how damaging their statuses were to their everyday lives. He couldn’t allow himself to have moments of weakness like any other omega would, especially not in front of a headstrong alpha like Jeongguk, who had already somewhat proved his status in their conversation earlier with everyone.

Yoongi envied the control and levelheadedness Jeongguk had exhibited then. It was a constant reminder to Yoongi that he hadn’t been able to match his maturity, and that stung him. He was four years older than him. He should have been the responsible one, and yet he hadn’t been.

Jeongguk’s hand wrapped around Yoongi’s forearm, and Yoongi surprisingly didn’t contemplate jerking away from the maknae’s touch as he had with Seokjin. Briefly, he wondered why that was, but he wasn’t able to complete his thought process before Jeongguk spoke again.

“I need to ask if you’re alright. You’re worrying me, hyung.” The younger paused momentarily before mumbling out, “More so than usual.”
It took so much of Yoongi’s self restraint to not react to those words. He wasn’t even sure if Jeongguk knew the gravity of what he had said. He’d basically just admitted to Yoongi that he worried over the older, and it had never occurred to Yoongi that anyone would worry over him in the first place; especially someone who was the maknae of their group. It was natural for the maknae to be cared for and worried over. It wasn’t as natural to care and worry over an older member.

Or maybe all of the members worried over him. He wouldn’t know though, as Jeongguk was the only group member younger than him to obviously express it.

Some unspeakable part of Yoongi was touched by the words, but another part was shocked at how touched he was. He shouldn’t care if other people care about him. Even if that other person was Jeongguk. It was a personal policy of Yoongi’s to not care.

As of late, though, Yoongi had found it harder to keep to his own policy around Jeongguk.

Yoongi returned his attention to the current moment. How was he supposed to respond to Jeongguk? Should he lie? Confess the truth? Or tell him white lies and half truths to protect himself?

The older decided to go with the third option. Less people would be hurt by his words if they were partially honest, but the better aspect of it was that the majority of Yoongi’s true feelings remained hidden from the rest of the world. For not even he could decipher his own emotions yet, and he didn’t want to let anybody in to decipher them themselves. There was just something too vulnerable about allowing someone else access to your innermost thoughts and feelings, and Yoongi despised being vulnerable as an omega already. He didn’t need to add being vulnerable as Min Yoongi to that list.

“Kook, this is my answer. I’m not okay. I hate being an omega. I hate the heats, and the urges, and the stigma that comes with it. I can’t think of anything beneficial about my status, so I’m just, pissed off that life continues treating me this way.”

The hand around him let go. “Wait, what do you mean by ‘continues’, hyung? Is there something else bothering you?”

And Yoongi hadn’t meant to let that slip. He was usually so immaculate with his lies, so careful with his words, so it was just his luck that on one of the rare occasions something important relied
on telling a good lie, he couldn’t deliver.

“Well, Kook, on any given day I can assure you that I’m bothered by a great many things-”

Jeongguk dipped his head. “That’s not what I meant, hyung. You know that.”

“Yeah, I know.”

Yoongi stared at the floor. He really didn’t want to continue this talk with Jeongguk. He’d already apologised, and he still hadn’t made his mind up on Taehyung’s suggestion. He couldn’t see himself making a solid decision anytime soon, either. Not after Seokjin’s heartfelt words of worry.

Jeongguk took another sip of his coffee, the action oddly casual considering what they were discussing.

“I really hate prying, hyung, but I just- I don’t know how I can help you if I don’t know what you’re worrying over.”

Yoongi appreciated the younger caring for him, but that didn’t mean he wanted the younger worrying over him. That was Yoongi’s job. The older wasn’t used to it being the other way around, and he didn’t want it to be the other way around. Not after Jeongguk had presented as an alpha and he as an omega. It would finalise the changes their statuses had brought into his lives permanently if he allowed the younger to worry over him. He needed to halt the younger’s worries where they stood, before everything changed too violently.

“I don’t need you to help me.”

The older ignored the persistent look in the maknae’s eyes. “But I want to help you, Yoongi-hyung.”

A knot formed in Yoongi’s throat. He didn’t want to walk down this path with Jeongguk, but if he had to, then he would. It’s self preservation, Yoongi argued with himself. He shouldn’t feel guilty for what he was about to say.
“How, Jeongguk? How do you want to help me? Do you want to help me with my heats? Because I still haven’t decided on that, and I’ll tell you when I’ve made a decision.”

Jeongguk swallowed, but other than that Yoongi couldn’t make out any other visible signs of discomfort. He was standing his ground, Yoongi realised several sentences too late. He wasn’t about to let Yoongi ignore his position, as much as the older wanted to.

“No, hyung. Let me speak. I want to...” He fidgeted with his hands as he answered Yoongi. “I want to help you accept yourself.”

The one moment Yoongi wanted to meet Jeongguk’s eyes to see if he was being sincere, he couldn’t. His gaze was fixed on his hands, as if he was slightly embarrassed he had admitted that aloud. Yoongi registered that he needed to say something, anything to break the unsettling silence between them.

“I’m not sure that’s possible, Kookie.”

That made the maknae’s eyes meet his, but Yoongi didn’t expect them to look so distraught when he met them.

“Then I’ll make it possible, hyung. I just can’t stand seeing you so closed off, and, I don’t know, is lonely the right word? Probably not, but that’s not the point. I’m trying to say that you obviously hate being an omega, like it’s no secret, but none of us really know why. And that lack of information, hyung, it’s... it’s scaring me.”

Jeongguk’s breath shuddered. “I want to know why, hyung, but you won’t let us know.”

Yoongi’s hand shook as he raised his cup of coffee to his lips. He sipped the coffee slowly, anything to draw out the time he had left until he needed to respond. When he eventually placed the empty cup back on the bench, he couldn’t even look in Jeongguk’s direction.

“Jeongguk, I can’t tell you why. I’m sorry I can’t, but I... Fuck, I don’t even know myself anymore. I just can’t, I can’t do it. I’m sorry.”

He left his stool before the tears could form in his eyes. He knew he was about to cry, and he couldn’t do that in front of Jeongguk. He was always strong for his maknae, and he always had a
collected appearance in front of him. He didn’t burst into tears at the thought of finally opening up to someone. He wasn’t ever like that, and he hadn’t been like that with Seokjin when they’d spoken earlier. So why was the prospect of telling Jeongguk everything on his mind so terrifying, when he’d done such a similar confession with his own hyung earlier?

Did he really care that much about Jeongguk’s opinion that he was scared of how he’d react to Yoongi’s thoughts?

Everything suddenly mattered too much to Yoongi, and when he closed his dorm’s door and collapsed onto his bed, he didn’t let the tears that had gathered in his eyes fall. He was Min Yoongi. He didn’t cry, and he wasn’t weak and vulnerable.

Being an omega didn’t change that.

Chapter End Notes

Hello everybody! I hope you’re all enjoying reading this as much as I’m enjoying writing it :) On Jan 26th I’m going to see BTS’s Seoul concert in cinemas so I’m super hyped for that! Then it’s back to school ☹️, so I’m trying to make the most of my time by writing every day up until then.

(Also, TXT is coming guys so get excited :DD)

So yeah, thanks for reading, and I hope you liked this update! I’m trying to get the next chapter up around next Saturday.
Yoongi had woken up five days later to the sound of his alarm, but when the will to leave his bed wasn’t there he knew he was in for a horrible day.

He tugged the blankets that had dropped to his waist in his sleep up to his chin and buried his face in the material. The beeping was still present, persistently attacking Yoongi’s ears and telling him to hurry up and start the day like any other person was expected to. Yoongi ignored it for as long as possible, which somehow ended up being long enough for the sound to stop of its own accord.

Yoongi felt his bed dip, but he didn’t need to move his head from the covers to know it was Seokjin who was sitting on it.

“Ya, you gonna get up? We’ve only got an hour until we need to leave.”

The younger wanted to groan at Seokjin’s words. He wanted nothing more than to lie in bed for the remainder of the day. There was an unsettling dreariness to his limbs when he pulled the blankets down and slowly sat up to face Seokjin. His hyung had already showered by the looks of it, as he was dressed in a basic white shirt with ripped jeans to match. Yoongi gradually turned his head to look at the time on the digital clock in their room, and swore quietly when he read the 7:58am on the screen’s face. He hadn’t just slept for an extra minute, he realised with a grimace. He’d slept for another 58 minutes.

He should’ve thanked Seokjin for properly waking him up, as he couldn’t imagine himself getting ready in time if his hyung hadn’t urged him to finally get up. But he didn’t. He was too consumed with the thought of the fan sign he was going to have to endure that day. The very idea of interacting with hundreds of people he didn’t know left an uncomfortable weight in his stomach. He really didn’t want to talk to other people. He wasn’t sure if he could, actually.

Yoongi barely had the motivation to make his way over to the shower. He half expected Jeongguk to step out of it again half-naked, but he quickly shoved that image to a dark corner of his mind. He wasn’t supposed to be remembering that.

He entered the bathroom and drowsily wiped his eyes with his fingers. He didn’t want to be around anyone that day, but he didn’t think he had a choice in the matter. This fan sign had been scheduled for over three months, and for him to pull out of it on such short notice in his eyes would be such a
shitty move. He knew how long some of their fans waited for this opportunity, so he’d be damned if he let his mental state get in the way of their happiness. He would just have to deal with his mood the same way he dealt with everything; by pretending it didn’t affect him.

He hoped he would be able to put up the pretence for the full day. It would be difficult, without a doubt, and the recent stresses he’d had to deal with in relation to his omega status surely didn’t help either.

Yoongi stood back from the shower head as he turned the water on and waited for it to heat it up. In the meantime, he stripped himself of his clothes and avoided the mirror at all costs. He knew the thoughts that would pop up the moment he saw his reflection were going to be far from pleasant, so if he could do anything to lessen the way he was feeling he was going to do it. His eyes evaded the mirror skilfully, and not long after he hopped under the spray of the water and drowned himself in his thoughts.

The water boiled his skin. He’d purposely made the temperature hotter than usual, and so far it was doing a successful job of distracting him from the ideas spinning relentlessly in his head. He lethargically rubbed his skin with a bar of soap and let his eyes stare off into the distance as he did so. Really, this moment in the shower would be his only opportunity to act as he really wanted to without the eyes of others constantly on him. He knew that if he acted like this in front of anyone else, they would immediately be concerned over his wellbeing when they really didn’t need to be. He’d gone through many periods like this over the course of his life; he could manage going through another one.

And if things did end up getting too heavy for him, then he could always go to Namjoon. He understood Yoongi during his episodes better than Yoongi understood himself, but the opposite was also true in terms of Namjoon’s anxiety. Yoongi could ease him through any moments of panic the younger had, and more times than not he’d been able to pull Namjoon out of the murky depths of his anxiety. Granted, each other’s presence didn’t always fix everything, but it did help.

Maybe Yoongi would talk to Namjoon later. He’ll see how he goes with the day first, though. See if he can endure his thoughts alone.

It took him much longer than usual to turn the water off. He knew he was stretching what little time he had left, but he couldn’t find the energy to care. It didn’t matter if he was a few minutes late. It wouldn’t matter to anyone.

He slowly pulled a towel around his frame as he stepped out of the shower. He yawned, imagining himself still in bed then. It would have been a dream come true to Yoongi if he’d been allowed to spend the entire day in his dorm, but he knew he had responsibilities and roles to fulfil as an idol. It came with the job description, after all.
So Yoongi left the bathroom with the towel still wrapped around his waist and made his way to his dorm. He didn’t so much as look at the other members gathered around the table next to the kitchen. He could confront their surprised faces at how slow he was being that morning later. For now, he wanted to focus on getting suitable clothes on for the fan sign, even though they’d probably be changed by his stylist noona’s when they arrived. So that meant he was wasting his limited time on something that didn’t matter again. Huh.

The world was cruel in ways it didn’t even know about.

He spent no effort on his appearance as he threw on the first clean shirt he saw in his wardrobe alongside a pair of black jeans that would work with anything. He didn’t even assess his appearance before he exited the dorm, instead deciding to simply accept what he was wearing and focus on more important things with his time.

Like how he was going to live the rest of his life as an omega.

Yoongi dragged his feet over to the table the rest of the members were eating breakfast at, and poured himself a glass of water. He concentrated on the task at hand, not really having to try to ignore the other’s eyes. It was second nature by now, with how often he’d had to retreat into himself when episodes like this hit him. They hadn’t been particularly severe as of late, but that didn’t mean Yoongi wasn’t still weary of them. While he felt relatively in control of his thoughts then, he wasn’t sure if that control was going to slip. It hadn’t in a long time, Yoongi realised as he drank his water. But that didn’t mean it wasn’t going to happen.

“You all good, Yoongi-hyung?” Namjoon asked.

The older smiled half-heartedly. It wasn’t like he was all bubbles and sunshine normally, so he thought his lack of energy was fine.

“I stayed up to work on a track last night. I’m tired.”

His eyes were focused on the glass in his hand, as they had been for a while now. He didn’t need to look at Namjoon to know that the leader was going to keep an eye on him due to that response. Yoongi could’ve sighed if he wasn’t surrounded by the other members. What other reply could he have given to provide the illusion that he was fine?
Yoongi felt Taehyung staring at him from across the table, and he really could strangle the younger sometimes. He still hadn’t asked him how he knew about his and Jeongguk’s status, and Yoongi felt that the longer he left it the more susceptible Taehyung would be to saying Yoongi had imagined him knowing anything at all before their confessions. He was going to ask him that day, he decided. When they were alone, because he wasn’t sure if the information he was going to receive was appropriate for other’s ears.

He only stayed at the table for a few minutes before he left for his dorm again. So much for them being late because of him. They were all still eating their breakfast.

With a grunt, Yoongi collapsed onto his bed. He wanted nothing more than to lay there for the rest of the day. He wouldn’t be concerning anyone at the fan sign, and he would be able to tackle his mood independently. That was how he’d usually done it. Sure, there was the rare occasion he’d needed to talk to Namjoon about it because the voices had been too loud, but for the most part he’d been independent. He’d been strong on most occasions.

And that strength was all that Yoongi craved in these moments, because if he was strong during times of hardship then he wasn’t vulnerable; and being vulnerable went against every fibre in Yoongi’s body. He needed to feel in control of a situation, and if he was strong then he was in control. He was himself if he was in control.

But he wasn’t strong or in control when he was vulnerable, he’d concluded years ago when he’d first experienced just how destructive his depression was. And if he was neither when he felt vulnerable, then Yoongi had simply decided right then and there to never feel vulnerable again. Because to Yoongi, being vulnerable was being weak, and it wasn’t his job to feel weak. It was his duty to be strong for his dongsaengs. He couldn’t abandon that responsibility, and he couldn’t abandon his own desires, either. So it was an easy decision to make it the end. He could be strong.

And he had been for years. He’d dealt with his depression rather silently, never making a big deal out of it and often categorising it as just another obstacle life liked to throw at some people. But then, all of a sudden, after having fought so hard for the slight control he’d managed to retain over his emotions and moods, his omega status came in to wreck the meticulous pendulum of his mind.

And by wreck, Yoongi meant devastate.

“Yoongi, we’re leaving now,” Jimin said as he ducked his head around the doorway. Yoongi saw the dancer’s eyebrows lower slightly when he saw him resting on the bed.

“Hyung, if you’re that tired then I’m sure Sejin-hyung wouldn’t mind you taking the day off.”
Yoongi slowly sat upright at that. “I’m swear I’m fine, Jimin. Just feeling a little under the weather.”

His words were packed with a double meaning, but Yoongi realised after he’d said them that Jimin was the wrong person to say them to. The dancer always battled his own demons, like they all did, but his were so scarily similar to Yoongi’s sometimes that he had to have perceived the dual meaning. After all, Yoongi was pretty sure Jimin fabricated similar sentences when he was fighting his own devils.

Jimin hovered in front of the door. “Okay. But you need to tell me when it gets worse, hyung.”

Yoongi told himself not to stare at Jimin.

“Promise me, please.”

There was the slightest of creases in between the dancer’s eyebrows, and Yoongi couldn’t tear himself away from it. Why was everyone so worried about him? Was he not allowed to deal with his own issues? It surely felt like it, with Jimin now breathing down his neck too.

“Yeah, fine. I’ll tell you.”

He’d only said it to relieve any worries Jimin had. He wasn’t planning on telling Jimin anything, or anyone for that matter. Even telling Namjoon felt like a faraway fantasy since he’d sat down for breakfast, or really his excuse for breakfast, earlier. So while the guilt he felt for lying so blatantly to Jimin was there, the relief that the dancer wasn’t going to constantly ask about his wellbeing was much more prevalent.

“Ya!” Yoongi heard Hoseok call out. “Hurry up you two! We don’t want to be late for Army!”

Yoongi scrunched his nose up. He really didn’t want to leave his bed, but he knew there wasn’t a realistic alternative. He couldn’t skip a fan sign simply because he wasn’t feeling up to it. That wasn’t the way things worked in this world. So he was just going to have to deal with it. Like he normally did.
Jimin sagged against the doorway briefly. The faintest of smiles was evident on his lips. “Thanks hyung. I, um. I know it’s not easy.”

With that, the dancer left Yoongi’s presence, and the older had to ask himself just what Jimin was referring to when he said it wasn’t easy.

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Everything was too loud. They’d heard the cheers through their van before they’d opened the door, and when they’d exited the vehicle Yoongi’s eardrums had practically burst. After doing so many fan signs over the years, he probably should have become accustomed to how energetic their audiences were.

He wasn’t accustomed to their energy just yet, apparently. He had to resist the urge to wince when a piercing shriek came from a girl not even four metres away from him and yeah, he loved his audience to death, but on occasions like this he wished they were just a little more... quiet. He didn’t even know why, but there was a small coil of anxiety now sitting deep in his stomach that hadn’t been there earlier. And he hadn’t felt anxious at a fan sign in ages.

Why was he feeling anxious? He shouldn’t be feeling anxious. He didn’t want to deal with the very real possibility of a panic attack on top of his current depressive episode, because he wasn’t sure if he could handle both. He’d very rarely had to tackle both at once. And when he had, someone had known about it and been able to help him get through it.

As he made his way backstage, he realised he was all alone on this occasion. Sure, Namjoon had his suspicions about his state of mind, and Jimin had gone out of his way to make sure he would confide to the younger when everything got too much for him, but neither of them were by his side right then. They weren’t rubbing his shoulders and telling him the moment will pass and make way for happier times. They weren’t guiding him to a private place to sort out his anxiety.

They weren’t there for them right then, and Yoongi had nobody but himself to blame.

One of their stylists tutted at his outfit when he finally reached the backstage area. There were mirrors and changing rooms in every direction, and Yoongi was quickly ushered to one of these rooms as another noona chose a different outfit for him. Yet another noona told him to meet her as soon as he’d changed into his new outfit so that she could do his hair and makeup, and as much as Yoongi wanted to thank them for their efforts, he couldn’t. They were stressing him out. They only had fifteen minutes left until they were supposed to be seated on stage, and he still had so much left to do. His stylist noonas usually took close to an hour to perfect everyone’s looks. Yoongi knew
they were pushing it to get him a new outfit as well as perfect makeup and hair in the time they had left.

Yoongi watched from the corner of his eye as the other member’s outfits were approved by their stylists. They then sat down in chairs so that the noonas could do their hairs, and Yoongi felt something sharp press against his ribcage. It felt like a knife was slowly being dragged down his chest.

Why was his life so stressful in comparison to others? Why couldn’t he be sitting in a chair alongside them? Were the clothes he’d chosen really that unsuitable for their fan sign?

A stylist then handed him a few items of clothing, and he forced himself to hurry over to the dressing rooms. His feet had been dragging themselves everywhere for the most part of the day, so Yoongi could tell the sudden change in pace had his anxiety ready to pounce at any moment. Damnit, he shouldn’t be feeling this anxious over a fan sign. He’d done them before, countless times, and they really weren’t anything to feel stressed over.

But maybe this particular fan sign was worth stressing over. It would be his first public appearance as an omega since his heat, and Yoongi knew exactly how analytical their fan base could be on the most insignificant things. Yoongi’s hands shook as he pulled his black jeans down in the dressing room. He quickly replaced them with the new white jeans the stylist had given him, and he knew it was stupid but he felt extremely overexposed wearing the severely ripped jeans. He wanted to be back in bed with his thoughts and his thoughts alone, not here. Not where he was expected to be putting his best foot forward with every step.

He pulled his shirt off without too much thought and replaced it with the black and white striped t-shirt he’d been given. The shirt was cropped a little higher than he would’ve liked, so much so that the fabric rode up to reveal his stomach when he lifted his arms. Yoongi frowned.

Today was not the day for Yoongi to wear this kind of clothing. He already felt so unguarded to other people’s looks, like they would be able to pick up on him being an omega from every small movement he made. He didn’t need to feel even more revealing than he already felt.

He tried to tuck his shirt into his pants so that it wouldn’t reveal his stomach every time he moved, but he had to stretch the shirt fairly harshly to manage it. He knew his stylist noona wouldn’t be happy with his action, but he really didn’t want to wear the clothes as they were meant to be worn. He didn’t want to feel vulnerable, and the cut of these clothes were making him feel exactly that.

He blamed the anxiety lodged firmly inside him for feeling so unmasked. He didn’t feel out in the
open like this with his depression. He felt the need to curl up in his room on his bed and ride the
day out peacefully when he was in the midst of his melancholy, but his anxiety... that was a
different story.

“Yoongi-hyung?” A voice that sounded similar to Taehyung’s called out. “Are you nearly done in
there? The noonas are getting worried.”

A cold sweat struck his palms. “Ah, yeah. I’m coming out now.”

Yoongi chucked his own clothes into the corner of the change room for later and dashed out to
meet Taehyung standing in front of the exit.

“Come on, hyung. You still need your makeup done, don’t you? Oh, and your hair!”

A small voice of reminder struck the back of his mind. He should ask Taehyung how he knew
about his status now, while they were both alone. But would he have enough time to answer?
Yoongi discarded that thought. He didn’t care if he had enough time to explain. He wanted
answers, and had wanted them for a while. He was going to get them, now or never.

“How did you know I was an omega? And Jeongguk, too. How’d you know he was an alpha?”

Yoongi kept walking when Taehyung’s pace slowed up. He wanted a short answer, a precise one
he could have now and question him about later. He still needed so much done before they went
out for the signing. He was relying on Taehyung to spit something out in response.

Taehyung seemed to catch on to Yoongi’s need for promptness, as he rushed to catch up with
Yoongi’s steps just as a stylist began approaching him.

“I’ll tell you later, hyung. I promise. I just, completely forgot to tell you.” Taehyung ducked his
head subtly. “Sorry about that.”

Yoongi wasn’t given an opportunity to respond, as the stylist noona had already begun assessing
his outfit.
“Yoongi, you’re not supposed to tuck that in.”

She moved to fix the shirt, but Yoongi took a small step backwards.

“Is there anything else I can wear?”

Yoongi purposely looked away from her and Taehyung’s questioning gazes. Before he knew it though, his arm was being tugged and then he was whisked off to a chair in front of a mirror. Another stylist stood over him as they sorted through the makeup brushes in their hand.

“We’re really pushing it this time, Yoongi.”

And they were. Yoongi knew that. He’d spent too long in the dressing room, he’d stared at his outfit for just a moment too long. He’d tried to fix it, too, when really there wasn’t anything to be fixed.

Except maybe his self esteem. And his mood. And the constant anxiety he felt bubbling up his throat.

His noona quickly applied the makeup, doing her best to work efficiently with the little time she had left. Yoongi didn’t complain when she became a little rough with her techniques as the time they had left dwindled away.

He could feel other people’s glancing at them. They were due out in a matter of seconds, and Yoongi knew he wasn’t ready just yet. Well, his appearance wasn’t ready to be seen in public yet, but he physically didn’t feel ready to be out in the open yet either. He wondered if anybody would hate him if he didn’t put any effort into the fan sign.

But deep down, he knew he could never do that. Not to his fans.

So, when he was told that he could leave with the others to the front of the stage, Yoongi untucked his shirt. He could deal with the eyes he got for his outfit, just as he could deal with the searching stares of the audience. He’d done this hundreds of times before. He could do it one more time.
Yoongi smiled when they walked out on stage, despite the large knot in his stomach. He told himself he could do this, so he did. That’s just how he functioned.

The smile wasn’t even that forced.

“Hello everyone!” Namjoon greeted into a microphone as he sat down on the chair closest to the exit they’d just come out of. They were in an indoor entertainment centre, and the queue that had formed upon their arrival was enormous. Yoongi couldn’t even see the end of it from where he was. A light sweat tickled the back of his neck when he realised he’d have to talk to every one of these people today.

The instinct to crawl into a ball was there, but Yoongi shoved the blame for that reaction onto his omega side. He’d done this so many times before, and yet the omega part of him wanted to cower from the sheer amount of people.

Or maybe that was his anxiety talking. Yoongi couldn’t really tell anymore.

Yoongi sat down next to Namjoon, thankful that he had him right next to him in case anything happened. He didn’t expect anything to happen, but he didn’t see any harm at having Namjoon at arm’s reach. If anything, it loosened the knot in his stomach slightly.

Jeongguk sat down next to him, and Taehyung after him. Yoongi then looked out at the crowd of beaming faces, and resisted the instinct to duck his head at the mass of eyes on him. He didn’t look any different, right? He hoped he wasn’t giving omega vibes to anyone.

“Okay, so I hope you guys all know how this works,” Hoseok started further down the table. “You’ll make your way down the table, starting with Namjoon on that end and ending with Jimin on this end. You’ll be able to have one item signed by us as you make your way down the line, that way everyone can get through before the day ends. Sound good everyone?”

A chorus of cheers responded to him, and the smile Yoongi made was less forced this time. Maybe if he focused on everyone else’s happiness he would be able to think of something other than his own despondency.

The first few fans made their way up to the table, and Yoongi got his pen ready as the first fan, a teenage boy, bowed in front of Namjoon. He heard snippets of their short conversation and the corners of his lips rose when the boy complimented Namjoon on how wonderful his latest mixtape
was. He could even feel the flush on Namjoon’s face from where he was sitting.

Maybe this wouldn’t be too horrible.

An hour passed before Yoongi could bat an eyelid. He wasn’t feeling quite as anxious anymore. The weight was still settling in his stomach, but it no longer felt like a heavy stone. Instead, he found his mood to be very subdued and borderline disinterested in what was going on around him. He greeted the fans with a smile, but not much else. He wasn’t able to give them much more than that, as sad as that was. Even giving them a smile felt like he was betraying himself.

He was being praised by people for being so open and honest with his lyrics, and all Yoongi could do was nod along and thank them for liking his words. He wondered if they would still think of him as open and honest if they ever found out he was an omega. Or if they would even respect him anymore as both an idol, and a person, if they ever found out. Because not everyone was bound to react as neutrally to his status as the other members had.

Some people were bound to react the same way those people online had.

Yoongi blinked rapidly to return to the present moment. Nobody else but the people sitting alongside him knew he was an omega. And it was going to stay that way. Yoongi was going to ensure it stayed that way.

He took a sip from his water bottle as a short break presented itself. A girl was chatting enthusiastically to Namjoon about his composing, and from what Yoongi could hear she knew what she was talking about. Namjoon seemed to be enjoying himself, and moments later Yoongi heard Jeongguk’s giggle from beside him.

The maknae was wearing devil horns with a pair of circular lenses, and the fan laughing in front of him was holding out a small red triton for him to hold. He gleefully accepted the prop and stood up dramatically, eyeing the sea of people before him with a hint of mischief in his eyes.

Then, he pointed the triton at Yoongi with a microphone to his lips.

“I guess I’m not really the Golden Maknae anymore hyung,” he commented as he jabbed the triton into Yoongi’s arm. “I’ve decided to become more of an Evil Maknae now.”
Yoongi picked up his own mic. “What do you mean, you’re only deciding to become an evil maknae now? You’ve been one from the very beginning.”

The audience erupted into cackles, and Yoongi had to bite back a smile. Jeongguk’s signature bunny smile was on display for the world to see, and something within Yoongi warmed at the sight. It was nice to see him happy after everything that had happened regarding their statuses. It gave Yoongi hope that maybe, he would feel the same way soon. Hopefully. Maybe.

Jeongguk returned his attention to the girl giggling in front of him, and Yoongi forced his own attention to focus on the person next in line. The girl who’d been speaking so casually to Namjoon about his composing was now standing awkwardly in front of him. He swallowed around the knot that had suddenly risen to his throat.

“I, uh, I want to thank you, Suga-oppa.”

Yoongi watched as she pulled out a photo-card for him to sign. It depicted an image of him from their ‘I Need U’ era, with his mint green hair faintly reminding him of the scent he’s going to emit every three months. No, don’t think about that here. This is the wrong time and place to be thinking about being an omega.

“I love every single song you’ve written. You pour so much into your work, and the lyrics themselves help me so much, like, you have no idea oppa. I, um, I did suffer from severe depression a couple of years ago, and um, it got pretty bad. But then I came across your music, and it... It helped me get through the tough times, oppa.”

He nodded along to what the fan was saying as he signed her photo-card. He did his best to cover up the slight tremble to his fingers as he held the pen over the card.

“And it’s not just that, Suga-oppa. You yourself act as an example, I guess. Because you live your life normally and don’t let your mental health affect the way you’ve chosen to live. You live the way you want, without restrictions, you could say, and I just don’t know how to tell you how much hope that’s given me as well as like, so many others. Just, thank you so much for not allowing something like depression to control you.”

Yoongi’s hands were clenched into fists.

“You really motivate us to live our own way, without the barriers depression usually put up. So
yeah, thanks for everything.”

The girl bowed deeply before moving on to Jeongguk, and then she was back to her enthusiastic self as she spoke to Jeongguk about his incredible dancing and live vocals.

Yoongi struggled to breathe.

“I’m going to the bathroom,” he muttered to Namjoon as he left his seat with suppressed urgency. He couldn’t let on to anyone he was leaving for any other reason, because he needed to handle this on his own. He needed to prove to himself that he could still handle things on his own. He was still independent, and when he was on the rare occasion vulnerable, he was vulnerable alone.

He barely heard Namjoon on stage announce that they were taking a short break before he made it into the backstage bathroom. The panic he’d fostered for the past two hours had finally chosen to erupt, and Yoongi could only be thankful that he was alone now that it had. He couldn’t image how traumatising it would have been to have an attack on stage. Oh fuck. What if he’d had it on stage in front of everyone?

Yoongi slammed his back against the tiled wall of the bathroom and sunk his head into the palms of his hands. This wasn’t happening, he wasn’t having a panic attack because of something a fan had said.

But he was. Because what that fan had said so honestly to him, was nothing but a thread of lies. And what was worse, was that the thread of lies were constructed by Yoongi himself.

He’d fed his fans the lie that his life wasn’t entirely dictated around something. And while it might no longer be true to his depression, or even his anxiety, it was true for his omega status. He was living a life now dictated by his omega status. And he hated how he’d only just discovered how to handle the first two mental health issues, only to be thrown yet another permanent obstacle. And there was no one he could reach out to for advice regarding his status, like he could with his other problems. Even the hospital staff he’d come across had limited ways to help him. So that left him only with the other members of Bangtan.

Yoongi’s breathing stilled.

His throat felt like it was closing up. He was living a lie to his audience, and he was lying to himself the longer he told himself he didn’t need help. Because he did. He needed someone to help
him get out of his melancholy moods, and he needed somebody to count his breaths when he felt the imaginary hands tighten around his neck. He needed somebody to dump his issues onto, because he wasn’t sure if he could carry them by himself any longer.

But he didn’t know how to ask for the help. Because he’d never asked for help before, and before now he’d never intended on asking for help. He didn’t even know what kind of help he was needing. He didn’t know anything.

His legs couldn’t hold him up any longer. Yoongi felt his knees buckle and the next thing he knew, he was curled up in a ball on the floor, struggling to draw one breath in after another. Why couldn’t he breathe? Was the fact that he was living a lie that stressful for him? Why couldn’t he just get over it already?

It wasn’t even just his fans he was lying to. Yoongi shuddered violently when he realised he was lying to the other members of Bangtan, too, and he had been for months. They were like a second family to him, and yet he’d been content with lying to them about his moods and his emotions for so long. Yoongi threw his fist to the floor, trying to rid himself of his self-directed anger, but the action was in vain.

It was then that the bathroom door opened, and Namjoon and Jeongguk rushed to his side.

Yoongi could’ve breathed out a sigh of relief if he’d been able to draw in proper breaths. Namjoon was here, and he’d helped Yoongi with his panic attacks before. He could help him out of this one before the audience outside got too suspicious of his abrupt departure.

But why the hell was Jeongguk here?

He shouldn’t be here. He’d never seen his hyung act this way, he’d never seen Yoongi go through an attack before. He would have no clue how to help Yoongi, and from the almost comical way his eyes widened at the sight of him curled into a ball on the ground, Yoongi guessed he was debating on whether or not he should stay in the room.

Namjoon was crouching in front of him now. Yoongi tried to say to him that he should get Jeongguk out of the room because he didn’t know what he was dealing with, but his throat then decided to close up on him. Why couldn’t he just do what he wanted to do? Why did he have to be so affected by things he didn’t want to be affected by?
“Hyung, I need you to look at me.”

Yoongi didn’t even realise he was staring at Jeongguk. He just wanted the maknae out of the room. He’d done so well to avoid showing this volatile self of himself to anyone but Namjoon, and he couldn’t let anyone else see him this way because this wasn’t him. He didn’t want the others to remember him by this, this moment of weakness he’d only ever had to share with Namjoon. He didn’t want this single, uncontrollable moment to cast a different light on his character that Jeongguk would remember him by.

Oh, shit.

Was that why he hated being an omega so much?

Did he hate losing control of himself that much that he’d just compared what little control he had now, in the midst of a panic attack, to the nonexistent control he has as an omega in heat?

Yoongi felt like he was an outsider in his own body when it began to shake violently with random spasms.

“Hey Yoongi-hyung, hyung, you need to breathe, you’re not breathing.”

The older opened his mouth to let in air, but his lungs wouldn’t take it in. They felt tight in his chest, too tight, and Yoongi really just wanted to be back in his own bed so that he could cry his own misery away. He should have told Jimin earlier that he was feeling awful. He should have approached Namjoon and given him a heads up on his mental state. He should have... no, he shouldn’t have told the other members. Because if he had, he’d have six other people in this bathroom with him instead of two.

He could barely manage two. He had no idea how he would’ve coped with six.

Jeongguk had crouched down to his eye level now, but Yoongi could barely focus on that. Everything around him felt surreal, like it was happening to someone else. This wasn’t Yoongi going through a panic attack, this was someone else. He was someone else in this moment. Someone that only Namjoon knew.

Now Jeongguk knew him too, Yoongi realised with a dreadful shiver.
He’d been there for who knew how long and he was no where near a normal state of mind. How was he supposed to face an audience for the remainder of the day? He couldn’t do that. There was no way he could do that, not when he still couldn’t breathe like a normal person-

A pair of hands latched onto his own, and finally, finally, Yoongi could breathe.

Air came into his previously tight lungs, and Yoongi lowered his knees from his chest as more and more oxygen filled his body. It was like the weight in his throat was slowly being dragged back down to the depths of his stomach. The entire time, Yoongi focused on a mark on the tiles beside him, because he didn’t want to find out whose hands were holding him together. He already had a strong suspicion, but he couldn’t let that suspicion become a reality.

“Hyung,” Yoongi distinctly heard Namjoon address. “Can you follow my breathing now?”

Shakily, Yoongi nodded. He thought he could, now that something was grounding him in reality. He scrunched his eyes quickly in an effort to brace himself, and then he turned to face the owner of the hands.

Jeongguk’s hands rested gently around his own, and all three sets of eyes in the room were looking at it.

Yoongi forced his stare to focus on Namjoon. The leader’s eyebrows were drawn together, and his lips were sitting in an uncharacteristic flat line. The older kept his eyes on Namjoon, though. He could wonder what he was thinking about later.

“Okay, copy my breaths, Yoongi-hyung.”

Namjoon breathed in deeply, and Yoongi was able to copy, albeit a little shallower. When the younger let the breath out, Yoongi felt the knot in his stomach eventually begin to unwind. Subconsciously, he intertwined his fingers with the hands on his lap.

“You’re doing so well, hyung,” Jeongguk commented.

Yoongi looked away from Namjoon at that. His and Jeongguk’s gazes met, and Yoongi couldn’t
ignore the creases of worry on his forehead or the small beads of sweat on his temples. He should’ve ignored the look in his eye, though. Yoongi didn’t know how to treat the wideness of his pupils, or the way his orbs locked onto his own like he was the only thing ever worth looking at.

Yoongi didn’t let go of Jeongguk’s hands.

“How are you feeling, hyung?”

Yoongi spun around to face Namjoon, and had he really just stared at Jeongguk in front of Namjoon?

The older cleared his throat to test if he could use his voice again. “Much better. I haven’t had one that bad in a while...”

Yoongi scratched the back of his neck as he peered up at Namjoon. He silently requested something as he glanced at Jeongguk, and thankfully, the leader understood.

“Jeongguk, it’ll look less suspicious if we all come back on stage at different times.”

Jeongguk, for what Yoongi felt like was the first time since they’d been in the bathroom, turned around to look at Namjoon. The creases in his forehead were no longer present.

“Yeah, yeah, um okay. I’ll go on first, then. See you guys out there, yeah?”

The maknae glanced one last time at Yoongi before he left the bathroom. He clearly didn’t want to leave them, but Yoongi respected him for listening to Namjoon’s request. He just, really needed a moment alone with the leader.

“How are you feeling, Yoongi-hyung?”

The older nearly rolled his eyes at the question. “You just asked me that.”

“I’m expecting an honest answer this time.”
Yoongi couldn’t even be that surprised that Namjoon had read him so well. He’d even had his suspicions about Yoongi’s health earlier that day, well ahead of any visible signs of his distress. Yoongi wondered sometimes how he read the older like a book.

“Well, if you want me to be honest,” Yoongi started with a lilt to his tone, “I still feel like shit.”

Namjoon pursed his lips and lifted his hand to his chin, clearly deep in thought. “You should have told me earlier, at breakfast. You didn’t have to come today. Sejin-hyung would’ve understood.”

The older shook his head. They weren’t on the same page yet. “That’s the thing though, Joon. It wasn’t that bad at the start of the day. It was just... lots of little things happened today that finally built up to cause this shitshow.”

A content silence passed through the bathroom. Yoongi shifted so that he was sitting on his haunches, and Namjoon then stood up and offered him a hand. Yoongi gratefully accepted it, and then they were exiting the bathroom with a certain slowness to their steps. Neither of them were really that keen to get back to the fan sign, Yoongi realised.

“I’ve got to ask you though hyung, before I forget.”

Yoongi turned to face Namjoon and slowed his steps even more, if that was possible. Then it was just him and Namjoon, in their own little world.

“What happened between you and Jeongguk earlier... Was that some kind of alpha and omega thing?”

The older stopped walking entirely. “What are you on about?”

Namjoon scratched his neck awkwardly. Like he really didn’t want to spell it out for Yoongi. Well, Yoongi thought, he was going to have to. The older legitimately didn’t know what Namjoon was talking about.

“The um, the hand holding. And the eye contact. Was that like, instincts or something?”
Yoongi’s brain raced to catch up with what Namjoon was saying. “I don’t think so?”

The leader nodded again before walking back in the direction of the stage. They’d probably been away from the fan sign for too long, but Yoongi couldn’t care less. Let them all think what they want when him and Namjoon walk out on stage together.

“It’s just- I’ve never seen you calm down that quickly. You didn’t even need me there.”

“Okay, that’s a lie,” Yoongi quickly countered as they approached the stage entrance. “You helped me breathe regularly, which is literally what I struggle with the most. You helped me heaps.”

“But all Jeongguk had to do was touch you, and you were calmer.”

“Joon, I don’t think those were instincts or whatever the hell you’re implying they were. I would’ve noticed if they were.”

Namjoon shuffled on the spot before glancing out at their waiting audience. He didn’t seem, well, angry or frustrated that Jeongguk had somehow calmed him down a lot quicker than Namjoon had ever been able to. Instead, he seemed almost fascinated. Like he was analysing every event he’d witnessed in the lead up to Yoongi being able to speak again after his panic attack. It worried Yoongi that Namjoon felt the need to analysis his and Jeongguk’s interaction in the first place, but he didn’t say that aloud.

“Well,” Namjoon whispered just before he left for the stage, a tone of finality in his voice, “then it must have just been Jeongguk who’d calmed you down.”

Yoongi was left to deal with those words floating in his mind for the remainder of the fan sign, because what exactly did that mean?

Chapter End Notes

Hello everybody! Thanks for reading, and I hope you liked the update!

I’m wondering if anybody would be interested in me doing writing commissions? I understand if you’re broke (I think we all are nowadays anyway 😃), I’m really just
trying to see if anybody would be interested :)

Regardless, have a good day/night wherever you are! The next update will hopefully be coming this Saturday
But I don’t wanna use my head

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

It was easier for Yoongi to get out of bed that day, so immediately the rapper decided it was going to be a better day.

They had a photo shoot lined up for nearly the duration of the day, and oddly enough, Yoongi felt alright with that. The people he worked with on set were all familiar faces, and since that fan sign over a week ago Yoongi had calmed down considerably. His melancholy mood had since disappeared, and there was no longer any anxiety churning dangerously in his stomach. He knew these forces liked to pick and choose when they appeared, but Yoongi couldn’t help but feel relieved that he was at least feeling back to his usual self. There was no cloud looming over him, and his heat was still over two months away. He could be Min Yoongi, and Min Yoongi only, for a little while more.

He showered quickly and greeted Jimin and Hoseok as he exited the bathroom. He was feeling surprisingly energised for the photo shoot, and that was unusual. He didn’t question it though. He didn’t question a lot of things nowadays.

Like Namjoon’s reaction to Jeongguk calming him down. He didn’t want to overthink anything, but Namjoon had probably felt bitter about Jeongguk calming him down quicker than the leader was able to. Yoongi himself still didn’t know what to think about that, either.

He didn’t think it wasn’t his omega instincts, if they even existed outside of his heat, that had calmed him down quicker than he’d anticipated. Yoongi admitted it could have purely been Jeongguk’s presence. But the real question Yoongi didn’t want to answer, was why? Why was Jeongguk immediately able to calm him down when Namjoon, who had so much more experience with helping people through attacks, wasn’t able to?

There weren’t many explanations in Yoongi’s mind for the phenomenon, but a few ideas had popped up over the course of the past week.

The one that Yoongi wanted to believe, was that the presence of Jeongguk as an alpha had somehow calmed his omega side down. Things would make sense then. Yoongi had never calmed down so quickly for anyone else in his life, so if biology had a say in the way he acted, then this explanation would make sense. The only issue with this theory though, was that Yoongi would’ve noticed if his omega side had acted in any way, shape or form towards the alpha.
His omega side had an undeniable presence. Just like his depression and anxiety, he could tell when it was lurking in the depths of his mind. Its existence couldn’t hide from Yoongi. He knew when his inner omega was present and acting out its wishes in his body.

And he hadn’t once felt its presence when Jeongguk had held his hand.

So that left the other theory as more plausible. Considering the facts Yoongi was working with, this theory should be more realistic. It was bound to be. But it wasn’t; at least, not to Yoongi.

It had simply been Jeongguk’s presence itself that had calmed him down, just as Namjoon had suggested before they’d walked onto the stage again. Generally, Yoongi found the golden rule for calming himself down was to get in a private location with someone he trusted, who on every single occasion since he’d moved into Bangtan’s dorms had been Namjoon. He’d associated safety and comfort with the younger, and Yoongi found that he could trust him. This was most likely due to the unofficial contract they’d signed when they’d first helped each other get through their moments of anxiety. There hadn’t needed to say anything aloud to agree that they would always help each other out when they were struggling, and for the last few years that had worked out perfectly for them.

They’d been able to rely on each other, because they’d felt safe with each other. And when Yoongi felt safe, he was able to calm down because he was in control again.

But somehow, Yoongi must have associated safety with the maknae of the group. Otherwise Jeongguk surely wouldn’t have been able to help him through his moment of panic so easily. His reaction to Jeongguk’s presence wouldn’t make sense any other way.

For once, Yoongi bothered grabbing something to eat for breakfast on the way out to the van. Sure, it was only a muesli bar, but it was an improvement on the empty stomach he usually carried to work each morning. Yoongi allowed himself to be happy with his choices for a moment. He could have a good day, he told himself. He could forget about all the forces constantly demanding his attention for a day.

He hopped into the van’s middle row. He had brought a small bag with him to put his current clothes into while he changed in and out of the clothes he’d be wearing for the photo shoot, and he dumped it at his feet as others made their way into the van.

Taehyung slipped into the seat beside him, and Jimin sat beside him. Yoongi watched Hoseok as he whistled and swung the van keys around his finger playfully, almost as if a wide grin was permanently etched onto his lips. Yoongi nearby smiled at the sight of it.
Hoseok collapsed into the driver’s seat and brought a mask up to his cheeks in the process. They could never be too careful on the roads, especially with how many cameras were out and about looking for them now.

The dancer swung around and adjusted the sunglasses on his face. “Joonie’s told me that today’s shoot is going to be pretty interesting.”

He looked between the other three in the van as he spoke, and somehow, Yoongi found himself looking forward to the shoot. It was probably Hoseok’s infectious mood making him excited, but a separate part of Yoongi was keen for the distraction. They hadn’t had much on their schedules because the promotions for their most recent comeback had finished recently, so Yoongi found himself losing time to his thoughts more often than not.

He still had to come to a decision on what he was going to do for his next heat, and it was slowly tearing him up inside. So any distraction, no matter how much he usually disliked it, was greatly appreciated by Yoongi.

“Namjoon thinks it’s gonna be interesting?” Jimin asked. “Well, if he thinks that, then we’re in for a ride.”

Taehyung and Hoseok nodded.

“Do we know what the concept is yet?” Yoongi inquired. Hoseok shook his head.

“Nah, he’s been pretty quiet about it. But if he thinks it’s interesting, well...” Hoseok giggled to himself. “Then it probably is.”

The others walked over to their van, and the conversation naturally ended there. Yoongi leant against the window and adjusted the cap on his head to best hide his eyes. From there, he added minimal comments to the conversation on the way to the studio, and nobody seemed to mind.

Manager Sejin was waiting for them when they arrived. He had a bright smile on his face, and Yoongi couldn’t help but realise that everyone was in a good mood today. Maybe he could be, too, he told himself as he hopped out of the van. It wouldn’t hurt to be carefree for a day.
He knew from how many times he’d done shoots before that cameras were everywhere at these places. They were constantly filming content for Bangtan Bombs and occasionally Run episodes, and before he presented as an omega it hadn’t really worried him. Even after he’d first found out he was an omega, he hadn’t been weary of the cameras. It was only after his first heat that he felt exposed under their lenses, like he was revealing too much every time he acted anything but cold hearted. Like he was acting exactly as an omega would.

But today, he didn’t care about the camera’s beady eyes. He felt like he was cowering away from the problem the longer he constantly held a facade up in front of the others, and it was slowly but surely going to drive him mad. He vaguely thought he must have learnt something about himself from his moment last week.

He’d felt so overwhelmed at the fan sign, and that was it in Yoongi’s mind. He’d been trying to cope with something alone, when he hadn’t needed to. It had been completely unnecessary of him to not tell anyone about his mental state that day, because what he had been going through wasn’t something the others were oblivious too. Sure, nobody except Namjoon up until that point had seem him in such a distressed state, but it was no secret that he struggled with his depression and anxiety some days. He’d kept his mouth shut on the issue for the sake of his own independence, and Yoongi seriously regretted that in hindsight. If he’d told someone about his mental state earlier, then Yoongi could see his ordeal in the bathroom being avoided completely.

He could’ve avoided Jeongguk seeing him in such a vulnerable position.

Manager Sejin clapped him on the back as he walked to the studio’s entrance, a rickety old building from the outside that Yoongi knew sported a very different appearance inside. Its outward appearance helped deter others from finding their shooting location, and on quite a few occasions where they’d had close calls with overly eager fans, they’d managed to get inside the building without arousing any further suspicion due to its underwhelming and rundown look. Yoongi pushed the front door open and mentally appreciated the place for being so inconspicuous.

Jeongguk, Taehyung and Seokjin walked in after him. They were looking down the entranceway hallway, as if they were searching for clues as to what this particular photo shoot was going to be themed around. Yoongi was curious, too, but he didn’t let it show.

More footsteps echoed through the small entrance, and Namjoon walked to the front of their group with a grin.

“We’ve got Studio 2 today guys, so let’s head up.”
Yoongi followed the others as they walked up a staircase to the second floor. There were labels on the doors that presented themselves as they entered a hallway, and Namjoon walked down the corridor with a kind of confidence that came with knowing a place like the back of your hand. They’d been here many times before, but if Namjoon was even slightly excited for the shoot, then Yoongi could allow himself to be, too.

Studio 2 arrived on the left side of the hallway, and Manager Sejin opened the door with a smile. He held it open for the members as they entered the studio, and Yoongi had to blink twice when he saw the multitude of clothes hanging up on racks in the room.

Surely they didn’t expect them to go through so many outfits in one day?

Many of the stylists in the room were ones Yoongi was on a first name basis with. He scanned the racks for the types of clothes they would be wearing, but his attention was forced elsewhere when Manager Sejin addressed them.

“This shoot is for version three of your next album, and I know that’s a while away yet,” Manager Sejin held his hands up in surrender, “but we thought it would be nice to get this out of the way before your schedules pick up again.”

Yoongi couldn’t argue with that logic. The less they had to do in the lead up to a comeback, the better. He was still working on three more tracks for their upcoming album, and one of them in particular was becoming a bit of a drag to work on. He’d need to get Namjoon or Hoseok’s advice on it soon before he threw his headphones out the nearest window.

“Our next concept, as you’re all aware, is about exploring one’s true self. We decided to explore that concept in this shoot too, so the clothes you’re going to be wearing might be a little experimental.”

The rapper took another look at the rack of clothes and noticed for the first time the variety of styles and colours. He couldn’t see much more from his position, but he could tell there wasn’t a distinct theme with the stylists’s choices. It was just an array of diversity, and something within Yoongi perked at the change in trend.

“As usual, makeup and hair will be done after you’ve put on your outfits, and from there the photographers will give you directions. Any questions?”
Yoongi became part of the silence.

“Awesome. Let’s get started.”

Immediately after Manager Sejin finished his run through of the shoot, stylists hoarded around the group of seven. Shirts and pants were held up against bodies, and Yoongi too found himself subject to a stylist noona’s scrutinising gaze. She held up various shirts against his chest, and thankfully any traces of anxiety he’d felt the previous week had well and truly left him. Those mindsets liked to leave and approach him whenever they liked, Yoongi had figured out after a couple of months of living with them. At least he was able to carry out normal tasks for the time being. Yoongi was grateful for that.

After only a few minutes, the stylist he’d been assigned handed him a bunch of clothes. His body went on autopilot as he entered the change rooms in the corner of the studio, and methodically began stripping himself of his current garments. He didn’t have to avoid the mirrors this time. Yoongi felt like a weight had been lifted off his shoulders, and he smiled at the feeling. This was nice. He liked this feeling of not being afraid of something, of not fearing for the immediate future. He liked not having any worries, and for a moment there was nothing on his mind but the shoot in front of him.

“My grandmother was an omega.”

Yoongi stopped pulling his jeans down his legs.

“What?”

Yoongi awkwardly shimmied around to face Taehyung with his jeans trapped around his thighs. The younger’s poker face was impenetrable. He couldn’t tell if Taehyung was lying when he wore this face.

Taehyung’s eyebrows were perfectly level, like he had to concentrate heavily on his next words. “My grandmother raised me with stories about how the world used to be back in her day. The terms ‘alpha, beta and omega’ came up pretty often. And um, even though she was an omega I could never really tell she had a status... I think she took medication or something for it.”

Yoongi began to notice small cracks in the other’s poker face, but he didn’t comment on it.
Instead, he focused on a different segment of what Taehyung had said. “Is that how you knew? She told you what omegas were like and when you saw me you put the pieces together?”

The corners of the vocalist’s lips lifted, and Yoongi spotted a hint of a boxy smile. “Nah, it was nowhere near that simple. I didn’t like, immediately know anything. It was just small things I guess that I noticed over time? But I definitely knew after our last comeback stage.” Taehyung sported a grin Yoongi wanted to be fond of. “You and Kookie weren’t exactly subtle, you know.”

Jeongguk entered the change room just as they both erupted into laughter, and timidly Yoongi continued removing his jeans. Sometimes it was too easy to lose himself to conversations with Taehyung, the younger was just so easy to talk to. Yoongi felt like he’d missed out on these conversations ever since he’d presented as an omega because he was so stuck on not revealing his status to anyone, and with hindsight, Yoongi questioned that decision. There wasn’t really any reason to avoid the members anymore, so Yoongi allowed himself this chat with Taehyung. It wasn’t like he had that much more to hide from them.

“What are you two gossiping about back here?” Jeongguk asked them with a smirk. He immediately went to pull off his shirt, and Yoongi tore his eyes away from the maknae’s torso.

Taehyung took off his own shirt. “Oh, I was just explaining how I knew you and Yoongi-hyung were an alpha and an omega.”

Yoongi forced himself to keep a straight face when Jeongguk’s eyes bulged.

“Wait, you knew? When? And how? I only told Yoongi-hyung I was an alpha before my rut, and I’m pretty sure he didn’t tell anyone he was an omega until after his heat.”

A grimace formed on Yoongi’s face at someone else mentioning his heat, and somehow Jeongguk seemed to sense his discomfort. He looked at Yoongi with an apology in his eyes, and something tightened within Yoongi at the look. He closed his eyes and shook his head, signalling to Jeongguk that an apology wasn’t necessary, but that didn’t mean he didn’t appreciate the younger’s thoughtfulness.

If the way Taehyung’s eyes had narrowed indicated anything, he’d definitely noticed their non-verbal communication. He didn’t say anything about it though, to Yoongi’s relief. He didn’t need the younger to constantly be questioning his actions.
Taehyung faced Jeongguk with a despondent expression Yoongi didn’t see often. “My grandma, who was an omega by the way, used to tell me about how things were when she was my age, and how a few people still had statuses, you know. Alphas, betas and omegas were still like, a thing despite the medicine most people took. I kind of grew up on these stories, I guess, so I had a good idea of what was going on with you two before you actually said anything about it.”

The maknae’s jaw had gone slack. Yoongi huffed with an undertone of fondness at how readable Jeongguk could be sometimes, especially when he was caught off guard.

“Try not to show how shocked you are, Kookie. It’s not a good look.”

Jeongguk’s jaw audibly clamped shut, and Taehyung smothered a laugh behind his hand. Even Yoongi cracked a smile.

“I-I’m not shocked, hyung! I just realised something.”

He faced Taehyung with ridiculously raised eyebrows.

“If your grandmother was an omega, then do you have a status? Cause I was told by some doctor at the hospital when I presented that it was a genetic thing.”

Yoongi too, turned to face Taehyung. He hadn’t even considered the fact that Taehyung could have known about their statuses because he was hiding his own. Yoongi forgot sometimes how insightful the youngest could be. It was always a bit of a wake up call to Yoongi, that Jeongguk wasn’t as young as his mind constantly made him out to be.

Judging by Taehyung’s unwavering eye contact, Yoongi could safely assume whatever he was going to say next was true. He’d been able to pick up on a few of Taehyung’s lying habits over the years, and the most obvious one was the lack of eye contact he gave someone he was being untruthful to. That evasiveness wasn’t evident here.

“Look,” Taehyung began as he pulled a sparkling black sequin shirt on, “as far as I’m aware, I don’t have a status. I’m pretty sure the genetics or whatever disappeared with my parents. What’s the term? They became recessive? I think that’s it, yeah,” Taehyung agreed with himself. “I think the gene for being an alpha, beta or omega became recessive with my parents.”
Jeongguk shoved his pants off next, and little was left to Yoongi’s imagination. Not that he hadn’t seen it all before, and not that he wanted to see it again. He was just noting that Jeongguk’s boxers left little to the imagination. Yeah.

“So, do you know if the reason you don’t have a status is because your grandma took medication to suppress the gene? If that’s even how it works...” Yoongi finished as he pulled on the pair of fishnet tights he’d been given. If what he was hearing said anything to him, it was that this medicine Taehyung’s grandmother had been taking was very effective.

Taehyung hummed, tilting his head slightly to the side in concentration. “It could be. And maybe the reason you two are an alpha and omega is because your parents didn’t take the medication or something. Or you could be mutations from the drugs, who knows. Oh! Or Yoongi-hyung, you could be Kookie’s soulmate and that’s why you presented as an omega when he became an alpha!”

“Taehyung, stop bullshitting before I separate your tongue from your oesophagus.”

“Aw hyung! Your words wound me!”

The older grunted as he pulled off his shirt in replace of a mesh black top that had a few rips around his stomach. “They should have done more than that.”

Jeongguk cackled against his fist, and a small triumphant grin crossed Yoongi’s face.

“Okay, okay, on a more serious note,” Taehyung started, a smile still on his face. “Have you guys decided on what you’re going to do for your next heat, rut, thingy?”

Taehyung looked genuinely curious, and Yoongi for once didn’t think he was being a little pushy with getting an answer. While Yoongi certainly didn’t approve of the younger practically forcing him to tell everyone he was an omega, he understood that a lot of the group’s activities probably would have suffered if he’d continued to hide such a fundamental, yet new, part of himself from the others. And Yoongi by no means was happy that everyone knew he was an omega, because honestly he would have preferred if the fact that he became vulnerable and weak every heat had remained hidden from the others. But he could understand the other perspective now that he’d heard a few other people’s opinions. That never would have happened if Taehyung hadn’t encouraged that discussion weeks ago, and a small part of Yoongi couldn’t deny that he felt a little bit lighter because he didn’t have some massive secret to hide anymore.
He just had feelings he had yet to understand, and for the meantime Yoongi would appreciate if those remained hidden. He didn’t want to dissect his and Jeongguk’s interaction the previous week if he could help it, and he certainly didn’t want to analyse the way his eyes were drawn to Jeongguk whenever the younger was in the room. Yoongi didn’t recall that ever happening before he presented as an omega, and that scared him a little.

Did that mean another part of Yoongi had changed due to him being an omega? Was another part of himself lying constantly to the people around him?

“Oh, no,” Yoongi was quick to reply. He didn’t expect Taehyung to take their lack of discussion on the topic that way. “That’s not the case. We haven’t been avoiding each other if that’s what you’re thinking.”

“Then why haven’t you spoken about it? It’s not really something you can avoid talking about.”

Something grated at Yoongi’s nerves with those words. “I didn’t plan on avoiding it.”

And he hadn’t. He just still hadn’t come to a decision, and he realised he needed to make one. Sooner rather than later, of course, would be better so that they had time to prepare themselves for their heat and rut, but that didn’t make it easier to make a choice. There were too many factors Yoongi had to look at, too many variables to have simply made a decision on the day like Jeongguk had. He still didn’t know how Jeongguk had been able to decide so quickly. He didn’t even know if Jeongguk had since changed his mind on the matter. He wouldn’t be surprised if he had, actually.

Hoseok chose to enter the change room at that moment, and somehow the thin tension that had stretched across the room dissolved. There was no reason for there to be any tension, Yoongi realised as he loosened his shoulders. Taehyung was just voicing his thoughts, and Yoongi was responding to them. The tension between them used to be a lot worse in their debut days, but they’d long since moved on from those times. They were all comfortable with each other, and Yoongi knew every single member had each other’s best interests at heart. Taehyung was trying to help.
them out and give them a push in the right direction, and while Yoongi didn’t feel like the younger’s methods were very fair, he understood that was just a part of Taehyung’s character. He was like this with all the members when there was something off, not just Yoongi.

Yoongi told himself to stop scrutinising other’s actions the way he did with his own, because otherwise he wouldn’t get anywhere with the other members. The only way they could keep moving forward was if they accepted each other for who they were, and yeah, Yoongi was still a far way off from accepting himself, but he could easily accept the others. And he had done for years. He didn’t know why he was having a hard time rationalising Taehyung’s actions over everyone else’s, but he was. And he was going to have to try and fix that, because Taehyung had his reasons for acting the way he was, just as Yoongi had his.

Hoseok clapped Yoongi on the back. “Ah, hyung! You look good. I didn’t expect the tights to work but hey, the noonas know what they’re doing!”

Yoongi gave Hoseok a small smile. “Thanks, Seok.”

The dancer beamed. “No problem. And said noonas are waiting for you outside by the way. They’re wondering what’s taking so long.”

The rapper scratched his ear as his other hand chucked the clothes he’d worn to the studio in the small bag he’d brought with him.

“I’ll tell them I was held up by these two. They’ll understand.”

Yoongi left the room with laughter in his ears. The others, particularly Hoseok, had burst out in a fit of giggles at Yoongi’s comment, and even Yoongi had found it a little more troubling than usual to keep a straight face.

He exited the change room regardless, and even though Hoseok’s laughter was the loudest, Yoongi could focus on the sound of Jeongguk’s cackle easier. He shouldn’t be able to do that. He shouldn’t be trying to do that.

As soon as he walked out to greet the stylists, they offered Yoongi various accessories to wear for the shoot. One of the accessories was a black choker that Yoongi knew he would need help getting on, but that didn’t mean he was going to ask for the help. Not until he absolutely had to, anyway.
He pulled on two sparkled black bracelets and shoved three black rings onto the same hand. Once he’d done that, he looked over at the couch surrounded by various lights and flash stands. They’d obviously be doing the shoot there, if the tripod positioned in front of the scene said anything.

Yoongi grunted when he nearly dropped the choker the first time he tried fastening it. He looked around subtly to see if anyone was watching, and then attempted to put the choker on again. When he once again failed to make the two ends meet, Yoongi sighed. It was embarrassing.

The rapper clamped his mouth shut when a pair of hands took the choker out of his grasp and easily fastened it. Yoongi glared at the ground, doing his best to avoid the eyes of whoever it was who’d helped him, and somehow whoever it had been had respected their wishes. They walked around Yoongi and sat down on a stool, and Yoongi definitely had to keep his eyes away from the person in front of him because it was Jeongguk.

Jeongguk wasn’t supposed to help his hyung. It was meant to be the other way around. And yet, Yoongi felt like the reverse was happening more and more often because he was an omega. Jeongguk probably felt the need to look after him because of his weaker status, and Yoongi... didn’t want to be looked after. He just wanted to be treated the same way he’d been before he’d told everyone he was an omega.

He also wanted to understand his own actions and feelings since he’d presented, because they certainly weren’t normal. Or at the very least, normal for him.

Oh, and he still had to decide on what he and Jeongguk were going to do for their next heat and rut. And every heat and rut after that. Because this issue wasn’t temporary, and it couldn’t be ignored the way tension in an icy room could be. The longer Yoongi put off making a decision, the more last minute thoughts and feelings would interfere with his mindset, because being an omega did that and he hated that. It shouldn’t be as difficult as Yoongi was finding it to be in control of his own being. He shouldn’t have to deal with so many dreadful powers in his life.

“Hey, hyung?”

Jeongguk’s voice wafted into Yoongi’s ears. He blinked as he lifted his gaze to meet Jeongguk’s, and Yoongi wanted to shred the concern that was evident on the younger’s expression.

“Are you doing okay?”
There were so many things happening around them, so many other sounds and movements, but Yoongi couldn’t force himself to focus on them for the life of him. He hadn’t replied, he realised belatedly.

“Uh, yeah. I’m alright.”

Jeongguk’s brow furrowed for a second. “Then what’s on your mind?”

He shouldn’t be surprised the maknae had asked this. He knew he appeared lost in his own world when he was thinking about something, and over the years the other members had probably developed the skill to see when the cogs in Yoongi’s brain were turning rapidly. Despite this, Yoongi’s still felt mildly surprised Jeongguk had said anything about it at all. Yoongi thought their current location wasn’t the best for having this kind of conversation, but apparently Jeongguk had thought otherwise. Maybe he thought whatever Yoongi was thinking about wasn’t that private.

Well, that wasn’t the case, Yoongi thought petulantly.

“My next heat,” Yoongi muttered just as a stylist stood in front of Jeongguk. Perfect timing.

The corner of Jeongguk’s lip lifted as the stylist walked around him to work on the back of his hair. The concern from earlier had thankfully disappeared, but the expression left in its place was oddly mischievous. Yoongi swallowed.

“We’ll talk later, hyung.”

Then, for a reason completely unknown to Yoongi, he winked.

“Promise.”

Jeongguk kept his eye closed for an unbelievable length of time, and Yoongi was then hyper aware of his every movement because Jeongguk was still looking at him. He narrowed his eyes and opened his mouth slightly, hoping to feign shock at Jeongguk acting this way but he knew he wasn’t pulling it off. He probably appeared flustered to any onlookers.
Then, just when Yoongi thought he was going to shrivel under Jeongguk’s look, the younger was escorted away by the stylist to have his makeup applied.

Yoongi was faintly aware of his own tongue licking his lips as he scoured the room for anyone who’d seen that interaction. A small urge to run out of the building and never face Jeongguk again presented itself, but he crushed it rather quickly. If he thought he had a lot to think about before Jeongguk had spoken to him, then he was greatly mistaken.

He clamped his mouth shut when he realised he’d left it open after repeatedly licking his lips. Yoongi smoothed his expression out and approached the nearest stylist noona, because he was desperate for a distraction. The same question persistently crossed his mind every few seconds of the shoot, though, and Yoongi had never felt more confused over how he was supposed to feel than in that moment.

Because why the _fuck_ had Jeongguk just winked at him like that?

~

The rest of the shoot is confusing to Yoongi, to say the least. He thought halfway through the shoot that Jeongguk must have come down with a fever simply because he was acting so uncharacteristically kind towards Yoongi. He handed the rapper his water bottle when Yoongi asked Hoseok where he could get a drink from, and when Yoongi whined once about a tension in his shoulders from posing in the same position for so long, Jeongguk had practically leapt at the opportunity to massage him. It wasn’t that Jeongguk didn’t usually do these things for the other members, and he even did them to Yoongi before he’d presented as an omega. It was the eagerness with which Jeongguk completed the tasks that confused Yoongi.

And it wasn’t just his willingness to act kindly that had Yoongi puzzled, either. He was also acting very, well, silly around the rapper. Like he was constantly trying to draw a smile from his face. Yoongi had briefly wondered if there was a camera filming all of this for a challenge Jeongguk had been asked to do, but when he spotted none he was left even more bewildered than before.

He couldn’t find an explanation for Jeongguk’s actions, and that worried Yoongi. He didn’t like being left in the dark, especially on topics such as another member’s behaviour. He was supposed to know what was going on as the second oldest hyung, and he didn’t.

It also didn’t help that Jeongguk had complimented his appearance every time he’d changed clothes. The first outfit had featured a black mesh top with black shorts to match, and a pair of fishnet tights had been added to give the outfit a grungy, yet experimental feel. Yoongi could admit
that he thought he looked good, because the stylists always made them look good, but he never expected the words to come out of Jeongguk’s mouth so carelessly.

“You’re killing those tights, hyung.”

Yoongi nodded because he hadn’t been sure if he could respond verbally. Then, he’d said something similar when he’d come out wearing the next outfit, a black hoodie with sparkling sequins and flowers sewn onto the sleeves.

“Hyung, that jacket really suits you.”

Then Yoongi had come out wearing the final attire for the shoot, which happened to be the simplest one of the lot. It was a black cotton t-shirt with matching black jeans, but the outfit’s cherry on top had been the sparkling white harness that draped down his chest and wrapped around his shoulders. The stylists had said it was supposed to signify not being afraid of your interests, and Yoongi could have laughed at the style choice if it hadn’t had a deeper meaning behind it.

As soon as Yoongi had left the dressing room, he’d felt a pair of eyes on him that he knew had been watching him for a fair part of the day. He’d walked over to the couch set up in front of various lights and a tripod and waited for directions, but before he could be given them Jeongguk had approached him.

He was grinning from ear to ear as he took in Yoongi’s harness, and Yoongi would’ve insulted him if he were anyone else. He didn’t know why he lacked the will to slander Jeongguk in that moment for his careless eyes, but he did.

“Wow, hyung... you actually look incredible.”

It was just Yoongi’s luck that Namjoon was standing two metres away from him, and the moment Yoongi’s eyes met Namjoon’s he knew he was being analysed. Like his and Jeongguk’s relationship was a curiosity to the leader now that he knew they were an alpha and an omega. Yoongi didn’t know how to feel about that assumption.

“Thanks.” Then, just to keep Namjoon off his back, “The noonas really killed it this time.”

When they finally finished the shoot, Yoongi felt exhausted. He hadn’t really done much, he knew,
but there was still a tiredness to his body that came with working on the same thing for too long. He got this feeling whenever he spent too much time on the one song, so the feeling wasn’t a stranger to him. It was with that thought that he remembered the track he would have to show Namjoon or Hoseok sometime soon, but from his and Namjoon’s brief interaction, he was leaning more towards getting Hoseok’s advice.

He didn’t mean to groan when he lifted up his bag from earlier. There wasn’t even anything in it, other than his phone and a pair of headphones he’d brought just in case things progressed slowly. He regretted making any noise of protest in the first place. As soon as the sound left his lips, Jeongguk stole the bag from his grasp and left the studio casually, as if he hadn’t just carried Yoongi’s bag for him because he could.

Now Namjoon and Taehyung were looking at him weirdly. Like they expected Yoongi to say something about whatever... that was about. Hoseok had glanced briefly in his direction when Jeongguk had taken his bag, but Yoongi had seen Jimin and Seokjin leave minutes earlier. He couldn’t get their reaction even if he wanted to.

But if the way everyone else was treating Jeongguk’s sudden kindness indicated anything, it was that Yoongi ought to be suspicious of the maknaes. For nobody acted this way around somebody unless they wanted something from them, right?

Wait.

If that was the case, then what did Jeongguk want from Yoongi?

A sick, twisted feeling rooted itself into Yoongi’s stomach.

Did Jeongguk really want Yoongi to spend his next heat with him that desperately?

Yoongi didn’t want to believe that. He couldn’t really imagine the younger being overly helpful and caring for something like that. He wasn’t a user. Jeongguk’s character didn’t allow him to act that way.

Regardless, Yoongi would have to ask him about his impulsive behaviour sometime soon. It would probably end up being in the same conversation that Jeongguk further questioned him about the upcoming decision he was going to have to make, but Yoongi wanted just a few more hours to mull over things.
He also needed a few more hours to comprehend just what kind of relationship he and Jeongguk had, or at the very least, the relationship Jeongguk was implying they had to everyone else. For he could tolerate Jeongguk doing a lot of things, but he wasn’t sure if he could let the suggestions he left on the other’s minds slide.

~

It was Yoongi’s turn to make the dorm dinner. He’d decided he’d wanted to make something relatively simple, and once he’d inspected the ingredients he had lying around the kitchen he decided to make Japchae-bap. There were only a few elements to the dish, so Yoongi thought he could get everything finished within the hour. And even if he couldn’t, he could always rope Seokjin into helping him. His hyung was sometimes too kind for his own good.

Yoongi began slicing the rib eye fillets with a sense of nonchalance he hadn’t felt since the previous week. He feared momentarily that he would be overcome with a sense of panic, but the feeling simply lingered. It didn’t escalate, but it certainly didn’t recede. It was a reminder, Yoongi realised after a couple of minutes. The feeling was a constant reminder that he had a decision to make, and his time to make one was slowly but surely running out.

He chucked the pieces of meat into a bowl and poured the pre-made marinade over the top. He might be a decent cook, but he wasn’t magnificent. He still had to rely on packaged foods for the sake of saving time. The life of an idol made Yoongi constantly feel like he was losing time to an unknown source, so anything to make things quicker in the kitchen he would use.

Footsteps echoed through the kitchen, and Yoongi looked up to see Jeongguk standing in front of him readily.

“How do you want me to help?”

The older bit the inside of his lip. He knew Jeongguk well enough to know he wasn’t asking- that, from Yoongi in return for his kindness. He wouldn’t do that. What Yoongi did know, or rather thought he knew, was that Jeongguk had a reason for being as kind as he was, and Yoongi was determined to unearth that reason.

“Why’re you being so nice, Jeongguk?”
Jeongguk’s cheeks tinted at the question, and Yoongi smugly smiled at his victory. There was a reason, apparently.

“I, uh. I felt like it?”

“You can’t bullshit your way out of this one, Kookie.”

“Yeah, I thought so.”

Yoongi wanted for Jeongguk to say something else expectantly. As the seconds passed, the twisted feeling returned to Yoongi’s stomach. Jeongguk wasn’t nervous about telling him the reason because it was exactly the reason Yoongi feared, right? No, Yoongi scolded himself. He was nervous because of something else. Jeongguk wouldn’t do that for something as trivial as sex.

The maknae made a move to bite his fingernails, but seemed to think better of it at the last second. “I finally did my research, I guess.”

Yoongi’s mind blanked. “On what?”

Then Yoongi caught up to what Jeongguk was talking about.

“Statues and all that, hyung. I did some reading today at the shoot to pass the time.”

Yoongi didn’t see any harm in continuing to make dinner while Jeongguk spoke, and the maknae nonverbally agreed as he made his way over to the stack of vegetables Yoongi had gathered earlier.

“Oh yeah?” Yoongi grabbed a capsicum and put it on top of a chopping board he’d pulled out earlier. “You finally did what I told you to do literally months ago?”

The older had tried to bring some light to the conversation, but for some reason Jeongguk wasn’t having it. He was currently looking at Yoongi so seriously in comparison to how he’d acted around him earlier at the photo shoot. Just what was the maknae trying to say?
“You never told us why you didn’t want anybody to know you were an omega, but hyung, I think I understand now...” Jeongguk walked over to Yoongi with his hands wringing and his head dipped in what Yoongi could only assume was sheepishness. This Jeongguk was only ever seen in front of strangers, and occasionally fans. He was never this meek around the other members, including Yoongi. In fact, he usually pushed Yoongi’s boundaries whenever they interacted.

This wasn’t a Jeongguk Yoongi was used to seeing.

“I, um, I didn’t realise so many people hated omegas...”

There it was. The reason for Jeongguk’s sudden bout of kindness. Why Jeongguk was suddenly acting so differently around him as of late, and why he had received compliments for every outfit he’d worn that day. It was all Jeongguk’s way of showing how he pitied Yoongi. Of course it was.

Yoongi smiled bitterly. “The world’s not that nice, Jeongguk. I learnt that a while ago, so their hatred isn’t really that much of a surprise.”

Jeongguk didn’t meet Yoongi’s eyes. “That doesn’t mean it’s okay, though. I just, I couldn’t believe it...”

The older let out a breath he’d held in for too long. Then, he began cutting up a few carrots he’d left on the kitchen table, anything to evade Jeongguk’s words. He didn’t want to talk about this now, not while he had been in such a good mood for the majority of the day. He very rarely had days as bright as this one had been, so would it be that great of a crime to want a few more moments of contentment before reality finally woke him up?

“I’m so sorry, hyung. Those comments, everything they said about omegas... You don’t deserve them. You don’t deserve any of them.”

The slam of a knife hitting a cutting board echoed throughout the kitchen as Yoongi cut the carrots up.

“Don’t do that. Don’t apologise for something you haven’t done.”

Yoongi wasn’t watching Jeongguk anymore, but he still heard his footsteps as he approached the older. They were now less than a metre away from each other.
“Hyung, do you remember when I said I’d help you accept yourself?”

Jeongguk began leaning into Yoongi’s shoulder, but Yoongi continued cutting the carrots, chopping the pieces up until they were much smaller than they were supposed to be. Yoongi could feel the pressure of Jeongguk’s body leaning against his, and he couldn’t tell if he wanted it or not.

The younger’s breath ghosted Yoongi’s collarbone. “Because I haven’t forgotten.”

The knife in his hand clattered to the bench-top when he felt a pair of arms drape over his shoulders and wrap around his chest. He was being gently embraced from behind, and Jeongguk’s head was comfortably situated in the crook of his shoulder and neck; right next to the scent glands Yoongi knew were there. He could never imagine Jeongguk saying all of these things just to let his inner alpha get a whiff of Yoongi’s omega scent, but that didn’t discourage Yoongi from thinking he should go back to taking the sweat reducers on a daily basis.

“Yoongi-hyung,” Jeongguk whispered, and suddenly Yoongi realised this was all getting a little bit too intimate to be happening between friends. “Every single sickening, and disgusting thing you read online is not true. It all couldn’t be further from the truth. Okay?”

Yoongi didn’t respond. He couldn’t respond. There were too many things going on at once; the arms around Yoongi’s chest had dropped to his waist, Jeongguk’s voice had lowered to a whisper, like they were sharing secrets with each other they didn’t want the world to know about, and the words coming out of Jeongguk’s mouth were meant to be reassuring.

The maknae, Yoongi belatedly realised, was slowly rocking them back and forth on the spot, too.

“Being an omega doesn’t mean you’re an abomination, hyung. I promise you it doesn’t.”

Even if Yoongi could believe Jeongguk’s words, the stigma was only half the problem. Yoongi still had his own twisted thoughts and feelings swirling constantly in his mind, and Jeongguk didn’t even know about it because Yoongi had refused to tell him.

Yoongi had refused to tell anyone. Nobody even knew the reason for his panic attack the week before because he had refused to tell the other members about it. He realised that not explaining something like that to at least Namjoon was a bit shitty of him, but he knew the second he truly expressed his inner thoughts on him being an omega, he would be treated differently. Like he was
fragile, and damaged. Like he needed healing.

Actually, screw that thought. Jeongguk was already treating him differently and he didn’t even
know the true extent of Yoongi’s inner turmoil. He probably thought only a few comments online
had brought about this sensation of inner hatred towards his omega status, but Yoongi knew there
was so much more to it after his fluctuating moods the previous week.

The arms around his waist tightened ever so slightly, as if they were reminding Yoongi to come
back to the present moment.

Jeongguk’s hair brushed against Yoongi’s neck, and a shiver inexplicably ran up the older’s back.
“Hyung, are you okay?”

And there were so many things Yoongi could reply with. He could say he was fine, and how there
was nothing at all constantly weighing down his subconscious. Or he could say how he’d never
felt so comfortable and safe and appreciated in Jeongguk’s arms. Or he could bring up how
confused he was over what choice he was supposed to make. Yoongi couldn’t tell which thoughts
were honest anymore, and that scared him so, so horribly.

“I, I don’t know.”

Loud, purposeful footsteps came from the corridor their bedrooms were down, and Yoongi leapt
out of Jeongguk’s embrace. As if Namjoon, Taehyung and Hoseok weren’t already suspicious of
Jeongguk and his actions from earlier that day, he didn’t need to add this weirdly intimate hug into
the mix.

Yoongi didn’t want to see the expression on Jeongguk’s face when he left his arms, but if he had to
assume what kind of face he was making he would have guessed he looked disappointed. Yoongi,
however, couldn’t bring himself to care much about it. It was one thing to admit he didn’t know
himself as well as everyone else assumed he did, but it was another thing completely to show such
uncertainty to other people.

Then, the thought crossed Yoongi that the footsteps were too loud to be natural. Whoever was
making the sounds were doing it purposely, as if to indicate to the other two in the kitchen that they
were coming. The hairs on Yoongi’s arms stood up.

Had they witnessed his and Jeongguk’s interaction just then?
“Jeongguk, can you boil the noodles?”

Hoseok walked in moments later, and he looked at the scene in the kitchen with a kind of causality Yoongi was immediately suspicious of. He’d seen, Yoongi realised.

“Can I help out in any way?”

And then they were back to acting normally, Yoongi thought. Jeongguk let out squeals of fake distress when the water he was boiling the noodles in splattered against the table, and Hoseok cracked up when Yoongi nearly tripped and fell onto the stove they were using to boil the noodles.

It was when they were finally loading seven plates full of food that Hoseok declared he was going to the bathroom. Yoongi had continued plating up, but the second the dancer had left them Jeongguk had appeared by Yoongi’s side.

“We need to talk later,” was all he had the opportunity to say before a door opened down the hallway.

A sinking sensation came over Yoongi at that sentence. There were only so many times they could converse before the inevitable topic of their heat and rut came up, and Yoongi felt like the hourglass keeping track of how much time he had left to come to a decision had just shattered.

While everyone else joked around at dinner, Yoongi ate in silence. The thoughts in his mind were louder than the member’s voices, anyway.

Chapter End Notes

Hello everyone! I don’t think I chose the best date to update because it ended up being the same day I saw BTS’s Love Yourself Seoul concert in cinemas 😊 But the chapter’s up at least! Idk about you guys, but the main thing I took from the concert was that Hobi should sing more often~ His voice is incredible (but that might just be my bias speaking :)

I’m going back to school this week, so I hope the update schedule doesn’t change but I can’t promise anything. I’ll do my best to get chapter 13 up around next Sunday regardless.
But I hope you guys liked this chapter! As always, thank you for reading.
I don’t wanna calculate

Chapter Notes

I finally made a cover for this fic! Here’s the link to my Twitter if you want to see it

https://twitter.com/mbookworm02/status/1092427423268798469?s=21

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Yoongi managed to make it through dinner without any interrogations. Not that he was expecting any of the members to suddenly bombard him with questions, but it was just a constant thought at the back of his mind nowadays. He was weary of everyone and everything. That was just the way Yoongi was now, and he hadn’t yet decided if he liked that change to himself. It wouldn’t be the first change he’d experienced since his presentation, though. It was this fact that constantly left the bitter taste in his mouth.

When everyone had finished eating, Namjoon and Hoseok stayed behind to clear the table and clean the dishes. Yoongi thanked them quietly as he made his way to his room, and Seokjin followed him in shortly afterwards.

Yoongi had barely sat down on his bed when a knock resonated through the room, and Yoongi thought he had more time goddamnit. He didn’t think he was ready to have this talk. Then again, if Yoongi could have his own way then he would probably never have this conversation with Jeongguk in the first place. There was just too much riding on a single decision. Too many possible endings to this story, and too many ways his and Jeongguk’s relationship could alter completely after a single decision.

Seokjin opened the door before Yoongi could protest otherwise.

“Aw, hey hyung,” Jeongguk’s voice greeted. Yoongi could have run up to the door and shut it in Jeongguk’s face just to avoid talking to him about their predicament, but even he knew that was being childish. Taehyung was right, to an extent Yoongi could at least understand, that he needed to talk to Jeongguk about this. He’d skirted around the topic for long enough, and it was fairly obvious he was the only one doing so. From what he knew, anyway, Jeongguk seemed fairly confident in the decision he’d made weeks ago. He hadn’t exactly rushed up to Yoongi in the time since to confide that he’d changed his mind.

Even from where Yoongi was, he could hear the smile in Seokjin’s voice. “Hi Kookie. What’s up?”
Yoongi’s eyes met Jeongguk’s, and he could tell from the way the younger’s head tilted downwards ever so slightly that he was expecting Yoongi to say something to Seokjin. And Yoongi understood him, but that didn’t mean he wanted to do what he was being asked.

As soon as that thought crossed his mind, though, Yoongi chided himself. He was being so petty about this, about everything. He needed to talk to Jeongguk, and he couldn’t just _not_ talk to him because he didn’t want to, or he didn’t feel prepared. He needed to grow up. Act his age.

He needed to be responsible, and even Yoongi could admit he hadn’t exactly been that since he’d presented. He was going to be mature now, though. For the sake of his and Jeongguk’s relationship at least.

“Jin-hyung, we... we really need to talk about what we’re gonna do for our next heat and rut.”

The words sounded awful coming from his own mouth, but they were out there. Yoongi watched Seokjin as his smile wobbled slightly, and Yoongi pitied him momentarily since he clearly didn’t know how he was supposed to react. Yoongi gave him a small, reassuring smile of his own. He would be alright. This talk wasn’t going to be the end of him. He could admit... some things. He could be honest about a few things, just as Jeongguk had been honest with him.

He could manage that. Being honest was different to being vulnerable.

Seokjin’s eyebrows rose marginally as he seemed to figure out the appropriate response to Yoongi’s words. “Oh, yeah. You should do that. Uh, I’ll go wait in Joon’s room or something. But yeah, when you’re done let me know, okay?”

The rapper’s only hyung gave Jeongguk and Yoongi a tiny eye smile, as if he was still a bit unsure of how he was supposed to act, but Yoongi saw Jeongguk give him a beaming grin in return and instantly Seokjin’s lips widened. Yoongi didn’t watch Seokjin as he grabbed his phone and left the room; instead, he was looking at the teeth Jeongguk was readily showing the world and wondering just how powerful a smile like that can be in the kind of world they live in.

Then, Jeongguk was entering the room and closing the door behind him. Yoongi flashed him his best attempt at a smile.

The bunny grin the younger wore then slipped off his face, and Yoongi couldn’t stop his own
smile from disappearing at the sight.

“I guess we have a lot to cover, huh hyung?” Jeongguk joked half-heartedly as he made his way over to Seokjin’s bed. Yoongi’s lips parted subconsciously when Jeongguk sat down on the bed opposite to him and leant forwards. His hands were clasped together in between his thighs, and the way he was eying Yoongi reminded him that the Jeongguk in front of him wasn’t a child anymore, but an adult.

An adult who, for the most part, had acted more maturely about their statuses than Yoongi ever had.

“Yeah, we do,” is all Yoongi said in reply. He didn’t avoid Jeongguk’s eyes as he spoke. He wanted to stop constantly cowering away from his issues, and he wanted to come out at the other end of this situation stronger. He could do that, he knew he could do that.

The younger nodded before dragging his teeth across his bottom lip. Yoongi’s jaw clenched at the sight.

Jeongguk ducked his head, and Yoongi tried not to let his eyes widen. “I, uh, I left out a lot of stuff weeks ago when I said I’d like to uh, spend our rut and heat together...” And then, to Yoongi’s great surprise, he looked at the older apprehensively. Like he was expecting a scolding of some sort.

Yoongi felt like his skin was crawling. Just what kind of impression had Yoongi given Jeongguk over the past couple of weeks to make him, fear his hyung’s reaction?

The older’s lips parted. “What do you mean?”

Yoongi had honestly expected Jeongguk to be a lot shyer about everything, but if the way he was currently holding himself indicated anything, it was that he either wasn’t embarrassed by whatever he was about to say, or he generally didn’t care about his alpha status. For a fleeting moment, Yoongi envied the younger. For having things so much easier. For not having to worry about so many variables and forces and controlling, damaging thoughts.

But Yoongi didn’t want to envy Jeongguk. He realised that he had demonstrated more than enough negative emotions towards the maknae as of late, emotions he knew the younger had done nothing to deserve, and only now was Yoongi seeing that for what it was.
He’d thrown around so much blame, so much anger and hatred, that he’d failed to come to a solution to fix the problem. And he wanted it fixed so, so badly, because he didn’t want to live a life dictated around being an omega like he currently was. Jeongguk in a way was constantly showing Yoongi how it was possible to actually be nonchalant about his status, and while Yoongi knew he had a long way to go before he felt anywhere near as self accepting as Jeongguk let on he was, he felt that now more than ever it was achievable. He could get over his status. He could tolerate the heats, and the instincts, and the bodily functions; even if those were vastly different to Jeongguk’s.

He could accept himself.

And maybe, he could finally do so if he accepted the possibility of Taehyung’s suggestion first.

“I, uh,” Jeongguk began. “I have conditions, I guess? If we end up, you know... having sex.”

Yoongi smothered a choked noise before it could surface. He shouldn’t be surprised that Jeongguk could talk so calmly about this. He’d proven over and over again over the course of a few weeks that he was so much more mature than Yoongi was giving him credit for.

At the back of his mind, Yoongi remembered how he used to act when someone spoke about sex around him. He wanted to go back to being that way, and he could if he just stopped caring about every little thing he did. He really didn’t have anything physical to hide from Jeongguk. Everything he was keeping to himself was mental, and Yoongi had established that nobody needed to hear the endless negative statements that would erupt from his mind if he decided to talk to someone.

Just the idea of doing that mortified him. He would permanently ruin the image of himself he’d carefully constructed over the years, all in a single moment. He knew he would be seen completely differently by everyone, regardless if they assured him otherwise.

Why did everything have to change now that he was an omega?

“What’s the conditions?” Yoongi asked as casually as he could. He wanted to overcome whatever barrier being an omega had put up in his mind. He could still act like himself outside of his heat, he chided himself. There was no need for him to be so analytical of every action and word that popped out of his mind.
As long as he avoided speaking about his feelings, he could get past this. Jeongguk didn’t need to hear anything.

Jeongguk leant back onto the bed. He looked more carefree than Yoongi usually did. Then again, Yoongi probably hadn’t looked that way in a while. He needed to change that.

The maknae visibly swallowed. “We’d need to be able to separate what happens then, you know, in the moment, from what happens afterwards. When we’re not sex-driven alphas and omegas.”

Yoongi could typically read Jeongguk fairly well, but that didn’t mean he could understand why he was feeling and acting a certain way. For Jeongguk had looked so uncomfortable saying those few sentences, but had done his best to appear otherwise.

The older knew, though, that Jeongguk had for one reason or another struggled to say those words. The unforced casualty he’d displayed for the entirety of their previous conversations just made his forced composure more obvious.

Yoongi wondered in that moment if Jeongguk had any toxic thoughts swirling in his own mind. Or if something else entirely was bothering him.

“And, we can only have sex if it’s safe.”

Yoongi forced himself out of his own thoughts. He needed to be involved in this conversation, and not constantly zoning out. He nodded in response. “I’m clean, in case you’re wondering.”

Jeongguk’s mouth twitched. “Oh, well, I meant we find a contraceptive or something so you can’t get pregnant, but being clean is important too. I’m also clean, so...”

He didn’t know why, because what Jeongguk had said wasn’t even meant to be funny, but Yoongi smiled. He saw Jeongguk flounder for a reaction afterwards, and it only made the older smile wider. It was kind of sweet how considerate Jeongguk was acting around Yoongi, but at the same time it kind of worried him. He shouldn’t have to worry about how he acted around Yoongi. The older hoped that they’d known each other for long enough to act naturally around each other.

Again, Yoongi mentally scolded himself. He could hardly nitpick on the maknae behaving differently for Yoongi’s own sake when Yoongi himself had acted differently for the majority of
the past couple of months.

“Those are reasonable things to consider, Jeongguk,” Yoongi commented as he crossed his legs. “Have any other terms and conditions?”

For a reason Yoongi couldn’t pinpoint, the younger frowned.

“Hyung, are you actually considering us, you know—?”

And then the pieces fell together for Yoongi. Jeongguk was undoubtedly confused about how Yoongi was currently treating the suggestion Taehyung had initially given, and the older knew it was with good reason. When Taehyung had first brought it up, Yoongi hadn’t exactly been in a considerate mood. He hadn’t bothered thinking about the benefits of such a suggestion, one of which Taehyung had even said himself in the moment. He wouldn’t have to go through the pain of a heat alone again, and that was now one hell of an incentive. But at the time, it’d been no where near as convincing a reason as Taehyung had probably hoped it would be.

Additionally, a few more benefits had popped up mainly over the past couple of days that Yoongi hadn’t really given much thought to. He would be forcing himself to approach the issue he had with his vulnerability if he shared his heat with Jeongguk. He would be in a completely different mindset in the moment, and he would inevitably get over the self inflicted humiliation he felt over being an omega in heat. Experience did that, Yoongi had concluded over the years. Actually experiencing something often helped him to gain another perspective, and he wanted to get over his own feelings and thoughts as soon as humanely possible. They were dictating too many aspects of his life, and he refused to let that happen any longer.

He just needed to take the first step of overcoming his fears, and that was by experiencing his fears. Exposure and experience went hand in hand.

Yoongi clasped his hands on his crossed legs. He looked, and felt casual. It was such a welcome sensation. “I am.” At Jeongguk’s slight tilt of head, Yoongi went on. “I seriously am. I wasn’t thinking when Taehyung brought it up.”

“But you were against it at first for a reason. What changed?”

It was unfortunate that Yoongi could hear the curiosity in the younger’s voice. He clearly wasn’t going to drop the topic soon. Yoongi had hid so much from him in recent times, so many things
that had eventually seen the light of day anyway. There was no doubt about it that Jeongguk was adamantly about getting an honest answer from him this time.

But Yoongi didn’t want to answer honestly, as much as he sympathised with Jeongguk’s position. The maknae had been nothing but accommodating with Yoongi’s constantly changing mindsets and alternating thoughts, and really, Yoongi had done nothing for him in return. Jeongguk wasn’t even asking anything from him in return for his kindness, as he’d first thought. Yoongi regretted even thinking along those lines in the first place.

With that thought resonating throughout his mind, Yoongi swallowed his pride.

“I realised how unreasonable I was being. And how much of an asshole I was being about everything.”

Jeongguk’s eyes widened marginally, but that felt like an approval for Yoongi to continue.

“At first, I could only look at the bad shit. I didn’t even consider the flip side of the everything, and, I don’t know. I’m trying to do that now.”

Yoongi shifted his gaze to Jeongguk’s feet, and for once he didn’t blame any omega instincts for the reaction. He used to look at the ground after speaking all the time; before he became an omega. He could do the things he usually did and feel comfortable doing them. It had been stupid of him anyway to blame his omega side for causing him to act the way he usually did. He was shy and introverted sometimes, because that was simply a part of his personality.

Jeongguk shifted his weight so that he was leaning on one arm. “That’s not all of it, though, is it?”

Fuck. When the hell had Jeongguk been able to read Yoongi like that? There had only been a few occasions where someone had sensed the cogs working overtime in his mind, and the times Jeongguk had been the person to do so Yoongi had been able to count on one hand.

That had been the case, anyway, until Yoongi had presented as an omega.

So wait, was it Jeongguk presenting as an alpha that enabled him to read Yoongi better, or was it Yoongi being an omega that made it easier to sense his feelings? Or even worse, was it a wicked combination of both? Could Yoongi read Jeongguk just as well as the maknae had seconds ago?
“Hyung, that’s not everything. You need to talk to me.”

The amount of care that had been placed in Jeongguk’s words nearly drove Yoongi to confess every filthy thought and depressing reality he had stuffed in his brain. But he couldn’t. He wanted to, for the first time in his life, confide to someone about all of his issues and his problems and every moment of self hatred he felt towards himself, because he wanted to get over this colossal war he was fighting. But the exact issue with that, was that he was fighting the war against himself, by himself. He didn’t want to get Jeongguk involved in it. He could handle things on his own, and he had a fucking plan now to conquer his irrational feelings and the forces that constantly fought amongst themselves. Jeongguk didn’t need to know anything.

Yoongi scratched the back of his neck. “That’s it, Kookie. That’s all there is to it.”

The way Jeongguk’s eyes narrowed to slits scared the shit out of Yoongi. He swore Jeongguk was looking at him the way he would a picture book, easy to understand and comprehend. Surely, it wasn’t that simple for Jeongguk to see what was truly going on in his mind?

Eventually, the stare Yoongi was receiving lightened up.

“I don’t believe you for one second, hyung.”

Yoongi closed his eyes for several seconds, because apparently Jeongguk did find him that easy to decipher.

“But if you don’t want to talk about it, well, I can’t force you.” Then, Jeongguk let out a little sigh that made Yoongi’s insides clench. “Just, remember you can talk to me about it, whatever it is. Please.”

The older froze for a brief second, but quickly gave Jeongguk a small nod. Jeongguk wasn’t... forcing him to do anything. There wasn’t any pressure. Yoongi didn’t feel any traces of anxiety like he had when Taehyung had insisted he talk to everybody about his statuses, and that was nice.

Jeongguk was being so considerate, and silently kind, and Yoongi didn’t know how he was supposed to think about that.
Yoongi laid back onto the bed and faced Jeongguk side on. He placed his head on his arms and that, that felt normal. Casual. “Yeah, okay. I probably need to contact the hospital about contraceptives. They’re not exactly easily accessible for us, and I don’t trust ourselves to remember condoms in the moment.” Jeongguk smiled and shrugged, and Yoongi felt the remnants of a smirk on his lips. “I don’t mean I don’t trust you to be responsible, Kookie. But that is exactly what I’m saying.”

At some part of the conversation, the monstrous stress that had been put on Yoongi had dissipated. There was no longer a cloud of pressure hovering around him, and Yoongi then realised something. He searched his mind, his body and his soul for the presence of his omega, the part of him that would naturally be soothed by an alpha’s presence, and Yoongi grinned like a maniac when he couldn’t find it.

His inner omega wasn’t influencing his thoughts, actions or feelings, and Yoongi felt like he’d made the discovery of the decade.

It was just Jeongguk who was calming him down. Just the maknae, with no other strings attached.

So, the real question that remained now, was what the fuck did that mean?

“Hyung, I won’t help you if you don’t apologise for those words!”

“Yeah, but in this situation I’m helping you out, too, so you’d suffer just as much as I would from that decision.”

“That’s very right, hyung.”

When he saw the beaming grins on both of their faces, Yoongi thought this was just the beginning. It was the first time he was actively trying to avoid overthinking every action and word of his, and it was working. He was genuinely feeling a sense of relief from not having to monitor every thing he did around others. Or, well, maybe just Jeongguk. But it was something.

Jeongguk himself laid back on Seokjin’s bed, and he turned onto his side so that he, too, was facing Yoongi. Yoongi pulled his legs up to his chest instinctually, but again, he didn’t blame his omega side for doing so. He did this before he presented, and blearily he remembered something the doctor at the hospital had said to him about him always being an omega, and how he would have acted like one even before he presented.
That would explain still sleeping in the fetal position, Yoongi thought with a smile. Slowly, things were beginning to make sense. Yoongi was beginning to understand the puzzle pieces, and gradually, a clear image was being created before his eyes.

However, the largest puzzle piece still left fuzzy, was Jeongguk’s.

Yoongi really didn’t know that much about Jeongguk and his status, but he didn’t feel like now was the time and place to start asking him about it. They were trying to figure out what they were going to for their next heat and rut, not what Jeongguk thought about being an alpha and what it was like for him.

He’d have to ask soon, however. Jeongguk had done so much to look out for Yoongi’s wellbeing, that it was only fair Yoongi did the same. That was the only reason for wanting to ask, too.

“I’ll have to get more scent reducers or whatever they are, too. I don’t want you jumping me in front of everyone just because I smell good again.”

The older watched as a fierce grin overcame the younger.

“Hey, I couldn’t help it! And if I remember correctly, you didn’t exactly run away from me afterwards, hyung.”

“And I was nearly in my heat at the time. Did you really expect me to resist the smell of an alpha?”

“Well, no, but that’s not the point. My point, is that I never had those scent reducers, or whatever you just mentioned.”

Yoongi frowned in disbelief, but he knew there was humour lacing his eyes.

“Wouldn’t that mean it should have been easier for you to resist me if I was using the medication that reduced my scent?”
The maknae’s face stilled and Yoongi let out a fond sigh of astonishment. Then, Jeongguk’s eyes began to widen considerably and Yoongi couldn’t contain his snort.

“I’m sure I can get some of the medication for you, too. The doctor I had was pretty good.”

Jeongguk hummed in agreement, but his facial expression didn’t change.

“Stop doing that, Kook. It’s kind of creepy.”

The maknae actually spluttered, like he hadn’t realised he was doing it, and then when he tried to smooth over his expression Yoongi couldn’t stop grinning. Jeongguk was an absolute dork at the best of times, and sometimes Yoongi forgot that he did act childish sometimes because he was a child in comparison to the composer.

Yoongi’s lungs tightened at the image before him; Jeongguk’s playfully mortified expression, the way his body was fully facing Yoongi and Yoongi only, like nothing else was worth his attention in that moment. There was also something swimming in Jeongguk’s eyes, but Yoongi couldn’t tell what it was. That in itself was unusual, because usually Yoongi found the younger to be fairly easy to read. But Yoongi refused to question it much more. He was done with constantly asking himself questions and doubting every decision he made.

He was going to get back to being normal. He knew it.

“Okay, but hyung,” Jeongguk started with a smile still etched on. “I’m still not one hundred percent certain of what you want to do, because you haven’t exactly... stuck with the same opinion.”

At that, Yoongi shifted so that he was lying on his back and facing the ceiling. He didn’t usually lie in bed like this, instead opting to curl into a ball and bring his knees up to his chest, but he wanted an excuse to avoid Jeongguk’s curious gaze while he spoke. He had had enough of skirting around the topic, because the old Yoongi per say, never would have been this evasive on something that simply needed to happen. He would have been straight to the point, sarcastic and cold but with an underlying sense of care he only saved for the moments he and the other members were alone.

He could admit to acting like that without the cameras, so he sure as hell could act like that if he was an omega. His status wasn’t going to dictate how he lived his life anymore. He was sick of letting things get the better of him.
“Kook, I—” Yoongi let out a breath of air. “I think I’d like to spend my heat with you.”

Yoongi ignored the distinct rustle of bedsheets as Jeongguk most likely sat up to look at Yoongi even more attentively than he had been before. It was a difficult feat for Yoongi to imagine, but the image of Jeongguk’s eyes popping out of his head at how honest he’d been he could definitely imagine. He kind of wanted to look him in the eye, but he was afraid that if he did he would lose all courage he had earlier to be somewhat honest with the younger about his opinion regarding their upcoming heat and rut.

“Don’t get me wrong,” Yoongi continued, “I hated the idea when Taehyung first suggested it. I thought it was irresponsible, and illogical, and stupid. I, uh, couldn’t see myself having sex with you just because I was an omega in heat, I think.”

The older didn’t understand why, but suddenly he felt exposed in the bedroom setting. His feet tugged at the blanket at the base of the bed and dragged it up to his hands, where he then proceeded to pull it up to his chest. The blanket erased some of the ice he’d felt gathering on his limbs, and with a shudder Yoongi relaxed fully into the hold of the mattress. He was fine. He was safe, and comfortable. He could continue talking.

“I, um. I also...” have issues with being vulnerable, Yoongi wanted to admit. He actually wanted to admit it really badly. But he wasn’t about to spill every secret he had stored in his mind over the past couple of months. He thought he could congratulate himself for sharing as much as he had, anyway.

As easy as it had felt in the moment, Yoongi knew it were the hours afterwards where he regretted even opening his mouth. When Namjoon had first found out about his depressive episodes, Yoongi hated to admit that he had fallen into himself a little afterwards. He’d been afraid, and unsure of the future, and really that situation wasn’t that much different from his current one. The only thing that stood out to him as glaringly different, was that there was more on the line now. His status was rare nowadays, and Jeongguk’s was too. They were treading a tightrope only they could cross, and for some reason, Yoongi felt like Jeongguk was waiting at the other end of it already. Waiting for him to cross it.

When Yoongi imagined the end of the tightrope to be the reward of self acceptance, he suddenly wanted to leap into the air and hope for the best as he flailed through the air to his desired destination. Even if he couldn’t make the jump himself, Yoongi imagined Jeongguk’s hand grabbing onto his just before he fell. Jeongguk was there for him.

Yoongi chewed on the inside of his cheek.
“Jeongguk, I want to live normally again. And, I... I feel like doing this will help me.”

And it probably wouldn’t, because Yoongi knew his luck was rotten and things very rarely worked out for him in the real world, but he wanted to try. Taehyung obviously had a reason for suggesting this in the first place, and if Yoongi had been extremely hesitant to consider the idea at first, he was at least willing to give it a go now that he knew of Taehyung’s background. He most likely had reasons for proposing anything at all, and while Yoongi wouldn’t go as far as to say he trusted his judgement, he certainly felt some sort of acceptance towards the younger’s opinion.

There was a purpose behind Taehyung’s suggestion, and whether it was simply to keep Yoongi and Jeongguk from more pain, or whether there was a deeper meaning behind it, Yoongi knew he most likely wasn’t going to find out anytime soon.

Yoongi still hadn’t looked in Jeongguk’s direction. He did want to, but he kept thinking he would close up the moment he saw whatever emotion was in the maknae’s eyes. That was another thing that had changed with Yoongi since he’d presented; he’d started to care too much about everything and everyone, in particular the opinions and emotions of Jeongguk’s that Yoongi had never been particularly analytical of. He cared too much. He never had before, but he did now.

He didn’t know if he should try getting out of that habit.

“Hyung,” Jeongguk whispered into the room, and Yoongi still wouldn’t look at him. The urge to was growing though; growing rapidly.

“And you sure?”

And Yoongi forced himself to close his eyes, because the overwhelming need to see the emotion in Jeongguk’s eyes at that question was too powerful to ignore. He didn’t need to see Jeongguk’s face to know what he was feeling.

Yoongi had never wanted to know what the younger was feeling towards him before he’d presented. In fact, he’d never particularly cared for anyone’s opinions on himself before he presented, but now that he’d suddenly become an omega, he always cared too much about everything. Jeongguk especially. He always seemed to care more about Jeongguk than he should as of late. He added that to the ever growing list of things he’d have to work on for the unforeseeable future. He wasn’t helping himself if he let other’s feelings affect the way he viewed himself.
The comments he’d seen all those months ago randomly surfaced to the front of his mind, but he swept their hatred aside. He didn’t need to hear their negativity again. They weren’t helping.

He was going to help himself as much as he could from now on. He’d had enough of moping around and searching for something to blame for his circumstance. As much as he wanted to blame Jeongguk for everything, he couldn’t bring himself to do that anymore. It was immature, and Yoongi was trying to move on from being like that.

He could move on, he told himself repeatedly. He could do that.

“I’m sure.”

The words were muttered so faintly that Yoongi himself had to strain to hear his own voice. But, for once, he was being brutally honest; Jeongguk deserved that kind of honesty, anyway, Yoongi reasoned. He’d been nothing but accommodating for Yoongi’s various moods, mindsets and reactions, and Yoongi felt like he’d done nothing to deserve such kind treatment. At the back of his mind, a wicked thought crossed his mind and made him wonder if all the kindness would stop now that he’d agreed to share his heat with Jeongguk, but he stomped on the idea furiously. He needed to stop doubting everyone. Not everyone was trying to use him.

Jeongguk would never use him. Yoongi was confident of that now.

A subtle silence overcame the two of them, and Yoongi breathed freely. That conversation had been manageable. Of course, some moments had still been beyond confronting to Yoongi, and others were so tense Yoongi swore he could hear the shudders in Jeongguk’s breaths as he spoke. But, there were also moments of humour he hadn’t expected. Jeongguk hadn’t tried to hide his cheerful persona behind a mask of seriousness like Yoongi had thought he would, and that had been an unexpected surprise. But it was a good one.

Yoongi had appreciated the friendliness that had remained even when their talk took an earnest turn. He couldn’t remember a time he’d felt anywhere near as comfortable in a raw setting like that, either. Both of those things, had happened because of Jeongguk. Jeongguk had done that for Yoongi.

He’d done so much for Yoongi.
And he probably had no idea.

No other word was spoken between them. Yoongi kept his eyes closed the entire time, and he could definitely imagine himself falling asleep in the position that he was in. He wasn’t quite that tired yet, but he could feel the mist of mental blankness beginning to descent on him. The radio static he heard surrounding him was suddenly disrupted by the creaking of a bed, and Yoongi knew when he heard feet hit the ground that Jeongguk was getting up. He was probably going to fetch Seokjin so that the older could return to his bed, Yoongi realised in his dreary state.

Had he been less coherent, Yoongi would’ve assumed he’d imagined what happened next.

Jeongguk’s footsteps could be heard crossing the few metres it took to reach his bed, and then they suddenly halted. Jeongguk had to be standing over Yoongi.

Then, he felt the blanket gently creep up his chest so that it reached his shoulders, and with a tenderness Yoongi had rarely witnessed in the maknae, he tucked the blanket underneath his collarbone so that Yoongi would remain snug for the remainder of the night. Jeongguk must have thought Yoongi was asleep, for Yoongi had never experienced this kind of sentiment before from the younger. That was the only explanation for his behaviour Yoongi could think of; since Jeongguk’s hyung was asleep, he felt like it was alright to look after him because Yoongi wouldn’t be able to scold him for it. That had to be it.

There was no way there was another reason for his kindness. Yoongi refused to even consider the possibility of there being another reason for his kindness.

He was done with questioning everything.

“Thank you for talking to me, hyung. It means so much to me.”

Then Jeongguk left Yoongi alone, and Yoongi forgot all about his resolution to not question everything that happened to him. For why the hell had Jeongguk said that? He wouldn’t have said that if he’d thought Yoongi was asleep, right? There was no reason to say something like that if Jeongguk thought Yoongi wasn’t able to hear him. No, the words were meant to be heard. Jeongguk had known somehow that Yoongi had been awake the entire time.

But how?
Yoongi turned over to his side and curled into a ball and— oh. That was how he’d been able to tell. Yoongi only ever slept in the fetal position. He didn’t fall asleep by laying on his back. That was the giveaway Jeongguk had been able to spot.

Damnit.

There was no question about it, then. Jeongguk had meant for Yoongi to hear his words, had meant for Yoongi to notice his actions. He’d calculated his every move. Jeongguk had known exactly what he was doing.

Yoongi’s mind was buzzing with questions the entire night; some of which, he wasn’t sure he ever wanted answered.

~

Yoongi woke up relatively easily the following morning. It was a pleasant difference from how he usually woke up in the mornings. He had to do a few things that day. Firstly, he’d probably need to contact that doctor at the hospital to see if he could get more sweat reducers or whatever they were to reduce his scent in the lead-up to heat. He’d also have to get some for Jeongguk, if he could. That might be a bit more challenging, but he was sure they’d have files on the younger regarding his situation. It was impossible for Yoongi to think otherwise.

In the same phone call, he might as well ask about contraceptives. He’d rather have a prescription ready to hand over at a pharmacy from the doctor who’d treated him at the hospital, than have to show his medical records to complete strangers in a chemist just to get a prescription. It also didn’t help that he was idol. If he handed his medical records over, it would be obvious to the pharmacists and surrounding customers just who he was. He couldn’t afford to make such a careless mistake.

Yeah, he would ask about the pills and contraceptives in the same phone call.

The second thing he’d have to do that day was finally sort out those tracks he’d put on hold for a couple of days now. He’d thought at first he should approach Hoseok, because he wasn’t constantly looking at him with obvious curiosity like Namjoon was, but since then Hoseok had walked in on him and Jeongguk working in the kitchen. Well, he hadn’t exactly caught them in the act of doing anything, but to Yoongi it still felt like some sort of secret had been spilled the moment Hoseok’s loud footsteps had echoed throughout the dorm.
So, Hoseok or Namjoon? Yoongi felt like he was choosing between identical twins. There was probably an interrogation waiting for him regardless of who he approached for advice.

He groaned as he dragged himself out of bed.

Seokjin murmured something about the alarm not shutting up to give him a few more minutes of beauty sleep, and Yoongi chuckled to himself. At least his hyung wasn’t questioning him about his talk with the maknae the previous night, and he probably had the most right out of all of them to know what was going on. It had been his room they’d borrowed to talk in, and he was their hyung, whose responsibility was to look after his dongsaengs. Yoongi was a bit amazed that Seokjin hadn’t already asked him about the previous night. He’d still been awake when the older had come stumbling into the bedroom, but this time he’d been sure to stay curled up in a ball to remove any suspicions his hyung might have had over his state of consciousness.

“Did you not hear me, Yoongi? Shut that awful alarm off already! It’s going to ruin my face’s appeal and create permanent bags under my eyes!”

Yoongi sighed loudly as he turned the alarm off. “Your face is already covered in imperfections. A few bags aren’t going to do anything.”

“Yoongi! Where has your respect gone for your hyung?”

“It disappeared a while ago, hyung.”

“And you have the nerve to complain about the other’s lack of respect! Gah, Yoongi, you really are a brat sometimes.”

“I do my best.”

There was no malice in either of their tones, and Yoongi hadn’t shared carefree banter with Seokjin like that in ages. Week, most likely. If not months. It had been too long since he’d acted like this, Yoongi realised. Acted normally, like Min Yoongi would on a day-to-day basis.

He had missed this.
“Oh, yeah! And how are you and Kookie now? Everything sorted out? Got a plan A and plan B as backup? Just in case, you know.”

Yoongi had concluded his earlier assumption way too early. Seokjin hadn’t asked Yoongi yet about their conversation because he hadn’t exactly had an opportunity to ask him about it. This was the first time they’d spoken since Yoongi and Jeongguk had spoken, too, so Yoongi didn’t know how he ended up guessing Seokjin wouldn’t ask him about it. Of course Seokjin would ask about it. He cared too dearly about the two of them to not ask.

Yoongi swallowed slowly. How much could he tell Seokjin, exactly? And would Jeongguk care if he told Seokjin what had happened the previous night?

Oh, there he was again. Caring about what Jeongguk thought. Why did he keep doing that?

The younger licked his upper lip.

“I think we’re good, hyung. Last night was, uh, good.”

He saw Seokjin dramatically roll out of bed with an exaggerated groan from the corner of his eye, and it was difficult to hold in a smile. His hyung could be overly theatriic when it suited him.

“That’s wonderful, Yoongi! I was getting a bit worried, not gonna lie, but I’m so happy you guys sorted it out by yourselves! Otherwise big bad hyung would have to have gotten involved.”

Yoongi ignored Seokjin as he attempted to get to his feet without using his hands, for whatever reason. He was most likely trying to cheer Yoongi up for finally sorting something out with Jeongguk, and yeah, it might be working just a little bit. He didn’t think Seokjin had even been trying to trip over his blanket while he was getting to his feet, but he’d managed to do it somehow. He ended up sprawled over his bed all over again, back in the exact same position he’d started the day in, and when Seokjin cracked up at his own clumsiness Yoongi couldn’t contain his laughter.

Today was going to be a good day, Yoongi decided. He’d made one step across the tightrope, and that was something Yoongi could cling onto hopefully. If he squinted, he could also see Jeongguk smiling at the other end of the rope.

Yoongi smiled back.
Hi everyone! I hope you liked this update :)

School just started back up for me, and wowie I’m busy. I really struggled to get this chapter written (as you can probably tell from this being posted a day late), so I’m really not sure when the next chapter will be up because it’s only the first week back and I’m already struggling to juggle so many things at once. I will do my absolute best to not make you guys wait any longer than absolutely necessary for an update! I love you guys too much to make you wait that long ❤️

Also, completely unrelated but Taemin’s got a solo comeback coming up and I’m about to get wrecked so look out for my remains in the next chapter

As always, thank you so much for reading this fic! I really appreciate it, I really do Have a wonderful day/night/existence
Chapter Summary

Thank you guys for being so patient with this update! Love you all

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The ringtone on the phone in Yoongi’s hand sounded distant, somehow. Like he was listening to it through a tin can rather than through the actual device. He didn’t analyse it too much, though. He was trying not to do that as often.

Instead, his mind retraced his steps during the day.

He had woken up with Seokjin and they’d both made their way out to have breakfast alongside everyone with grins plastered on their faces. Yoongi couldn’t be bothered to wipe his happiness off his lips. He was trying to go back to properly being himself, so he was done with constantly putting on a blank face and pretending he was incapable of feeling emotions. That might be the image he put up for the fans most of the time, but he couldn’t do that to the other members anymore. The distant way he’d treated them over the past couple of months couldn’t be undone, but Yoongi could improve on it. Work on his actions for the future.

He believed he could do it, so he would. He was done with moping over his status.

Somehow, he’d remembered to take his sweat reducer pill that morning over breakfast, and when Jimin’s head had tipped at him using the pills in front of everyone Yoongi decided he might as well tell them what they were actually for. It wasn’t like they weren’t going to be seeing him, and Jeongguk for that matter, taking them daily.

“Jimin,” Yoongi addressed, and he swore Jimin’s eyes popped out of his head at being caught staring. “Remember how a while ago I told you these were antidepressants?”

Whatever conversations were occurring around Yoongi paused to listen in on what he had to say. Yoongi felt oddly calm being the centre of attention. A slither of his past self had returned, apparently.
Jimin nodded slowly, like he was trying to figure out what Yoongi was going to say before he actually said anything. Yoongi spared a few seconds to glance at the various faces looking at him, curiosity lacing their expressions, but it was Jeongguk’s who stood out to him. For some reason.

The only way Yoongi could describe the way he was looking at him was, well, pleased. He had the faintest suggestion of a smirk hiding in his eyes, like he knew something everyone else didn’t, and moments later Yoongi realised that he did actually have a reason for pulling that face. He knew things about Yoongi from the previous night, things that Yoongi hadn’t shared with anyone else, and the look in Jeongguk’s eyes demonstrated that. He looked happy with that fact. A kind of happy that was so subtle Yoongi had to go swimming in his eyes to find it.

He pulled himself back to face Jimin, who quickly met his eyes. His gaze clearly hadn’t been on Yoongi the entire time. He, and everyone else, had probably witnessed whatever his and Jeongguk’s prolonged eye contact had been, but thankfully they didn’t seem to be in any state to say anything about it. Good. Yoongi hoped they kept it that way.

Jimin’s lower lip protruded slightly. “That’s not what they are, right hyung.”

The dancer didn’t phrase it like a question. Jimin sounded confident, like he’d figured something out, and Yoongi didn’t know how he kept forgetting how insightful Jimin could be.

“Yeah. You’re right. They’re actually for getting rid of my scent. You know, the omega one I produce? I think it’s, uh, mint...?”

He looked over to Jeongguk for confirmation, who gave him a small nod alongside the smallest of smiles. Yoongi looked away immediately.

“Yeah. But it reduces the strength of smell I make, especially in the lead up to my— you get the picture.”

Yoongi ducked his head, unsure if his cheeks had taken a pink tint during his explanation. It was always better to be safe than sorry, he reasoned with himself as he held his head titled towards the dining table. It wasn’t expected of him to be acting bashful about this. The others all thought he hated being an omega, not that he was embarrassed by it. Those were two entirely different things.

Yoongi should know. He’d been feeling more of the latter as of late, and that didn’t make any sense. He couldn’t expect the others to understand his sudden change of heart if he couldn’t
understand it himself.

He was supposed to hate being submissive, and different, and vulnerable. Yoongi couldn’t explain what he felt now, for everything was still too complicated and convoluted in his mind, but it definitely seemed like the correct word to describe his feelings towards being an omega had shifted from ‘hate’ to ‘dislike’.

So how the hell did that even happen in such a short time frame?

He was sure if a blush had been on his cheeks originally, it had to have disappeared in the time he’d spent staring at the table. Reluctantly, he raised his head to view Jimin again, and he made a resolution right then and there to not let his gaze drop like that again in case he missed someone’s reaction to something he said.

“So, you smell like... mint, hyung?” Yoongi nodded curtly. “Okay, so is this an omega-only thing or does Kookie smell like something, too?”

Jimin was pressing for information, Yoongi knew, but he couldn’t blame the younger for doing so. He hadn’t exactly opened up about his status for months, and since he was throwing scraps of information out there for the others to feed off, Jimin was doing his best to collect as much information as he could. Yoongi learnt when Jimin had first asked about his pills all those weeks ago that Jimin was not afraid of confronting something that concerned him head on, even when he probably didn’t need to get involved. But Yoongi knew that was simply his excessively caring nature rearing its head. He was like Seokjin in that sense, constantly looking after the other members and checking in on them in ways they most likely weren’t even aware of.

However, the main difference between Jimin’s concern and Seokjin’s, was that Seokjin tended to avoid confronting them about issues that didn’t concern him. While Jimin didn’t lack the ability to do that, he certainly tried to get to the bottom of an issue regardless of that person’s feelings towards his occasionally invasive concern. It was just a part of Jimin’s personality, though. He was naturally curious, and caring.

The two combined were a weapon even Yoongi couldn’t fight that day, so he succumbed to the dancer’s question without much hesitation. They needed to hear this. He’d kept too much from them already.

He was still keeping too much from them, but he would cross that bridge when he got there. For now, he could explain a few things about their statuses. Nobody needed to hear about his mess of a mind yet.
Yoongi put his hands on the table and made a random gesture. “It’s more of a thing for alphas and omegas, yeah. I don’t really know anything about betas, other than the fact that they can’t smell scents like we can,” he said as he pointed between himself and Jeongguk, and why the hell was Jeongguk still giving him that small smile? “Uh, yeah. But Jeongguk smells like lavender, so uh. That’s a thing.”

Of course his reflex reaction was to scratch the back of his neck. He didn’t pull away from the action, because that would look even odder from everyone else’s perspective, but he tried not to do it for awfully long either. Why was he sounding so embarrassed by everything? He never used to be embarrassed. He used to outwardly be blunt and closed off about his status, but now a weird mixture of awkwardness and unsettlement had overcome him in front of everyone. He hadn’t felt this way before he’d sat down in front of everyone.

Yoongi wanted to disconnect his brain from his body so that he could stop overanalysing everything happening around him. He just needed to stop.

Namjoon stood up from his seat and stacked a few used plates on top of each other. “So these pills you’re both taking, are they just for alphas and omegas? Just because I find it a little difficult to comprehend medication being made for something so... uncommon, per say.”

Yoongi didn’t know where to start. He wasn’t surprised in the slightest that Namjoon had rolled about three questions into one, but he was a little lost on where to start with his reply.

“Ah, Joon-hyung, the thing is, I’m actually not taking the pills yet.”

The older swivelled his head around to see Jeongguk’s bashful face, and he hoped the emotion in his eyes indicated a grateful ‘Thank you’. The tips of Jeongguk’s ears burned, and Yoongi.

Yoongi did not expect that reaction.

“Wait, what?” Seokjin asked with the barest hint of surprise in his tone. “Why aren’t you taking them yet? Isn’t it kind of pointless for one of you to get rid of your smell if you can smell the other anyway?”

The rapper hated that Seokjin had a very valid point.
“I, uh. I forgot to tell Jeongguk they were a thing. He only found out they existed last night, actually.”

Collective disbelief simmered in the air, and Yoongi felt the barest instinct to shrink in on himself, but he didn’t act on it. After a few more moments of suppressed embarrassment from being called out for something he probably could have handled a lot better, Yoongi saw Namjoon shake his head from the corner of his eye. The shadow of a smile revealed itself in that moment, and the tenseness in Yoongi’s shoulder’s immediately deflated. Namjoon, at least, wasn’t actually angry at him. Maybe very disbelieving, but not angry. Yoongi would take that reaction in his stride, because that was what he did with everything. Or, tried to do with everything.

“Well, try to get Kook here some of those pills soon, yeah Yoongi? Before his rut creeps up on us.” The leader didn’t try to hide his smirk anymore. “Like Jinnie here said, your efforts right now are pretty pointless if Jeongguk isn’t taking the medication, too.”

Yoongi gave Namjoon the most intimidating glare he could manage, but the leader seemed completely unaffected by it. He must have gotten used to his stares after living with them for so long.

So that was how Yoongi ended up with his phone in hand, and a clear objective in mind. What was the doctor’s name again? He’d probably need to ask for her if any of this was going to work. He really didn’t want to disclose any more medical information to random personnel.

Finally, the ringtone ceased to exist and a female voice drifted through the line.

“Hello, you’ve reached Sector Four’s reception for the Asan Medical Center, how can we help you?”

Yoongi wasn’t sure if he wanted to let out a breath of panic or relief. He had the right number, and that was something, but he needed to get a specific person on the line. If they were even working that day, Yoongi thought miserably. There were so many loopholes to this plan, all for some pills Yoongi couldn’t risk to get prescribed at a chemist. It was bad enough he’d have to pick them up himself.

He needed to say something, he realised after he let the line swallow silence for a beat too long.
“A, uh, a couple of months ago I was treated by a doctor at your hospital that rang me on this line and I, uh. I would like to get back in contact with her as soon as possible.”

“Do you know the doctor’s name?”

Yoongi paused. “Uh, no. I think it started with an L? Yeah, it definitely did.”

He heard faint clicking on the other end of the line, and for a moment Yoongi allowed himself to do nothing more than breathe. This would work. There was nothing he needed to stress over, so if he could start breathing evenly again that would be incredible.

A hum resonated through the speaker. “I have a Doctor Lee Jisoo and a Doctor Lee Hyuk Mikyu working in their stations currently. Do either of their names ring a bell?”

The first name did in fact ring a bell with Yoongi. He wanted to let out a sigh of relief, but he held it in for the sake of normality. He could thank whatever deities existed later for actually doing something nice for him.

“Uh yes, I’m pretty sure it was Doctor Lee. Could you get her on the line?”

Yoongi wanted to curse at the odd addition of desperation that laced his voice.

“Yes, of course. Not a moment.”

Radio silence met the silence of Yoongi’s studio. He waited patiently for a noise to carry through the line, and in the meantime he checked the time on his desktop’s screen. Hoseok would be dropping by within the hour to help him with his tracks, and Yoongi would really like this phone call to be finished by then. Not for the sake of privacy, because it wasn’t a secret to anyone at this point that he needed to contact the hospital for Jeongguk and his pills, but rather for the sake of... security. A sense of security at the very least, not even anything physical.

While previously Yoongi had struggled to come across moments where he felt, well, safe and comfortable in his omega skin, somehow it was getting easier to experience those moments. And then Yoongi brutally crushed the thought that Jeongguk had brought along most of those moments. It didn’t help the rapper’s cause that it wasn’t even the alpha in Jeongguk that had been helping him, either. It had just been Jeongguk, each and every time. Only ever Jeongguk.
Yoongi didn’t want that to mean anything, but he felt like it did. Like it had to.

A rustle was heard through the phone in his hand, and Yoongi shoved the device to his ear quicker than he would care to admit.

“Hello, this is Doctor Lee Jisoo from the Asan Medical Centre. How can I help you?”

He didn’t understand why, but Yoongi’s shoulder’s deflated when he realised he was going to have to open up about his and Jeongguk’s plans for their heat and rut. He otherwise couldn’t see any other way of retrieving the prescribed contraceptives if he didn’t explain their situation to the doctor.

A frown stretched across Yoongi’s face. He really didn’t want to say any of this out loud, but he knew he had to. This was a form of confrontation, he thought absentmindedly. In a way, this experience was preparing him to face his proper fears, his real worries and stresses that just wouldn’t leave him alone as of late. This experience was going to help him, so he just needed to get it over and done with already.

Enough stalling. Enough running around in circles. Min Yoongi wasn’t afraid of confrontation.

“You might not remember because it was a few months ago that we last spoke, but I think if I say, ‘I’m that random omega that presented a while back,’ you might remember.”

Yoongi hoped his slight cockiness would cover any waver that appeared in his voice.

“Ah,” Yoongi heard distantly. “Min Yoongi, correct?”

And Yoongi nodded, despite knowing the doctor couldn’t see it, “Yep. That would be me.”

The smallest of pauses came from the doctor before she spoke again. Yoongi felt better at the thought. He wasn’t the only one wondering what to say, and how to say it.
“Was the medication I prescribed effective in reducing your scent?”

Again, Yoongi nodded. He felt a little stupid at repeating the action, but it was second nature by this point in his life to respond physically to something before he did verbally. It was a habit of his, Yoongi reasoned. Another thing that had nothing to do with being an omega.

Yoongi stood up from his swivel chair, phone in hand. “Yeah, it was. And I’d like another prescription for it, if that’s alright.”

More clicking came through the line. “You should still have a quarter of your propantheline dosage left. Have you been excessively using the medication up until your heat?”

He didn’t have to try to hear the disapproving in her tone. Yoongi had last spoken to her in such a friendly manner, that he’d somehow forgotten that alongside that friendliness needed to be professionalism. She was a doctor, first and foremost. Yoongi couldn’t expect her to ask anything different.

“No, I haven’t. It’s actually for the, uh. The alpha that presented on the same day.”

Another pause came from the doctor, but Yoongi ignored it. He shouldn’t analyse it, there was no reason to analyse it.

Then, a sigh came down the line. “I should have expected you’d find out anyway. I’m assuming you know why you presented as an omega now?”

Yoongi walked from one end of his studio to the other, trying to keep his mind off the time. He wasn’t stressed about Hoseok visiting, but the thought of him bringing up any of his and Jeongguk’s interactions had him on edge. He really didn’t want to talk about any of those if he could help it. He couldn’t decipher why his mind was thinking the way it was, so how could he understand why Jeongguk was acting in certain ways? How could he possibly understand how he was feeling about that, too? He couldn’t sort out his own emotions, as much as he’d tried recently, so he didn’t think he had a chance of deciphering anyone else’s.

He couldn’t even decode Jeongguk’s emotions, despite Yoongi knowing he could read him like a novel. He just couldn’t understand the maknae. His motives, his sudden understanding of the smallest of things about Yoongi; he didn’t get any of it, and he wanted to. Before him not knowing anything ripped his already damaged mind to shreds.
“Yeah. He was my trigger or whatever, wasn’t he?”

“Correct. His presentation seems to be, from my perspective anyway, the only reason for you becoming an omega. I hope you now understand why I couldn’t tell you this earlier.”

Yoongi stopped walked back and forth, because he finally did understand. It had taken him far too long, actually, to understand why he’d never been told in the first place. He prayed that his own ignorance had stopped him from understanding the doctor’s position, rather than his own self-pity and hatred.

“You had to protect Jeongguk’s privacy. It’s one of your duties as a doctor, so yeah, I, I understand. I get it.”

If Yoongi concentrated, he could feel the smile on the doctor’s lips. He allowed himself a slither of happiness at that.

“I’ll get another prescription sorted out for you and Jeon Jeongguk was it?”

“Yep. That’s him.”

A faint hum of comprehension echoed through Yoongi’s ear. “I’ll make sure one of the bottles is under his name, and the other will be under yours. Do you need me to organise any other medications while I’m putting this under your name? Painkillers, contraceptives, fertility drugs...?”

Yoongi struggled not to choke.

Had he really been so obvious with the other requests he’d needed to make? Had his voice wavered too much? Had his breathing become too shallow? What was it that had given away his need for something else from the doctor, something that he hadn’t already had the guts to just ask for?

Yoongi, he told himself, stop. Stop overanalysing everything. It wasn’t helping anyone, or anything.
Then, he told himself to sit down, because his pacing had started up again and it wasn’t helping his
nerves that had abruptly developed for some reason. They hadn’t developed because he was
embarrassed. He didn’t get embarrassed.

“I-I,” and he stopped right there, because he was stuttering. He didn’t stutter. He never stuttered.

Why was he finding it so difficult to spit out a request? This happened when he had to confront
someone about anything relating to his omega status, and it happened every time. He’d never had
issues with confrontation like this before.

So he refused to have them now.

“I need some contraceptives, yeah. Strong ones. The strongest you’ve got, actually.”

Yoongi swore he would have reached his hands out through the phone and strangled the doctor if
she asked what the contraceptives were for, because Yoongi knew she had to have an idea at the
very least why he was requesting them. It was probably glaringly obvious to her, actually. She’d
looked after and diagnosed both of them when they were last at the hospital, so it would be stupid
of Yoongi to assume she didn’t know any better.

Thankfully, her response was perfectly professional, and Yoongi wanted to reach through the line
to hug her or something instead.

“I’ll put them under your name, if that’s alright. You’ll need to take them at the same time every
day for them to be effective, so I advise taking them alongside your propantheline every day unless
you are trying for children.”

Yoongi’s eyebrows rose slightly at that mention of information, but he wasn’t as disgusted by it as
he used to be. He couldn’t change that fact, so he might as well move on with his life, right? Taking
birth control should help him, too. It was another thing that would hopefully help him accept his
circumstances.

It wasn’t like it mattered that much anyway, right?

“Yeah, easy. All good. I can pick everything up at a chemist, right?”
When Yoongi’s voice didn’t wobble, he let a slither of a smile show. It wasn’t like anyone could see it, anyway. Nobody could see how happy he was at finally confronting something regarding his status.

Even though asking for birth control was a small step, a tiny step actually, it was still movement in the right direction. If he kept this success rate up, who knew? He might actually get over his status quicker than he thought he would.

He might even not care about his heat. What a miracle that would be.

He knew it was too idealistic for him to be thinking along those lines, but he didn’t want to care for a moment. He wanted to be ignorant, and hopeful, and optimistic for a second, so he was.

The tapping of keys on a keyboard filled the silence momentarily. “Yes, you will be able to. Just be sure to bring Mr Jeon with you so that he can sign off for his own medication.”

Yoongi spun around in his chair. “Okay. I’ll probably pick it up this afternoon.”

And just like that, the million dollar question popped into Yoongi’s mind. He’d been meaning to ask Jeongguk about it for ages, ever since the maknae first confessed to him that he was an alpha, but he’d never had the courage to ask before. He didn’t understand this lack of courage either, but he forced himself not to dwell on it for too long. He hadn’t exactly acted like himself the past couple of months, so he reasoned his lack of courage was simply a byproduct of his unusual behaviour.

“Is there anything else I can help you with? You should have received the email by now that contains your prescriptions.”

Screw it, he thought as he gathered the remains of a past bravery. He was never going to find out if he didn’t try to ask someone.

“I, uh. I do have a question.”

Yoongi felt the pressure of silence fully in that moment. He stopped picking at the skin on his
thumb and instead forced himself to look at the clock on the wall in his studio. The hands liked to tease him, Yoongi had found out over the years. They liked to make fun of how much time Yoongi wasted constantly, and this occasion was no different. He was taking far too long to ask a question that wasn’t even about him.

“Do you know why Jeongguk presented, Doctor, um, Doctor Lee was it? Cause I don’t think he needed a, a trigger to present like me. He just, sort of... did.”

The aftermath of that question, funnily enough, wasn’t a dead line like Yoongi had anticipated. Fear was like that, Yoongi had learnt a while ago. Irrational. Uncontrollable. Dangerous. Everything Yoongi hated.

But it seemed like Yoongi was learning that lesson all over again, with the way his hands had clenched around the armrest of his swivel chair.

A soft sigh, one that Yoongi barely picked up on, echoed through his eardrum. It made a single bead of sweat drip down his forehead.

Then, the doctor’s voice returned to his unexpected relief.

“I cannot answer that, Mr Min. That’s confidential patient information he’d have to tell you himself.”

Yoongi slunk a little into his chair. “I figured. Didn’t hurt to ask though.”

The absence of noise this time felt like Yoongi’s cue to end their conversation. He’d probably been on the phone with this poor doctor for too long, anyway.

“Thanks for your help anyway, Doctor Lee.”

With that, Yoongi imagined the faintest presence of a smile on the doctor’s lips. She was most likely eager to leave their talk, but Yoongi hoped she was instead pleased to be helpful to a patient. Again, that probably wasn’t the case, but Yoongi tried to be optimistic.
It wasn’t as easy as Hoseok made it out to be.

“Not a problem, Mr Min. If you ever need your medications prescribed again, just give me a call on this line and I’ll get back to you as soon as possible.”

The flat tone of silence overcame the studio, and Yoongi slowly let the phone leave his ear. He immediately threw his head back against the headrest of the chair and a gaping breath of relief left him. His contraceptives were sorted out. He couldn’t get pregnant from his upcoming heat if he used them effectively. He was one step closer to having sex with Jeongguk out of need.

Yoongi didn’t know why, because he never knew why, he never knew anything, but something about that thought didn’t sit right with him.

He stopped thinking about that though. He was supposed to be simplifying everything in his life, so it shouldn’t matter if a single thought in his mind didn’t make complete sense to him. He could deal with it. It probably didn’t mean anything.

The gentle ticking of the analog clock became Yoongi’s world for a while. He spun the chair from side to side, glaring at the program he’d left open before the call with Doctor Lee. He couldn’t find what was missing from this track, this single piece of music he’d been trying to finish for around two months, he guessed. He hated asking for other’s help with his music, because he knew they all had their own styles and flows, but he couldn’t see this song getting finished anytime soon if he didn’t accept his circumstance and at least try to make progress with it by accepting someone else’s help.

Yoongi realised seconds afterwards that there was a parallel there, somewhere, that related back to his omega status. But being Yoongi, he refused to look at it. He was trying to stop overanalysing everything, after all.

Then, not a minute later than Yoongi had been told, he heard a knock at his studio door. It was probably gratefulness that came over him in that moment, but he didn’t rule out anxiety either. He more often than not hated getting other’s help with anything because he never needed it, but it also always left a stinging in his stomach whenever he admitted he wanted it. He wasn’t supposed to need help as a hyung; he was meant to be self-reliant, the pillar in everyone else’s lives when things took a turn for the worse. Just as Seokjin seemed to always wear this subtly caring yet independent aura, Yoongi was expected to wear one of indifference and benevolence. The fans even weren’t oblivious to his covert kindness towards the younger members.

Stop. Analysing. Everything. He needed to stop.
A playful few knocks went through the studio again, and Yoongi finally got up to answer them. He didn’t know why he was faintly imagining possible ways he could get out of doing this, but it most likely had something to do with how useless he was getting at confrontation. Yoongi smoothed out his fringe before unlocking the door, but didn’t do much else to improve his appearance. Hoseok understood him well enough to know that looks didn’t really matter between them.

To Yoongi’s expectations, Hoseok entered the studio. He was dressed in a pair of baggy sweatpants that dangled around his ankles and a loose singlet that barely covered his sides. Yoongi felt slightly better about his own appearance.

“Hello hyung! Let’s have a look at this song now, shall we?”

Hoseok may not always have an overly enthusiastic persona on display, but he always had a cheerful undertone to his words and actions. His optimism was his own silver lining, Yoongi liked to think. He was his own source of happiness, as well as other’s. Yoongi admired him in that sense.

Yoongi shut the door behind the dancer and gestured to the chair in front of his various desktops. “Be my guest. It’s sounded like shit for way too long.”

The younger let out a gentle giggle as he made his way over to the swivel chair and spun it around once before plonking himself onto it. He looked up at Yoongi for permission, he assumed, to play the song, and the older nodded. What else was the dancer here for, anyway? Still, Hoseok was polite like that. He was considerate in ways Yoongi never imagined.

Then, the melody of a broken tune broke through the studio, and Yoongi scrunched his eyes up at the song. He knew it was incomplete, but it sounded so much worse when there was someone else listening to it. It sounded hollow, almost. Like there was no reason behind the song ever being made.

Hoseok’s own eyes were narrowed at the screen in front of him, and he kept tapping his fingers to a beat Yoongi knew wasn’t there.

It took too many minutes for silence to return to the studio.

Hoseok glanced, once, between Yoongi and the split track in front of him, and Yoongi couldn’t not bite his lip. Was Hoseok about to be honest, or dishonest for the sake of Yoongi’s feelings? He
really prayed for the former. He knew there were issues with the song; the entire reason Yoongi had called for Hoseok’s assistance was because he knew he needed help in making it decent. He didn’t want the dancer to lie through his teeth. He was sick of people tip-toeing around him.

Was it so wrong of him to want to be treated the same way he was before everyone found out he was an omega? Because even if Hoseok praised him for an entirely different reason, Yoongi knew that secretly, it would be because of his own pity towards the older. The praise his song could possibly be given wouldn’t be deserved.

Hoseok brought his fist to his cheek and leant against it. “How long have you been working on this for, hyung?”

In all honesty, Yoongi didn’t have a clue how long he’d actually spent on the song. Whenever he’d had a spare moment in his studio, he’d always managed to squeeze some time in for adding and editing the tune. It shouldn’t sound as incomplete as it did for the amount of time he’d wasted on it.

“Too long,” Yoongi gradually replied. He made a point of glaring at the screen, like he was frustrated with the melody instead of himself. He didn’t know what was holding him back from finishing this song, and it was annoying him to no end.

“Hyung, I need you to be honest with me. Otherwise this—” Hoseok gestured between himself and Yoongi, “isn’t going to work.”

The older leaned on the chair Hoseok was sitting on, but didn’t move his head to face the dancer. Could he be honest? He thought he could with most things nowadays, but he had no idea what Hoseok would ask him to be honest about. There were only so many secrets Yoongi had left to himself, and he couldn’t see himself opening up about those to Hoseok, or anyone else for that matter, anytime in the near future. He hoped they remained buried in the depths of his mind, actually. They were nothing but depressing scraps of information and emotions that nobody else needed to hear. Hoseok would hardly want to listen to any of that.

He did need to try moving on, though. He wouldn’t be helping himself otherwise, and he needed to at least try doing that. He’d wallowed in enough self-pity to last a lifetime.

“I’ll try.”

Hoseok nodded from the corner of Yoongi’s eye. “Good.”
The dancer paused before saying whatever he was going to ask Yoongi, and the older could feel his lungs holding the minute amount of air he had left in them.

“What exactly is going on between you and Jeongguk?”

The air wouldn’t leave Yoongi’s lungs.

“And please don’t lie to me about anything, hyung. I saw you and Jeongguk last night. And this morning Jeongguk was acting all giddy and— and just really weird around you, it was impossible not to notice. And then at the photoshoot! He was literally all over you. I don’t think he was away from you for more than a minute at a time.”

Yoongi attempted to bring more air into his chest, but it was so difficult. What was Hoseok trying to suggest? Just what was the dancer trying to get across to Yoongi, and how did that relate in any way to the song in front of him?

“I brought you here to help me with the track. Not to talk about Jeongguk.”

Hoseok took an exaggerated breath of air, like he was the one exasperated with their conversation. Yoongi scowled. Hoseok was the one bringing them down this path. Yoongi just wanted to get back to what they were meant to be doing.

“You don’t get it, Yoongi-hyung. I think... I think Jeongguk is the reason this song isn’t working.”

Yoongi sighed, but it sounded more like a growl than he intended.

“What the fuck does Jeongguk have to do with this?”

“Hyung, you haven’t finished this song as well as you usually do because you’ve been distracted. You’ve been focusing on other things, and these things have been either worrying you or confusing you because I’ve never—!” Hoseok took in a gaping breath to calm himself down, and Yoongi shuffled awkwardly on the spot to avoid his deathly glare. “I’ve never seen you like this, hyung. It’s like you’re two separate people rolled into one, and I know I’m not the only one who’s noticed. Me and Namjoon were talking about it last night.”
So it wouldn’t have mattered if Yoongi had chosen Namjoon to help him with the track instead of Hoseok. They both would have drifted off task to the topic of him and Jeongguk. Yoongi felt his previous anger snap in two, never to be recovered in their talk. His frustration wasn’t helping his cause, and the quicker he rid himself of it the more rational he could be with Hoseok’s ridiculous perspective.

“Look,” Hoseok sounded about as done with their conversation as Yoongi felt. “You act... differently around Jeongguk. And Jeongguk acts differently around you, too. So, I don’t actually know if he’s distracting you, or whatever else I said, but there’s something going on between you and him.”

Yoongi opened his mouth to say something, but Hoseok continued before he could get a word in.

“And I’m definite that there’s more to it than just you being an omega and him being an alpha. Your statuses don’t explain everything, you know? Whatever is going on between you two is more than just your biology.”

Yoongi wasn’t an idiot. He could be oblivious on occasions, and things sometimes went right over his head, but he wasn’t stupid. What Hoseok was suggesting hadn’t escaped him. It was pretty clear what he was thinking about his and Jeongguk’s questionable relationship, and Yoongi had never felt so done with Hoseok’s indicative words before. He just needed to say it already.

“You think I like Jeongguk. And that he likes me.”

Hoseok’s eyes widened considerably, like he hadn’t expected Yoongi to say it aloud. He looked thankful for the older’s comprehension, regardless. “Exactly! That’s exactly what I mean.”

Hoseok gave Yoongi the first smile he’d seen directed at him since the dancer had entered the studio, and Yoongi had never considered himself vindictive. However, the need to strip the dancer of his grin was positively overbearing, for what the fuck made Hoseok think he and Jeongguk felt like that in reality?

“Sorry to disappoint Hoseok, but that shit couldn’t be further from the truth.”

The smile on Hoseok’s lips did drop, but Yoongi didn’t feel gleeful like he thought he would when it happened. Instead, something like guilt wormed its way into his chest. Yoongi did his best to
The dancer stood up from his seat. Yoongi failed to find a single undertone of anger or frustration evident in any part of his body language. “Then explain to me why you let Jeongguk hold you that way in the kitchen last night. Tell me why he couldn’t stop complimenting you at the photoshoot. Tell me why Jeongguk was blushing at breakfast this morning, even. Something, hyung. Please tell me something. Because whatever it is going on between you and him, is affecting this.”

Hoseok looked over at the screen showing his track, and that was one step too far for Yoongi.

“I have no fucking idea what’s going on, Hoseok. I wish I knew, but I don’t. I have no fucking clue why he’s acting this way, but I can tell you it’s not because of—it’s not because of that.” The word felt like leather on his tongue. Really old, dry leather.

Yoongi swallowed around the sensation.

“Now, can we get back to making the song sound decent?”

Unlike the last time he’d lost consideration for his words, he felt the aftermath of his outburst seconds later. Hoseok’s expression was drawn together, like he was struggling not to let anything show on his usually readable face, and Yoongi wanted to apologise immediately for shutting him down so quickly. He’d brushing aside his every comment for the sake of his own dignity, and Yoongi knew what Hoseok was feeling. He’d felt negligence directed at himself before, countless times, but he couldn’t apologise. Call him an asshole, but he wanted Hoseok to realise that making those kind of assumptions were dangerous around Yoongi. Hoseok shouldn’t even be thinking along those lines. He had no right to dig into the way he and Jeongguk acted around each other. It was hardly any of his business.

His or Namjoon’s. It didn’t concern either of them, yet they’d discussed it anyway.

Yoongi breathed through his nose.

“Please?”

The word came out strangled, and Yoongi knew then that he was at the mercy of Hoseok’s kindness. He didn’t sound confident, or independent, with that single word. He sounded desperate
instead. Like he was hoping against hope that Hoseok would pity him and let their talk slip by.

That single word had said more about his real state of mind, and Yoongi hated, absolutely hated, that he’d let it out. It ruined everything he’d said up until that point, and if Hoseok was as observant as he was letting on with his and Jeongguk’s recent dynamic, then there was no doubt he’d heard the million implications behind that word, too. The main one being that he didn’t believe a word he’d told Hoseok, but was praying that if he told someone else those words then he himself would believe them.

Because it was ridiculous to think Jeongguk felt something towards him, right?

It was even more ridiculous to think that he felt something for Jeongguk. If he felt anything, if the key word there, it was because of his inner omega reacting positively to Jeongguk’s alpha. There was nothing else hiding beneath the surface of his and Jeongguk’s friendship. There was nothing else to it.

There never had been, so why would there be anything now? There shouldn’t be. Yoongi was sick to death of change that was due to him being an omega.

Could anything just stay the same now that he was an omega?

Then, against any beliefs Yoongi had about Hoseok, the dancer spoke up.

“Okay, hyung.”

That was it. Hoseok didn’t ask about the sudden vulnerability in Yoongi’s tone, or the weird significance behind the sole word that had glided past his lips. He left the matter alone, against Yoongi’s better judgement. He’d been sure that Hoseok would have delved further into Yoongi’s thoughts, but he didn’t. He actually respected Yoongi’s wishes.

Yoongi wanted to smile from the small serendipity he’d found in their talk. At least Hoseok knew when to stop. The older didn’t know he was capable of respecting someone’s decision as much as he did when Hoseok stood true to his word and sat back down to look at the individual components to the track, starting with the piano chords.

A grateful smile crossed Yoongi’s lips on the inside.
They slowly made their way through the song, with Hoseok making constant suggestions for improvement on a Word document he’d opened up on a separate screen. They worked like that for an hour, Yoongi guessed, before Hoseok eventually stood up to stretch.

“Yoongi-hyung, I think I’ve lost all feeling in my legs.”

The wide grin on the dancer’s face told Yoongi he wasn’t really complaining. The older glared regardless.

“You agreed to come down and help, so technically it’s your own fault.”

Hoseok laughed, a real, uncontrollable laugh, but Yoongi managed to keep a straight face all the same. It just made Hoseok laugh even louder, and that was kind of the point. Yoongi was smiling on the inside, and he was pretty sure Hoseok knew that. Hoseok knew a lot. A lot more than he let on.

Yoongi was okay with that, though. If he hadn’t kept his thoughts to himself, Yoongi wondered where else they would be in that moment. Knowing Yoongi’s habit of throwing other’s feelings, as well as his own, aside, he could only assume that Hoseok probably wouldn’t still be in his studio helping him.

Hoseok was wiser than he let on, too. But Yoongi already knew that.

“I’ll leave you to it, hyung. My brain’s currently a bit dead from staring at that monitor.”

Yoongi felt like he wasn’t even in the same room as the dancer as he walked over to the studio’s exit. He felt more like an outsider, with the amount of things he wanted to say swirling in his mind but the inability to say them keeping his mouth shut. He could say one thing, though, that wouldn’t give anything else away. He could say one thing to Hoseok before he left.

“Thanks for the help, Hobi.”

He knew it was the first time he’d called Hoseok by his nickname since he’d entered the studio, and from the beaming smile on the dancer’s face he knew it, too. Yoongi wondered what was
going on in his mind momentarily before realising it was a pointless endeavour. He could hardly understand his own thoughts, so what chance did he have at understanding Hoseok’s?

The dancer was probably thinking something nice, though, if his constant positivity said anything.

“No problem, hyung. If you ever need anything, you know you can always hit me up!”

The double meaning behind his words didn’t go over Yoongi’s head, but he nodded anyway. The dancer then left the studio, and a string within Yoongi tightened at the sudden silence. It was nice of Hoseok to have his back in a way that wasn’t invasive. The way Taehyung had supported him recently more often than not ground his nerves, but Hoseok’s way of supporting him was much more subtle. It wasn’t that he didn’t appreciate Taehyung, not at all, but Yoongi felt like he preferred Hoseok’s methods to the younger’s.

He hoped there was nothing wrong with that. He didn’t think there was, but he didn’t know anything anymore. He just hoped nowadays. Hoped for things that usually didn’t happen.

At least he’d been able to secure his and Jeongguk’s prescriptions.

Yoongi looked over at the clock hanging on the studio’s far wall. He still had time to visit the local chemist to pick everything up, and as long as Jeongguk came with him there shouldn’t be any problem.

He shoved the words Hoseok had said to him earlier into the darkest sectors of his memory as he brought up the maknae’s contact on his phone. He might as well grab everything now while he had time.

He typed out a quick message to Jeongguk, alerting him on his own plan for the late afternoon. Yoongi assumed he wouldn’t get a response, because the maknae never seemed to actually reply to anything the members texted him. It was an awful habit of his, but nobody had managed to get him out of it in all the years that they’d known him, so everyone had since accepted it and had moved on. It was evident the maknae wasn’t changing his ways for anybody.

He did claim to read their messages though, so Yoongi thought the youngest would probably rock up outside his studio unannounced within a couple of minutes.
A loud buzz ruined the silence, and Yoongi nearly dropped his phone when it vibrated. The screen lit up his darkening studio to show that— what the fuck.

Jeongguk had actually replied. Within seconds of Yoongi texting him, too.

*Sounds good! Coming to studio now ;)*

And he’d responded with a wink emoji. A fucking *wink emoji*.

Yoongi stared at the message until he heard the maknae knock on the door.

It meant nothing, Yoongi repeated to himself as he opened his studio up for Jeongguk. It would never mean anything.

Right?

Chapter End Notes

I really hope you guys liked this update! I managed to write it in between bouts of homework and such so I really hope it’s alright. (I also just got a maths assignment on quadratics so actually end me 😞)

On a completely random note, a cyclone could hit where I live so that’s interesting 😄. I don’t know if you guys know about the monsoonal flooding that’s been happening in Far North Queensland (in Australia) recently, but with this cyclone we might get some flooding further south where I live that could be similar. I’ll keep you posted!

Anywho, I’m hoping to update this again soon (before two weeks pass), but I really appreciate you all for your patience with this chapter! Thank you for reading and staying updated with the fic

And finally, it’s Hobi’s b’day tomorrow, so please show him some love on Twitter or something! He really deserves to have a fantastic b’day. Have a great day/night wherever you are!
I’ve never been in a calculating love

Chapter Notes

I’m going to start posting updates for this fic on my Twitter if anybody’s interested in dates for when the next chapters will be up, so if anybody’s interested a link to my Twitter is down below. Don’t hesitate to talk to me there either! I love reading anything you lovable readers have to say 😊

https://twitter.com/mbookworm02/status/1097083776419516416?s=21

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Afternoon, hyung!” Jeongguk greeted eagerly. He was wearing an unreasonably wide smile, one that captured his positive essence too perfectly for Yoongi, but that didn’t mean Yoongi didn’t appreciate the sight. Seeing somebody happy and seemingly carefree was a nice change.

“Hey Kook,” Yoongi greeted back. The maknae’s cheerfulness slowly infected the overly serious mood that had been in Yoongi’s studio seconds before, and an odd sense of comfort came over Yoongi at the feeling being eradicated from his workplace. Secretly, he thanked Jeongguk for bringing this odd aura of optimism with him. It was nice to finally feel calm in his own studio after an hour’s worth of stress had dwelled within its walls.

Yoongi turned away from Jeongguk before his gratefulness made its way into his eyes. “I’ve just got to shut this down and then I’ll be with you.”

The burn of someone’s gaze following him didn’t escape Yoongi. He could feel the weight of Jeongguk’s eyes watching him as he saved the mess of a song still open on his desktop.

“Is that a new song hyung?”

Yoongi didn’t need to see the maknae to know his eyes would be blown wide with curiosity. He had always been intrigued with the song writing process, and he’d only really tested his skills in the arena of producing recently. He turned out to be a natural with certain components of songwriting, but he still hung around his rapping hyungs to better understand the process. Yoongi decided in that moment that he could never find Jeongguk’s curiosity aggravating in any sense.

If anything, Yoongi was enamoured by it. It was sweet, in a way, that he knew someone so interested in something he was so passionate about.
So Yoongi might hate the way the song sounded then, but he could change that. He could change so many aspects of it, and it would still be the same song, but it would be better. It would be an improved version of the original.

The rapper forced himself to keep his back to Jeongguk. “Yeah, it is. It’s not finished yet, but... It’ll get there.”

The program finished saving Hoseok’s edits, and Yoongi made a big show of rummaging around the studio momentarily for a reason he didn’t understand. He mentally shook himself out of his stupor and pressured himself into looking Jeongguk in the eye, because he really needed to start doing that more often. What was going on between them, whatever it was, couldn’t just be ignored.

Jeongguk’s lip quirked when Yoongi looked at him, definitely for a single moment too long to be deemed acceptable, but Yoongi didn’t care. He shouldn’t care.

“You’ll have to let me listen to it soon, hyung. You never fail to create masterpieces.”

But Yoongi did care. He cared, more than he should, and Jeongguk had shown repeatedly that he cared for Yoongi in one way or another.

“I’ll share it when it’s done, Kook.”

Should the way Jeongguk treated him mean something? Or should it mean nothing at all? They all cared for each other after all. They all looked after one another, and they always had each other’s backs when times got rough.

Yoongi walked over to the doorway and waited as Jeongguk pulled open the door. He didn’t hesitate when he held the door out for Yoongi, and despite the weird warmth that erupted from Yoongi’s chest at the caring action, he kept a straight face. He had to keep a straight face, otherwise all of the crazy things he felt every waking moment of his day would dance freely across his face for Jeongguk to see.

The clicking of his studio closing up brought Yoongi back to reality. “That would be awesome, hyung.”
Then Jeongguk walked ahead of Yoongi and effectively leaded them out of the complex, and Yoongi could tell there was a certain eagerness to Jeongguk’s steps as he guided them out of the building. The oddest part of this, however, was Yoongi allowing it to happen. He knew these corridors and walls so much better than Jeongguk did, as he practically called the studio his second home, yet he was letting the person out of the two of them that was much less familiar with the layout guide him to the car park.

It didn’t mean anything, though. Jeongguk was probably just excited to finally get something to help reduce his animalistic nature for when they got closer to their rut and heat. Yoongi was, however wondering about something that Hoseok had only just brought to his attention minutes ago.

If what he claimed was true, and if, hypothetically, he liked Jeongguk, which he didn’t know if he did or not yet, then that begged a different worry. Regardless of how Yoongi felt, he himself was clueless as to how Jeongguk felt about anything. His alpha status, his new instincts and biological functions, even the same kind of feelings Yoongi didn’t know if he had or not. For did Jeongguk’s actions themselves have any meaning behind them? Or were they all caring things the younger had always done for Yoongi, and he’d only just begun to notice them now that the excuse of him being an omega and the younger being an alpha was there to explain any newfound attraction they could theoretically develop for each other?

That question, Yoongi knew, was going to plague him.

~

Yoongi had texted Seokjin that he and Jeongguk were headed out to the chemist before they’d left the studio complex. That way, if they were spotted somehow beneath the parkas, beanies and masks someone at least knew where they were.

Frost had gathered on the edges of the windscreen, and Yoongi huffed to himself as he watched the window wiper fail to remove it. It wasn’t really a hazard while driving, so Yoongi didn’t feel like it was necessary for him to remove it before they left the car park.

Jeongguk, obviously, felt differently.

“Ah, Kook, what are you doing?” Yoongi asked when the younger popped open his car door and adjusted the gloves on his fingers. “Hey, close the door already! It’s freezing out there if you couldn’t already tell!”
Jeongguk stared at the edges of the windscreen before nodding once. “Yeah, I got that.”

The younger then hopped out of car, closed the door and walked over to Yoongi’s side of the windscreen, where he wiped away the fresh frost that had developed during the past couple of hours. Jeongguk humorously crossed his eyes as Yoongi glared at him through the windscreen, and when Jeongguk smiled to himself, probably satisfied with his own work, he moved on to the passenger’s side of the windscreen. Yoongi sighed, secretly hoping Jeongguk had heard him.

What exactly was Jeongguk trying to achieve here?

Moments later, the door opened again and a gust of cold air burst into the car. Jeongguk jumped back into his seat and shut the door just as quickly, a blank expression now on his face. Yoongi stared at the corners of the windscreen, and his lips parted without a second thought.

“What was the point of that?”

Jeongguk’s eyes widened when he turned to face Yoongi. “I was clearing up the windscreen. The wipers weren’t helping, clearly,” Yoongi caught a glimpse of joy through his gaping eyes, “so I helped instead.”

The slow lift of Jeongguk’s lips made Yoongi examine the windscreen. He couldn’t believe Jeongguk sometimes.

“The glass is still foggy, Kookie.”

Yoongi could feel the delayed reaction Jeongguk had towards his words, as one second he could feel the maknae’s smile on him, and the next it was being directed elsewhere. From his peripheral vision, Yoongi could make out Jeongguk leaning towards the glass rather comically.

A hum broke the momentary silence. “It is not.”

“Uh, it is. You didn’t do shit to clear it up.”
Jeongguk’s smile broke out in its full force. “Well then hyung, be my guest and clear it yourself! I’m sure you could show your dearest dongsaeng how it’s done.”

The grin the maknae wore didn’t falter when Yoongi glared at the steering wheel, and if anything that just made Yoongi want to smile, too. He resorted to starting the engine up instead, though.

“Ah, so you’re not gonna show me hyung? How disappointing! I expected so much more from my favourite hyung!”

Yoongi’s cackle finally broke through the confinements of his lips, and it didn’t feel like he’d betrayed himself for once. “Hey, it’s fucking cold out there. Only morons would go out and try to remove bits of ice from the windscreen.”

The incredulous expression on Jeongguk’s face was worth the half-hearted insult. Yoongi couldn’t get rid of his grin as he pulled out of the car park, and the silence that stretched over many seconds wasn’t laced with tension or fear for once, like it had been so many times before. It was comfortable instead. It was warm. Pleasant. Yoongi liked whatever atmosphere had generated within the car at that moment.

They arrived at their local chemist way too quickly for Yoongi’s liking. His lips had gradually stopped producing a grin, but the barest suggestion of a smile was still there. Yoongi couldn’t remember a time when that had happened recently, and yeah, that thought should have worried him. It definitely wasn’t healthy that he lacked the ability to recall happier times in his recent memory. It couldn’t be healthy.

But these last few minutes in a lukewarm car had made all of those previous days of misery, well. Yoongi wouldn’t say bearable, because some days he was still plagued with his own thoughts, but these last few minutes made him put things through a different perspective. There was a quote for that, wasn’t there? Something about rain always having to come before rainbows?

Yoongi scoffed to himself mentally. It wasn’t like inspirational quotes were going to help him. He was going to help himself, and that was that.

Yoongi parked in the car park at the back of the building and turned the engine off automatically. A single street light flickered despite the sun that still beat against the ground, and usually this would have annoyed Yoongi to no end. Today, however, he didn’t give it a second glance. There were more important things to focus on.
Like the untroubled mood that had recently settled in the car.

This mood had failed to develop anywhere near Yoongi during the past couple of months, but for some reason it was developing with Jeongguk. As much as he wanted to, and he really wanted to, Yoongi couldn’t just look past this fact anymore. Jeongguk was doing something to him, and it was something that the younger was probably completely unaware of.

Yoongi exited the car before the mood could suffocate him.

He pulled his face mask up to the bridge of his nose and hoped whoever served him would assume he was wearing it that way because of the freezing temperatures outside. From the corner of his eye he could see Jeongguk doing the same, and something quelled within Yoongi at the sight. It was only him and Jeongguk going in, not the seven of them. Logically they were less likely to be identified simply because of that, but Yoongi was always weary nowadays when he was out in public. The stone that was anxiety liked to sit in the depths of his stomach when he went out and about, and Yoongi could clearly recall the way it had made itself comfortable when he’d last picked up his sweat reducers.

Jeongguk had done a fairly exceptional job of eliminating the feeling just from being in Yoongi’s presence, but he didn’t dare chalk it up to their statuses this time. He knew now that their biologies weren’t to blame for Jeongguk being able to calm him down and comfort him. He knew their statuses weren’t the answers to Yoongi’s burning questions.

A hand latched onto Yoongi’s arm, and instinctually Yoongi looked around to see if anybody was watching. He just as quickly met the eyes that peeked out from the slit between the top of a mask and the bottom of a beanie.

He hoped his glare proved to Jeongguk that the physical contact was completely unnecessary and reckless considering how exposed they were to unwelcome eyes, but he was not expecting the equally measured glare he received in response to communicate a frustration so similar to Yoongi’s own. Why Jeongguk looked so frustrated, Yoongi wished he knew. He didn’t think he’d done anything to deserve the disappointment that laced Jeongguk’s eyes alongside his obvious exasperation, but there had to be something for the maknae to be looking at him this way.

“Hyung, are you doing okay?”

Yoongi switched his glare so that it was focusing on the hand still clasped around his arm. He was going to lose count over how many times Jeongguk had asked him this.
“I’m fine, Jeongguk. Really.”

He didn’t need to see Jeongguk’s eyebrows to know they had risen skeptically. Then, a sigh of disbelief escaped Jeongguk’s hidden lips.

“Hyung, I. I want to believe you because you should know yourself better than anyone else but I —” A broken sound ruined the younger’s composure. “I can’t. I can’t believe you for a second.”

Yoongi couldn’t lift his head to face Jeongguk, even if he wanted to. Something like shame swam inside of Yoongi where anxiety usually rested.

A splintered scoff left Jeongguk. “Do you have any idea how awful that is for me to say? That I can’t trust what you say anymore because I feel like I’m being lied to every time we speak?”

The feeling swam deeper into the depths of Yoongi’s consciousness. “That’s not true, Jeongguk. You know that’s not true.”

“How am I supposed to know, though? How exactly am I supposed to know you’re telling me the truth if you’re hiding it, hyung?”

Yoongi stiffened. “What are you implying, Jeongguk?”

The older hated that Jeongguk’s hand had stayed on his arm throughout this. It was a tether that was keeping them connected when Yoongi would rather their connection be severed before things escalated beyond his control. He needed everything to remain in his control for as long as possible, and the longer that arm rested on his own, the closer Yoongi felt he was to losing it.

He tried gently prying his arm away from Jeongguk, hoping that the maknae would get the idea, but Yoongi could have sworn his grip tightened instead.

Then, against all of Yoongi’s anticipations, the fire in Jeongguk’s words died.
“There’s something on your mind, Yoongi-hyung, and I know it.”

A switch immediately flicked over inside Yoongi’s mind, and somehow the ability to face Jeongguk resurfaced. Maybe it was the sudden lack of spite in his tone, or the subtle confidence in his words that had Yoongi scrambling for his own assertiveness, but he could face Jeongguk again and Yoongi decided he didn’t need a reason for understanding why he could. He just needed to do it.

And when he did it, he was rewarded in a way Yoongi had never known was possible.

There was this look in Jeongguk’s eyes that Yoongi couldn’t place, but he knew it held an irrevocable meaning beyond simple words. Yoongi could see through the outline of Jeongguk’s mask that the younger’s jaw was set, and if he squinted hard enough he could see the waver of Jeongguk’s adam’s apple coinciding with his breaths.

Jeongguk’s expression was mesmerising.

The younger’s thumb rubbed against Yoongi’s arm slowly. “You always get this, this faraway look in your eyes when you’re worrying about something, and I’ve been seeing it so often recently that I just… I can’t help but worry, hyung.”

Yoongi struggled to keep a blank expression at that. There was no way Jeongguk had paid that much attention to Yoongi’s habits that he could tell what some of them meant. That shouldn’t even be possible.

The thumb on Yoongi’s arm hadn’t stopped rubbing him. Yoongi couldn’t understand why his attention was drawn to that, of all things, but now that he’d properly noticed it he couldn’t tear his focus away from it.

Jeongguk was trying to do something, and Yoongi wasn’t sure what it could be anymore. Not that he ever had the slightest idea, but utter confusion overcame him nowadays whenever he tried to understand Jeongguk’s motives. Nothing made sense anymore. There was no explanation for Jeongguk’s care, no plausible excuse for the thumb slowly caressing his arm. Yoongi wanted there to be a reason for the thumb’s movements, a reason for Jeongguk’s overly caring actions as of late, but he couldn’t find one no matter how desperately he searched the younger’s eyes or body language.
And that scared him.

Why couldn’t he find a reason for Jeongguk’s behaviour?

The grip on his arm loosened, and then fell away to leave Yoongi completely. There was nothing for Yoongi to glare at anymore, nothing to preoccupy himself with, and he needed to preoccupy himself by doing something. Standing there awkwardly while Jeongguk shared thoughts Yoongi hadn’t known the maknae had even been having wasn’t helping anyone.

If anything, he needed to turn the situation on its head.

“You need to stop worrying so much over me yourself, Jeongguk. It’s... It’s unnecessary.”

The words sounded weak to his own ears, but that didn’t stop Yoongi from standing by them. Yoongi’s spine had tingled when he’d realised Jeongguk was being slightly hypocritical of Yoongi, and he wasn’t just going to let that slide. Especially when Jeongguk had only moments earlier told Yoongi off for worrying over something the younger had yet to find out about.

Jeongguk turned away from him. “Hyung, I can’t help it. I, I do it without thinking.”

Yoongi frowned, even though he knew Jeongguk wouldn’t see it. “Now you know how I feel.”

He wanted to leave it there, so Yoongi did. He promptly took off towards the roadside and didn’t wait for Jeongguk to catch up. He knew it was stupid, but Yoongi felt weirdly giddy on the inside that he’d finally made Jeongguk feel a shrivel of what he was feeling. It was such an insignificant thing to be pleased over, but Yoongi found he was anyway. It felt like he’d finally made the first step across that tightrope and had managed to sway only slightly in the process. He felt like he’d managed to talk to Jeongguk once about something and actually get his point across.

And while he certainly hadn’t left their talk on the best terms, Yoongi didn’t really care. He knew his habit of not caring for other’s feelings had reared its ugly head again, but at the same time he’d actually spoken to Jeongguk and had arrived on the same wavelength as the younger. That was a rarity in itself nowadays, so Yoongi blamed his giddiness on finally being able to do that.

Yoongi walked into the pharmacy with a subtle confidence he knew he could produce on command. It was one of the many talents he’d acquired throughout his years of being an idol, and
when the dime of the door bell alerted him to Jeongguk’s entrance, he saw a similar confidence radiating from the maknae. Yoongi disregarded the thought that Jeongguk carried himself like a different person in front of strangers, because if anything that just meant Jeongguk was alright with dropping his defences in front of the other members, including Yoongi.

He hated how his chest clenched at the thought.

They walked together down an aisle to the back of the store, and Yoongi wasn’t really looking at the shelves. He just wanted to grab his and Jeongguk’s prescriptions before somebody became suspicious of their appearance, but Jeongguk had different plans apparently.

Yoongi was halted in his tracks by the hand that grabbed his wrist.

Immediately, Yoongi looked around the store to see if anybody had seen. Thankfully, nobody else seemed to be in the store, but that didn’t stop him from his hardest glare to the maknae.

“What the fuck are you thinking?”

Jeongguk didn’t bat an eyelid at Yoongi’s harsh words. “Hyung, do you think we need some of this?”

Yoongi’s stare didn’t lessen in intensity as he followed Jeongguk’s train of sight, and the maknae had spoken so casually that Yoongi hadn’t expected to be faced with... that on the shelves.

“Are you asking me if we’re going to need a lubricant?”

A hideous cringe came over Yoongi. He couldn’t believe he’d said that out loud, to Jeongguk nonetheless, but he should have expected that the younger would have asked something like this. It was probably just him asking out of curiosity. Yoongi told himself this, anyway. Jeongguk wouldn’t try to tease him here of all places, would he?

Jeongguk’s eyebrows were so flat that he couldn’t be expressing anything but solemnity. “Well, yeah. Last time I checked you’re still a guy, so...”
He didn’t want to, he really didn’t want to, but Yoongi found himself questioning how much research Jeongguk actually did on omegas and how much he was still going to have to explain to him.

“Kook, during my heat,” and Yoongi paused. Seconds later though, he remembered he was supposed to be trying to confront his issues instead of cower from them, so Yoongi grit his teeth instead. “I produce slick, which might as well be a natural lubricant. We won’t need, you know, lube during my, my heat.”

It was endearing, but also hilarious, to watch Jeongguk try to keep an expressionless face at this new information. His eyes blanked momentarily, like he forgot how he was supposed to function for a moment, but then his eyebrows twitched as he scanned the other shelves. He was avoiding Yoongi’s eyes, he realised. Something similar to a snigger escaped Yoongi.

“Right.” Jeongguk eventually said. “I’m grabbing one anyway.”

And then Jeongguk snatched the lubricant closest to him before Yoongi could say anything.

“What the fuck, Kookie? Why?”

There was disbelief in his tone, sure, but Yoongi hoped it was mainly the humour hiding in it that Jeongguk picked up on.

The maknae stuck his bottom lip out as he read the back of the bottle. His eyes weren’t moving back and forth so Yoongi knew he couldn’t actually be reading the description, but the pretence made Yoongi smile anyway.

“Why not, hyung? You never know when it might come in handy.”

Jeongguk walked further down the aisle then, and Yoongi was about to follow when he froze.

“Hey, what the fuck are you implying there!? Yoongi called out to him in the most contained voice he could manage. “Don’t walk away from me! It’s disrespectful!”
Yoongi groaned when Jeongguk continued walking, seemingly oblivious to the older’s voice. In a way though, Yoongi wanted the younger to keep carrying on. He would rather have this playful atmosphere surround them than the accusing one they had in the car park earlier. Yoongi knew it was no secret that he could handle the teasing atmosphere Jeongguk was currently providing a lot easier than the confrontational one Yoongi had spurred on without meaning to earlier.

Maybe Yoongi wasn’t as opaque as he thought he was, if Jeongguk could apparently read him within a couple of seconds now. Or maybe he was, since he never knew anything anymore. Yoongi shook his head to himself just as Jeongguk halted in his tracks again. He could focus on all of this nonsense later, because that’s exactly what it was. He was thinking about something that had no significance or meaning, and he knew he was doing it far too often for it to be healthy. He needed to just, let his thoughts go for a moment. He could manage doing that.

Jeongguk’s hand ran down the shelf in front of him, and when Yoongi followed his hand’s movements he couldn’t contain his scoff.

Of course Jeongguk’s attention was caught by these, as well.

“We’re gonna need condoms too, right? Or are you using contraceptives?” Jeongguk froze. “Actually, don’t answer that. You’ve probably told me already that you’re using birth control, or you know, something along those lines.”

Jeongguk looked a little out of his depth, with his hand wavering in front of the numerous packets and an uncharacteristically frustrated expression creeping onto his face. Yoongi gestured to the containers in front of him without a second thought.

“I’m gonna use birth control, yeah. I’m getting that while we’re here,” Yoongi whispered as he walked past Jeongguk. “But it wouldn’t hurt to get a pack, Kookie. I’d rather have them just in case...”

What the actual fuck was Yoongi saying?

The maknae nodded along though, oblivious to how confused Yoongi felt over his own words. “Okay, fair enough. What sized condoms should I get?”

Yoongi’s thoughts physically slowed in their tracks. There was no way Jeongguk was asking him that. Jeongguk knew better than to play ignorant with Yoongi.
“How the fuck should I know?”

Jeongguk immediately turned to face him and held his hands up in mock surrender. Yoongi narrowed his stare. “Hey, I was just asking! There’s no need to get defensive, hyung.”

“You were seriously just asking me to admit your dick was big.”

The flush that appeared on Jeongguk’s face was unmistakable.

“Jeongguk, I can’t believe you.”

Yoongi grabbed the smallest condom size on the shelf and shoved it into the younger’s chest with barely a second thought. “There you go. They’ll fit nicely, Kook.” He then sarcastically widened his eyes and stuck his bottom lip out. “Trust me.”

Jeongguk just stood there for a good few seconds before any reaction squirmed out of him. Then, his mouth broke out into a grin so wide Yoongi had to question if he’d properly interpreted what he’d said.

“Oh, hyung. With that pout, I’d trust you with anything.”

Yoongi’s supposed ‘pout’ smoothed out to another glare. This glare, however, lacked the spite that usually came with the expression. “Kookie, you utter bullshitter.”

“You’re as much of a bullshitter as I am, hyung!” Jeongguk commented, his grin somehow widening. “I mean, come on. You’ve seen me naked on plenty of occasions.”

The implication didn’t go unnoticed by Yoongi. “That doesn’t mean I should boost your ego, Kook.”

Then, without another word, Yoongi swapped the box in Jeongguk’s arms for the largest size available. He didn’t hand this container of condoms over to Jeongguk, though. He wasn’t about to
give that kind of satisfaction to the maknae.

Instead, Yoongi held his hand up and rattled the box as he walked past Jeongguk to the counter at the back of the store. He hoped Jeongguk was gawking. It would make Yoongi’s day if he was.

He did feel a little stupid for reasoning to Jeongguk that they should buy condoms because it would be good to have them ‘just in case’, but whatever. Even though they’d already said they were both clean, and Yoongi had literally seconds earlier stated he was buying birth control pills while they were at the chemist, he’d grabbed the packet regardless. There was no reason for them to buy condoms, or lube for that matter considering the slick Yoongi was going to produce during his heat, but they were getting them anyway for some reason. Yoongi cringed a little at the thought, but everything was okay. There was still time to rethink his decision, even though Yoongi knew he never would.

His mind was stuck on the idea of getting through his heat with Jeongguk, so he was going to do it. End of story.

Yoongi didn’t so much as look behind him to see if Jeongguk was there before he approached the service desk at the back of the store. A man, dressed in a white shirt and black pants, walked up to him and greeted him with a dreary smile. Yoongi could relate to that expression.

“Good afternoon sir, how can I help you today?”

A body stepped into line with Yoongi, and he didn’t have to look sideways to know it was Jeongguk. He fished his phone out of his pocket and brought up the email Doctor Lee had sent him earlier that day.

“Can I get these two prescriptions filled out?” Yoongi asked as he handed the device over. “And can I also get these.”

Yoongi pulled the packet of condoms out and gently pried the lubricant out of Jeongguk’s hand too. He knew exactly what it looked like, especially with the birth control he was getting, so he could only cross his fingers that the man in front of him did not recognise the pair of eyes peeking out from behind his mask. Both of them couldn’t afford something like this to leak out to the public. Their entire situation had to remain a secret, if they were being realistic. The plague of negativity that would come after them, their group and their company if their arrangement was shared with the public was something they both wanted to avoid at all possible costs.
The man, though, didn’t bat an eyelid at the products or the medicine. “Sure thing. You’ll need to sign for them, but that’s about it.”

Sometime during Yoongi’s request, a shoulder had come to brush against his. Yoongi couldn’t help the way his body stiffened at the touch.

“Can I get this prescription too please?” Jeongguk asked as he, too, gave his phone over to the pharmacist. His shoulder shifted against Yoongi’s as he showed the man his email, and there was no way he couldn’t feel how close they were standing to each other. Jeongguk had to be aware of how close he was to Yoongi. He also had to be aware of all the things they were buying in front of a total stranger. Jeongguk may be younger than Yoongi, but he wasn’t stupid.

Yoongi tried not to question that thought either as Jeongguk didn’t so much as shuffle his feet while they waited for the pharmacist to finish reading through the documentation.

Yoongi felt like the man was stalling in giving Jeongguk a response, they’d been standing with their shoulders pressed against each other for so long.

“You’ll need to sign for these, too,” the pharmacist responded after an unreasonable length of time. “But that’s all. Are you paying separately or together?”

To Yoongi’s astonishment, there was no spite in the man’s tone. If anything, there might be boredom lacing his voice from asking the same question every day, but there wasn’t malice like he’d expected. Maybe he and Jeongguk didn’t look as much of a couple as Yoongi’s mind kept thinking they did. He hoped that was the case; that his paranoid mind was widely mistaking Jeongguk’s actions in public. They probably just looked like close friends, maybe even brothers if people squinted.

Wait, why was he caring about that anyway?

“We’ll pay together,” Yoongi answered. He didn’t dare turn to see what Jeongguk’s reaction was to that.

“Okay, please just wait a second while I grab the paperwork,” the man said as he trudged away from them. He couldn’t be less interested in their identities, and Yoongi thanked whatever was up there for erasing his dreadful luck from his life for once.
His joy didn’t last long. A presence leaned towards Yoongi’s ear, and the older braced himself for whatever words Jeongguk was about to whisper to him.

“I could have payed, hyung.”

The maknae’s lips were so close to Yoongi’s skin that he felt the ghost of his breath tread along his neck. The faintest trickle of lavender entered Yoongi’s nostrils, and if he hadn’t known that was Jeongguk’s alpha scent he would have thought he’d imagined the smell. There was no reason for Jeongguk to be this close to Yoongi; they were in a public place and the way Jeongguk was leaning towards him would undoubtedly attract other’s attention. They didn’t need any more eyes on them if they could help it.

So Yoongi took a single step away from the younger, and that sole action seemed to be enough to knock Jeongguk out of his stupor.

The man returned from wherever he’d been. Yoongi hadn’t really paid attention. He placed two receipts in front of them and lazily dropped a pen onto the counter afterwards.

“Just sign at the bottom then you can pay.”

Yoongi nodded once and signed off for his pills. Jeongguk followed suit seconds later, and then the man grabbed the receipts and replaced them with one small white packet.

“That’s got your stuff in it, minus those,” the pharmacist muttered as he gestured to the lubricant and the condoms. If Yoongi focused, he could sense the red that painted Jeongguk’s cheeks when the man glanced between them after pointing at the products. “And you can pay for everything over here.”

The older didn’t think much of it when he left Jeongguk to his own devices as he paid. He just tapped his card and returned to the maknae’s side, then failed to mutter a single word before they left the confinements of the store. He wasn’t sure what was on Jeongguk’s mind, but there was something. There had to be something. The way he’d completely shut out an attempts at conversing with Yoongi as they hopped in the car had to mean something.

“What’s going on in that big head of yours, Jeongguk?” Yoongi asked in an attempt to be humorous. When not so much as a smile appeared in return, Yoongi frowned. There was something bothering Jeongguk, that much was clear.
Yoongi didn’t turn the engine on, despite the icy breeze that had entered the car. “Seriously Kook, what’s up? You’ve closed up on me.”

He wanted to smile at himself for finally calling something as it was, as ever since he’d presented as an omega he’d felt that part of himself slowly drift away from his personality. But it was back. He was able to confront issues again head on. Well, he’d been able to confront this issue head on, but it was still something in Yoongi’s eyes. He’d accomplished something, and by his own standards it meant something. So Yoongi smiled at himself mentally.

He couldn’t smile in reality though, because Jeongguk obviously couldn’t.

The younger was taking his time in pulling his seatbelt over his chest, and for a reason Yoongi couldn’t pinpoint he seemed to be doing his best to avoid making eye contact. It took all of three seconds for Yoongi to go through what had happened in the chemist to realise something.

“Hey, don’t worry about not paying for your pills. I wanted to pay for them.”

Jeongguk finally looked up from the seatbelt buckle, but he didn’t turn to face Yoongi. Instead, he stared through the front windscreen with a kind of despondency Yoongi hadn’t seen in the younger for years.

“That’s,” Jeongguk started, but the word sounded too broken to be Jeongguk’s, “that’s not it.”

Yoongi watched Jeongguk fiddle with the hands in his lap for a moment. He struggled to think of an appropriate response, but ended up going with the sentence that made the most sense to him. “Then what is?”

The atmosphere was far from tense, but Yoongi would describe it as intimate. There was something going on here, something beyond whatever had happened in the chemist. Jeongguk had done such an exceptional job of constantly ensuring Yoongi was feeling alright that Yoongi realised he hadn’t really reciprocated that same level of care. Sure, he’d always wanted Jeongguk to be in his best frame of mind, but maybe... maybe he hadn’t made that concern as obvious as he should have.

Jeongguk had made no move to speak. Yoongi unbuckled his own seatbelt so that he could turn his body around to properly face the maknae.
“You can tell me anything, Jeongguk. You know I’m the last person who’d judge you for anything.”

The last rays of light filled the car park for a few split seconds before a musky darkness overcame the area. The same streetlight from earlier still flickered at the edge of the parking lot, and it seemed to fascinate Jeongguk to no end, for he had yet to look away from it. Or maybe it was the idea of a distraction that had the younger so captivated. He had doing a pretty good job of ignoring Yoongi’s words up until this point, after all. Yoongi would have commended him for taking after his way of ignoring people if Yoongi hadn’t been the person the maknae was ignoring.

His words weren’t getting through to Jeongguk. He still hadn’t changed his empty stare, and Yoongi didn’t know what else he could say to prompt the younger to open up. He sat there in the silence of the car for moments he knew were being snatched away from the two of them by an empty void, but he didn’t utter another word. His verbal efforts were futile.

Yoongi was sure it was this thought that prompted him to cover Jeongguk’s clasped hands with his own.

Then, there was warmth in the car once again. Yoongi hadn’t needed to turn the heater on to get it, and something inside of Yoongi warmed, too. Maybe Jeongguk would say something now, anything. Yoongi tightened his fingers around Jeongguk’s hands.

Then, Jeongguk stuttered.

“I-It’s stupid. I’m overreacting.”

“It’s not stupid if it’s bothering you.”

Yoongi thought he’d learnt this lesson a long time ago, but ever since he’d presented he felt like he was being forced to learn the lesson all over again. It wasn’t fair, but maybe he could teach Jeongguk the lesson as he relearnt it himself.

He also stored in the back of his mind that Jeongguk reacted better to physical cues than verbal ones. Just as Jeongguk had managed to piece together so many random puzzle pieces of Yoongi, the older felt it was only fair that he do the same.
There was no other reason for it, Yoongi told himself. There didn’t need to be another reason.

Jeongguk let out a slow breath that Yoongi felt the younger had held in for too long. “It’s just, I don’t know. I’m sorry I leant over you like that earlier. That was... that was uncalled for on my part.”

Yoongi’s eyebrows dropped ever so slightly. That couldn’t be the extent of it, not by a long shot.

“It’s fine, you didn’t do anything wrong.”

“But I did! Yoongi-hyung, I—” and Jeongguk paused, as if he was trying to organise his thoughts in a manner Yoongi would understand. It didn’t matter to Yoongi that the younger needed a little time to get everything in order. He could relate to that constant sensation of confusion, so he could wait for however long Jeongguk needed to line everything up the way he wanted.

After what felt like an entire minute to Yoongi, Jeongguk finally, finally, turned around to face Yoongi.

And there was a prayer for forgiveness hiding in Jeongguk’s eyes before he even spoke.

“I smelt you, hyung. I smelt your mint and I-I, I moved towards it like an idiot and I’m sorry. I should’ve had more control over myself.”

Yoongi had seen this outwardly confident and mature man for so many months on end that he was amazed he’d managed to somehow forget that Jeongguk actually had another side of himself, too. He had a gentler side, a side that was vulnerable to other’s words and actions just as Yoongi was. But, selflessly, Jeongguk had hidden this part of himself. Of course he’d hidden it, Yoongi realised. If Yoongi himself had tried for so many months to hold himself together without letting anybody know, he should have at least wondered if Jeongguk was doing the same.

To think, that Jeongguk had been consoling Yoongi over his anxieties while Yoongi sat oblivious to Jeongguk’s own struggles.

Yoongi swallowed, and even that was a struggle with the growing knot at the back of his throat.
“Jeongguk, it’s fine. Don’t worry about it, alright?” Then, as an afterthought, Yoongi added, “Nobody else was in there anyway so it doesn’t matter.”

The breathing in the car stalled, Yoongi knew it stalled, but the world kept on spinning. Jeongguk had this positively distraught expression on his face, like he was still holding something destructive inside of himself.

Yoongi wanted to set that destruction free. This expression didn’t suit Jeongguk, would never suit him, and Yoongi needed to bring a smile back to those collapsed lips as soon as humanly possible.

“What is it really, Kookie?” Yoongi whispered into the frozen air of the vehicle. “What’s wrong?”

He wasn’t one for whispering, always preferring to speak in his signature levelled, gravelly voice, but he would make an exception for Jeongguk. His preferences didn’t matter in that moment, hell, none of Yoongi’s feelings mattered in that moment. He couldn’t believe he’d neglected this obvious issue within Jeongguk’s life for as long as he had, for the kind of subdued distress Jeongguk was expressing wasn’t just something that sprouted up overnight. This kind of distress developed over time, so much time, and Yoongi felt sick at the thought of months passing before him and Jeongguk got to this point.

There were no tears in the maknae’s eyes, but there were cracks. Jeongguk’s shoulders had slumped considerably since they’d first entered the car, and the way the younger’s head couldn’t seem to stop dropping to avoid Yoongi’s worried stare just, wasn’t something Jeongguk ever did.

Yoongi rubbed his thumb along Jeongguk’s clasped hands, so similar to the way Jeongguk had done so to him in the car park earlier that day, and then, only then, did Jeongguk let in a gaping breath.

“Nothing’s wrong, hyung. I’m just… I’m so ashamed of myself.”

It took a lot of willpower for Yoongi to not flinch at those words.

“Why, Jeongguk?” the older asked before he could rethink his decision. He didn’t think though, that if he was given the chance to rethink it that he would change it. Jeongguk had hoarded this uncanny shame for too long, and had hidden this feeling from Yoongi for far too long.
It just, it wasn’t fair that Jeongguk had always been by Yoongi’s side as he struggled with adapting to every change his omega status brought, but Yoongi had failed miserably in reciprocating that same level of care for Jeongguk. It didn’t sit right with Yoongi, any of it.

There was something other than shame bubbling in Jeongguk’s eyes now. Fear, possibly? Or was it guilt? Yoongi couldn’t decipher one negative feeling from the other, but the more he stared at these eyes the more lost he felt on Jeongguk’s inner thoughts and feelings. Just how much had Jeongguk been hiding from Yoongi, while Yoongi had done his best to do the same? How much were they still hiding from each other?

Jeongguk exhaled another breath of air, and somehow, to Yoongi it sounded more controlled than any of his previous ones.

“I, I never cared about being an alpha up until my rut...” Jeongguk started with a certain weariness in his eyes. He still hadn’t diverted his gaze from Yoongi’s, and Yoongi, despite his rational side chastising him for doing so, couldn’t deny how happy he was at that fact. He would question that happiness later, though. Because really, his unfounded happiness didn’t even matter in that single moment. All that mattered was what was coming out of Jeongguk’s mouth, and how Yoongi could possibly erase all the overwhelming negativity dispersing from those words.

Jeongguk’s eyes glazed over for the briefest second, like he had just made a sickening realisation, but Yoongi gripped his clasped hands in the gentlest manner he possibly could to ground him. He knew what it was like to think about things he would rather forget, to constantly be reminded of things you’ve said and things you’ve thought when you would do anything to throw the memories of those actions into a bottomless pit.

Yoongi hoped it was his physical act of comfort that drew Jeongguk back to the present, for the blazed look in his eye had seemingly disappeared just as quickly as it had arrived.

Then, Jeongguk shook his head.

“But I started caring when I, when I... thought of you during my rut as nothing more than a fucking breeding machine.”

It was clear to Yoongi that the younger was nowhere near experiencing an onslaught of tears, but what Yoongi could tell was that there was something bubbling beneath the surface. Something Jeongguk was trying to contain. Yoongi continued stroking his thumb along the maknae’s hands.
“The entire time I was in my rut I wanted nothing more than to have sex with you, hyung. The entire fucking time. And my, my mind for some wicked, crazed reason couldn’t stop imagining you fucking pregnant with my kids. That’s just, that’s so,” Jeongguk rashly pulled his hand out from Yoongi’s to grip his fringe with barely contained anger, “that’s so fucked up, hyung. I can’t believe I ever thought any of that, and. Just. I’m so fucking sorry I ever thought of you that way.”

Jeongguk pulled at his fringe harshly as he let out a shattered breath of air, and not two moments later he shouted, “Fuck!” to the heavens above with a kind of fury Yoongi had rarely ever witnessed in the younger. There was no way Jeongguk had hidden all of this frustration from Yoongi since his rut, right? There was no way Yoongi had missed all of this developing in the younger, for Jeongguk didn’t just erupt like this over the course of a few minutes’ anger. His anger developed over time until it festered into an eruption like this. So how much had Yoongi been oblivious to over the weeks? How many signs had Yoongi missed while he was focusing so intently on his own needs and wants?

There was no tenseness in the air though. There was no leftover anxiety rolling through the space between them, and instead the car’s atmosphere felt too mundane for the outburst Jeongguk had just had. Everything felt wrong to Yoongi, like there was no balance left in the universe between Yoongi and Jeongguk’s persons. Everything just felt off.

“And then,” Jeongguk continued, but Yoongi couldn’t not notice how his voice lacked the bite it had earlier. “Then I start reacting to your smell in public and that’s just unacceptable, hyung. D- During my rut I can, I guess kind of understand my actions because they’re done out of instincts and all that shit but I. In the chemist I was just, just me, with none of those instincts or impulses a- and I reacted like that, like a, like a kid who never learnt what self control was. I’m just. I’m so sorry for everything, hyung.”

And then a silence came over the two of them that spoke more words than all of the words they’d said aloud.

Yoongi was searching Jeongguk’s eyes now, he knew he was. He wasn’t ashamed to admit it, either. He was looking intently in them for any hints of self-hatred, of the very same feelings Yoongi had continuously felt over the past few months. It was too difficult though to identify everything. The maknae’s orbs were vibrating an aura unlike anything Yoongi had seen in his life, and it was... it was beautiful in the way shattered glass still shone when light glinted off it. Something within Jeongguk was speaking to him then, telling him of feelings Yoongi had never previously imagined Jeongguk harvesting, but he was speaking of them so honestly that Yoongi couldn’t just ignore them. He had to say something back. Anything, actually. He just had to reply and do something in return for Jeongguk’s brutal, unhindered honesty.
So, Yoongi said the only thing he thought was appropriate in their situation.

“Jeongguk, you don’t—you don’t have to apologise for so many of those things... Please stop, just, beating yourself up over them. I. I can’t say that I’m completely innocent in all of this either, so it’s... it’s only fair we both own up to our own shit.”

Then, Yoongi tried to give Jeongguk a smile, and somehow Yoongi thought he managed to make it genuine despite every single thing that weighed down his happiness. For Jeongguk was worth it, was worth anything, and Yoongi...

Yoongi didn’t know for how much longer he could tell himself Jeongguk wasn’t.

Chapter End Notes

I feel like I haven’t fed you guys in so long. I’m really sorry the wait for this chapter was over two weeks! At least it’s up now, and I hope you liked it anyway. A lot happened in this chapter, that’s for sure 😊

As a sidenote, the cyclone I mentioned last chapter ended up being the biggest disappointment ever because it didn’t even make landfall! But I appreciate everyone’s well wishes from last chapter, thank you for being so caring and sweet to me 💗

I’m a little sad rn because Key (from Shinee, my ult group) has just left for the military, but other than that everything’s pretty dandy in my life. I’ve got exam block coming up so my updates might be stalled for a bit around then, but otherwise I hope the wait for the next chapter isn’t too long.

Anywho, have a great day/night, wherever you are in the world! (I’d love to know where you guys are from btw! Just because I’m curious 😊 I’m from Australia in case I haven’t mentioned it before :D)
I know it’ll be cold like winter, but I still wanna try

Chapter Notes

I had no idea that you guys lived in so many places around the world! Thanks for sharing that info with me, I really appreciate you all talking to me in the comments

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“What are you on about, hyung?” Jeongguk asked, and it took Yoongi longer than he would have liked to remember what they were talking about.

The smile Yoongi had been giving dropped of its own accord when he remembered. He needed to get across to Jeongguk that he wasn’t alone in... this. That it wasn’t just him having these somewhat disturbing thoughts without his consent.

Yoongi licked his lips. “Do you seriously think you’re the only one who had the— the weird as fuck thoughts, Kook?” Yoongi didn’t dare let his eyes wander, even though his gaze wanted nothing more than to avert to the floor of the car. “Because I’ve also... had them. During my heat.”

The older watched Jeongguk’s every movement for any indication on how he felt about this new information. There were no hints, to Yoongi’s dismay. Well that was great. How was he supposed to tell if his words meant anything at all to the younger if he failed to let Yoongi know anything through his reaction?

Jeongguk, too, licked his lips. Yoongi tried not to question it. “Really, hyung?”

He had spoken tentatively, as if he had been afraid of asking Yoongi for confirmation. Not that long ago, Yoongi honestly would have been pleased to hear that tone in the maknae’s voice when he questioned something he’d said. But now, all Yoongi wanted to do was get rid of that insecurity, that sense of doubt Jeongguk was trying to express without offending Yoongi. It was touching in a way, that Jeongguk was being so considerate, but at the same time it was Yoongi’s turn to be considerate. This was supposed to be the time where Yoongi comforted Jeongguk and assured him of things outside of his control. If it made him hypocritical, Yoongi didn’t care anymore. He never should have cared if Jeongguk’s wellbeing was on the line.

God, why couldn’t he have noticed Jeongguk struggling before now?
“Really,” Yoongi slowly replied. “You’re not the only one with the fucked up sex fantasies going on.”

Instantly, Jeongguk’s face broke out into a wonderful, blinding smile and Yoongi... felt like he’d accomplished something. Like he’d done some good in the world now that the only person that mattered in that moment was happy, even if the happiness only lasted a second. Yoongi even felt the urge to smile back himself.

He was going to blush first, though. The heat he felt gathering in his cheeks was unmistakable, and Yoongi couldn’t understand it. He was never one for getting embarrassed over crude comments. He usually didn’t get embarrassed by anything, really. But it was indisputable that his face reddened more often now than it used to. Yoongi willed the tint to leave before Jeongguk noticed, but he didn’t think that was going to happen.

Jeongguk let out a strangled laugh, like he was trying not to let on how amused he was at Yoongi’s confession. Yoongi understood that; only moments later Jeongguk had been disgusted at himself for having lewd thoughts of his hyung, but then he’d suddenly heard that those thoughts were on a two way street. That must have made an interesting revelation, at the very least. And Yoongi blushing over his own confession couldn’t be helping. It was almost comical how blind they both were to the most obvious things between them.

Then, Jeongguk cracked a grin.

“You, woah. Okay, you have no idea how thankful I am to hear that, hyung. I thought for so long I was the only one having crazy feelings towards you.”

Yoongi’s mind splintered in that second.

Jeongguk continued, seemingly unaffected. “Can we, um, stop off for a coffee on the way home?”

The older sat there for several moments and made no move to start the car up again. Because...

Because how the fuck was Yoongi expected to continue from that?

Jeongguk’s actions had been alluding to something this entire time, hadn’t they? They weren’t just acts of brotherly love, and they weren’t done because Jeongguk wanted something from him, he
knew that. There had to have been some deeper meaning behind everything. Yoongi had been trying to convince himself otherwise, for so long he’d tried to convince himself otherwise, but everything that had happened in the past couple of hours had somehow managed to... flick a switch.

And just when Yoongi thought he’d begun to understand Jeongguk’s motive, and the thoughts and feelings that came with his complex being, Jeongguk pulled this on him.

The words ‘crazy feelings’ just, wouldn’t stop echoing through Yoongi’s mind.

“Is that alright, hyung?”

Yoongi gripped the steering wheel tighter. “Yeah, yeah. We can do that.”

The older turned his attention to the car park in front of him; it was too difficult to keep looking at Jeongguk. It was near impossible, really. Yoongi didn’t know what to do with himself.

So he turned the engine on and drove away from the chemist, because driving was the only thing distracting him from the hurricane of thoughts wrecking through his mind.

Yoongi had to park the car far too quickly. Their journey had only lasted a couple of minutes, and Yoongi ended up parking in front of a local coffee shop that Jeongguk had fleetingly pointed at on the road. The maknae made a move for his wallet as soon as Yoongi turned the engine off, and the older noticed a brief second of doubt flicker across Jeongguk’s face before he smothered the emotion with warmth. He was smiling at Yoongi again, ever so slightly, and the image before Yoongi was so obscure that he didn’t know how he was supposed to act.

Jeongguk had shared so much and had let out so many pent up frustrations that Yoongi simply couldn’t understand how Jeongguk was smiling minutes later. He couldn’t possibly be smiling out of joy or happiness. Right? There was no reason for him to be happy with anything.

“Would you like anything, hyung?” the younger asked with that inexplicable smile still on his lips. Yoongi knew he’d wanted to return that smile to his face minutes earlier, but it didn’t belong on Jeongguk’s face in that moment. There was no way Jeongguk was just going to move on from sharing thoughts like that and not address them at all afterwards. He couldn’t possibly expect Yoongi to do that, either. He’d shared his thoughts, too, and Yoongi didn’t want to, he really didn’t want to, but he felt almost offended by how easily Jeongguk had gotten over his outburst.
It was like the information they’d shared with each other didn’t matter.

Yoongi gnawed on the inside of his cheek.

“I’m good.”

Jeongguk shifted in his seat, once, before placing his grip on the door handle. He glanced back at Yoongi one last time before he opened the car up to the elements outside.

“Okay, hyung,” is all Jeongguk said as he exited the vehicle.

And with the younger’s departure, came the onslaught of thoughts Yoongi knew were going to decimate him.

Jeongguk had shut down the only explanation Yoongi had been able to finally reach as an excuse for his behaviour, but with two simple words he’d stripped any possibility of it being true to shreds. The words were still turmoiling through Yoongi mind as he struggled to think of something else, anything else to draw his attention away from such a stupid, trivial topic. It shouldn’t matter if Yoongi’s theory was incorrect. It shouldn’t matter that Jeongguk had just labeled any feelings he had towards the older as ‘crazy’.

None of it should matter to Yoongi, because the type of person he lived as required him to not care.

Yet here he was, sitting alone in a car on an early winter evening with nothing better on his mind than the confirmation of all of Jeongguk’s feelings towards Yoongi being purely created by secondary status instincts.

Yoongi loathed that instead of feeling the urge to smack the steering wheel in a fit of rage, he felt the urge to cry. Because of fucking course his omega status would impact yet another fucking thing in his life. Not only was he feeling embarrassed over things he shouldn’t care about, he was feeling the urge to cry at things he couldn’t control. There were so many things wrong with him now, and they were things he couldn’t change about himself. Him being an omega was just a part of himself he needed to accept already, and he needed to do that soon. Otherwise, how the hell was he going to get through his next heat with Jeongguk, who literally minutes earlier stated that he lost control of his own thoughts during his rut?
Does that mean Jeongguk would lose control of his actions during his rut, too? Would he say every filthy thought that came to his mind, and would he enact every one of his fantasies on Yoongi with little care for the relational, humane parts of themselves?

God. They were both going to become animals in their next heat and rut, and there was nothing they could do about it.

Yoongi’s eyes watered.

He scrunched his face up and forced the tears to stay put. Jeongguk was going to return within moments, and he couldn’t see Yoongi crying over nothing when he came back. Jeongguk had been catching on to too many of Yoongi’s habits lately, and had somehow been able to link them with the darkest of Yoongi’s secrets with next to no questioning. He was reading Yoongi far too well, and Yoongi didn’t want to hear what came out of Jeongguk’s mouth when he tried to reason out loud why the older was crying.

Yoongi didn’t want to know the reason.

When he was sure the water had disappeared from his orbs, he checked his reflection in the rear view mirror. He looked alright. Not like he’d been crying, thankfully. He hadn’t been crying, either, but it was good that it didn’t look like he had been.

The car door opened and ruined the mindset Yoongi had been struck in.

“Hey hyung, can you hold this for a sec?”

Jeongguk was struggling to keep the car door open with his leg. His hands were already occupied with a tray of two coffees and a small brown package squished in between, and Yoongi had to roll his eyes at how Jeongguk always tried to do too many things at once. It was a bad habit of his, to constantly bite off more than he could chew.

Not that Yoongi could ever comment on anybody else’s bad habits. He had his own share to keep track of and manage.
“Yeah, sure thing.”

He leaned over to grab the cardboard tray, and watched on in silence as Jeongguk hopped into the car. He slammed the door shut as soon as he sat down, and Yoongi couldn’t be more thankful for the relief he received from the freezing air outside.

Jeongguk gestured to one of the cups. “That one’s yours. No milk or sugar or anything.” The younger paused briefly. “That’s right, isn’t it? I thought it was right...”

Yoongi slipped the pair of cups out of the trays and put them into the cup holders in between the two seats. He didn’t acknowledge how his insides suddenly felt as warm as his hands from holding the coffees.

“Yeah, that’s uh. That’s right.”

His tongue felt heavy in his mouth. He’d told Jeongguk he didn’t want anything, but Jeongguk had bought him a coffee anyways. Not that he minded, far from it, but him buying anything for Yoongi didn’t help the older with his thoughts. At all.

He still possessed manners, though. “Thanks, Kook. You didn’t have to.”

Jeongguk grabbed his cup and smirked through his sip. He cupped the coffee close to his lips and hummed for a moment afterwards. “I feel like I had to, though. You’ve looked like you could fall asleep at any moment for a few hours now. I mean, have you seen how red your eyes are hyung?”

So Yoongi hadn’t done as well a job as he thought at erasing the remains of his near breakdown. At least Jeongguk thought his eyes were red from sleep depravation. He couldn’t imagine what the younger’s reaction would be if he found out they were red for a different reason.

Yoongi took a sip from his own coffee and tried, really tried, to pretend his insides hadn’t just flipped at the realisation that Jeongguk had, in fact, remembered the way he liked coffee from the one time the older told him months ago. He knew it didn’t mean anything, Yoongi had just learnt that a few minutes ago, but it didn’t... it didn’t stop these weird butterflies from flitting through his stomach.

Ignorance was bliss, though, so Yoongi excused the butterflies as a symptom of not eating much
that day. “Didn’t know my insomnia was that obvious, Kook.”

Jeongguk playfully hit him on the arm. “You choose to stay up, hyung! You’ve got insomnia by choice, not chance.”

There was a smile on Yoongi’s lips at those words, but he knew it didn’t reach his eyes.

“I hear bullshit, Kookie.”

The older knew in that moment that Jeongguk had noticed. The maknae’s aura wasn’t cheerful anymore, and Yoongi knew he could do nothing to bring it back. He wasn’t feeling up to being cheerful himself, so he could hardly fault Jeongguk for relinquishing his own positivity. He couldn’t believe in a way, though, that he’d so desperately wanted to make Jeongguk happy minutes earlier when he really couldn’t care less for his emotional state now.

Yoongi hated how selfish he was being, for stripping Jeongguk of any joy he’d had previously, but Yoongi felt like he couldn’t help it. There were too many revelations to be concerned over, and the man next to him had added another possibility on top of everything without even thinking about it.

The younger really didn’t have romantic feelings for Yoongi if he considered them crazy. The feelings he were experiencing were probably only sexual, and were most likely created only by the presence of his inner alpha during rut. They weren’t Jeongguk’s genuine feelings. They were fabrications that had been created by something he couldn’t control.

Yoongi drove them away from the coffee shop with a narrow glare he directed at the world in front of him. He wished he could direct this stare at Jeongguk, for deceiving him with something so simple, but he knew he couldn’t. It was a physically limitation of Yoongi’s, he’d realised seconds after attempting to give Jeongguk his stare. He physically couldn’t bring himself to guilt the younger into thinking he’d done anything wrong.

For Jeongguk had done so much right, had done the right thing by Yoongi on more occasions that Yoongi could count, and that; that was the issue at its core.

Jeongguk had yet to do anything wrong by Yoongi, and here Yoongi was wanting to tear the person beside him to shreds because he was frustrated and confused and he needed a way to expel the ridiculous self pity and hatred he felt towards himself.
It *sickened* him that he felt this way.

For some reason, a reason Yoongi will forever be thankful for, the younger didn’t try to speak to Yoongi for the duration of their trip. When they pulled up at their dorm, no words passed between them either. It was clear to Yoongi that Jeongguk had bit his tongue to keep silent for the drive, but Yoongi could see parts of the younger’s resolve dry up as he parked the car.

Yoongi had managed to turn the engine off and open his door before Jeongguk finally spoke up.

“The uh, the muffin is for you...”

He rubbed his neck as he said it, and if Yoongi squinted he could make out the barest hint of pink on the younger’s cheeks.

Yoongi looked down at the package. “You didn’t have to get me anything.”

The cold was sleeping into the car, slowly but surely, and Yoongi could feel the chilly breeze flit in between his layers the longer he sat in the driver’s seat. He paid no mind to the temperature as he took in Jeongguk’s posture, though. There was no denying that Jeongguk looked self-conscious, with the way his eyes were downcast and his shoulders were drawn together. Embarrassed, even.

“I know... I just felt like, you know, getting you something.”

The mind Yoongi had helpfully supplied the fact that Jeongguk was just being a caring dongsaeng again. It supplied this fact while Jeongguk hid his flaming cheeks and the tinted tips of his ears from Yoongi. The older was going to burst into tears on the spot if he didn’t get out of that car.

Yoongi picked his half empty coffee cup up alongside the brown package. He looked at Jeongguk side on for a split second, expecting the younger to say something because he’d taken the muffin, but there was nothing. He was simply twiddling his thumbs as Yoongi hopped out of the car, and it took the younger several more moments to get out of the vehicle than it should have.

So Yoongi wasn’t the only one with a lot in his mind. That sure felt unusual.
He slotted the keycard into the doorway to their apartments and tried to shove his hand holding the package into his pocket. It felt belated to say something about it, but Yoongi figured it was better to say something later rather than never. Jeongguk deserved that.

The door opened slowly. “Thanks for this, by the way.”

His didn’t think he was going to react to his own statement, but from the heat he felt generate on his own cheeks his body obviously felt differently.

From the corner of his eye he saw Jeongguk nod, and Yoongi felt marginally better. He should have thanked him earlier, but at least he’d said something.

Now, Yoongi couldn’t wait to escape this awful interaction.

They took the elevator up to their apartments, and Yoongi tried not to let on how eager he was to get away from the younger. He just, needed some time to sort the mess in his head out. And he needed some time away from Jeongguk. A lot of time.

The elevator couldn’t have risen to their level slower. Yoongi dragged his feet along the ground when the door finally opened, and he headed towards his dorm seconds later. Jeongguk remained silent as he left.

By the time Yoongi had made it to his dorm, his eyes were damp again. He furiously wiped them before he knocked on the door, and he prayed to gods he didn’t believe in that Seokjin wasn’t inside. He was going to have a mental breakdown, he knew this, and he would do anything to ensure that nobody else witnessed it. Everyone knew he didn’t lose his shit over stupid things like this. He never lost his composure over something so meaningless, and it was that fact that physically petrified him.

For something had to matter to him, and matter a great deal at that, for him to stop functioning like a normal human being and nearly cry.

There was no reply to his knock. Yoongi crossed his fingers on both hands as he pushed the door handle and entered his dorm, and Yoongi thanked his lucky stars. His hyung was not in the room. He couldn’t have asked for a better scenario.
Yoongi slid his back onto the door and leant against it until he heard it click shut, and then…

His heart cracked.

He wasn’t crying. He would never cry over something as stupid as a sentence Jeongguk had said. Never. The moisture in his eyes needed to stop gathering. The tears that threatened to overflow at any moment needed to stop trying, because they would never get the opportunity to spill. Yoongi would fucking make sure of it.

He clawed at his face to erase any presence of his meltdown, and his breaths came out in shudders that wracked his entire body. Why wouldn’t the tears stop gathering?

He didn’t care if Jeongguk had feelings for him. He’d only been told by Hoseok that it was even a possibility earlier that same day. Yoongi hadn’t thought about Jeongguk liking him for more than a few hours at best. He’d never even found any confirmation for the assumptions Hoseok had made. He’d simply heard the idea, and assumed Jeongguk must have had these feelings if Hoseok had brought them up. It had to be a fact then.

Except it wasn’t, and Yoongi was a fool for ever believing it was.

Jeongguk had made it perfectly clear to Yoongi that he thought his feelings were silly, and that could only mean so many things. Either Jeongguk only experienced these feelings during his rut, and his real state of mind had no saying over how he felt and acted at that point, or he did have those feelings, as Jeon Jeongguk and not an animalistic alpha, and didn’t… didn’t like them. Or accept them. Either way, he’d dismissed them as nothing but ‘crazy’, right to Yoongi’s face nevertheless, and Yoongi couldn’t deny the finality that doing something like that brought about. Jeongguk had meant every word he’d said.

Yoongi wanted to curl into a ball and wail.

Yes, he’d believed for only a few hours that Jeongguk had been acting so kindly to him for so many months because he might have had a romantic interest in Yoongi, but Yoongi had launched himself at that possibility and now, he was feeling the consequences. He shouldn’t have trusted Jeongguk’s actions to mean something more. He shouldn’t have so easily accepted something as trivial as word of mouth to be the truth of any matter. He scraped his eyes of any leftover moisture frenziedly. Why was he still crying? He didn’t care about Jeongguk’s feelings, he’d never cared. He didn’t care.
But Yoongi could see through his own lies, for the first time in years.

And it was tearing his heart apart.

He cared. He’d always cared. He’d never once not cared, and Jeongguk— he’d especially cared about Jeongguk. He’d always cared about Jeongguk, but he’d been stupid. Careless. He’d allowed himself to leap after a possibility, the slightest possibility that Jeongguk’s kindness meant something more than just brotherly love, and then he’d fallen.

Yoongi knew his tears were only the beginning. His body may have stopped aching now, but it will continue to do so in the future. With every single heat he was going to experience from now on, his body, mind and spirit was going to know what it wanted, and who it belonged to. Who it cared about. Jeongguk was going to feel the exact same emotions in these circumstances, and he was going to experience the same loss of control and insane feelings as Yoongi. But there was one striking difference between the two of them that Yoongi had only just begun to fathom since his tears had failed to leave his eyes.

While Jeongguk’s crazy feelings would lose meaning the second he came out of his rut, Yoongi’s wouldn’t.

Because Yoongi’s feelings were meaningful.

And they were meaningful to him both during his heat, and outside of it.

_Fuck._

What the fuck was he supposed to do?

A knock came from the door, and Yoongi scrambled to get to his feet.

He’d had his moment of solidarity, so he couldn’t ask for much more. Maybe a few more minutes to piece together the scraps of his mind and heart, but that was being greedy. He didn’t deserve that kind of generosity from the world. So he plonked himself onto his bed and waited for the person on the other side of the door to enter. He wasn’t bracing himself, he told himself. There was no need to prepare himself for a confrontation he always knew was going to happen.
The door opened so, so slowly, and Yoongi stared.

“Sorry, I’ve got to sleep here tonight because Namjoon’s got a migraine. Seokjin’s kind of taken my bed in the dorm to look after him…” Jeongguk added a little chuckle to the end of his explanation, like he was amused by what he’d said, but Yoongi knew immediately that it was put on. He wasn’t keen on the arrangement either, by the looks of it.

Yoongi grunted. He hoped against hope that Jeongguk didn’t notice how red his eyes must be.

“Why didn’t Taehyung give his bed up for Jin?”

The implication was clear. So that I got to sleep with Taehyung instead of you. It was a bitter thing of him to say, he knew it was, but he said it anyway. He didn’t want to care about what came out of his mouth.

Jeongguk stood in the doorway and for a moment, Yoongi thought he was going to leave. He hovered there for a moment too long, however, and Yoongi knew then that Jeongguk had thrown that option out the window.

“Because I offered first. And cause I, I wanted to say sorry.”

Yoongi splayed his legs out before him, and laid back further onto the bed. He knew it was a stupid tactic to try to look like he couldn’t care less, but at this point he was going to do anything to look carefree. He’d pretty much lost his natural poker face the moment Jeongguk entered the room. The younger could read him too well.

Footsteps could be heard further down the hallway, and Yoongi guessed it was somebody who was going to start making dinner soon. Yoongi knew, however, that he wouldn’t be going into that kitchen for the remainder of the night. He’d be lucky if he left his dorm to brush his teeth. He really wanted nothing more than to fall asleep right then and there if it meant he didn’t have to look at Jeongguk for the rest of the evening.

He sighed. “What are you apologising for, Jeongguk? You’ve done nothing wrong, I’ve already said this. Stop beating yourself up over those, those feelings you can’t control.”
Yoongi felt awkward as all hell saying that, but at least it was out there. Jeongguk needed to stop feeling guilty over the things he felt during his rut. It was okay for him to move on from his feelings when he wasn’t in rut, even if Yoongi had discovered he couldn’t. It was alright for Jeongguk to keep walking while Yoongi struggling to get back to his feet. Yoongi just needed to get over himself.

Jeongguk visibly swallowed. “But I must have done something wrong, hyung. You didn’t talk to me the entire drive home.”

Damnit, all Yoongi had to do was blink and Jeongguk knew there was something on his mind. It wasn’t fair. Yoongi couldn’t keep anything to himself anymore, and the only secrets he had left were ones nobody would ever want to hear. He knew it. It wasn’t a stupid assumption. Who in their right mind, after all, would want to hear about the freaky thoughts Yoongi had on his own biology, and the disgusting things he thought about himself? He knew his mind was wrong, and that it was wrong to hate these uncontrollable parts of himself, but he couldn’t control it yet. He’d tried controlling himself, and it hadn’t worked.

Yoongi allowed himself to fall onto the bed. “That’s not your fault. That’s just me not, you know. Not feeling up to a conversation.”

The click of a door closing echoed through the dorm, and it was only then that Yoongi realised the younger had been leaning against the door and slowly closing it the entire time he’d been in there. Yoongi didn’t know how to feel about that.

“Well,” Jeongguk started, and Yoongi noticed this suppressed kind of regret, maybe, that swam in his eyes, “I’m still sorry. About earlier.”

It sounded to Yoongi’s ears that the younger was trying to convince himself with his own words, but Yoongi paid little heed to it. Yoongi just wanted a break from everything.

“Jeongguk, forget about it. It’s not important, okay? We don’t have a say in how our alpha and omega sides think.”

He hoped the younger stopped saying sorry. The constant regret he saw in Jeongguk’s eyes when he apologised did nothing to help Yoongi with the whirlwind of emotions he’d only just identified. If anything, it just made Yoongi’s feelings reaffirm themselves. Jeongguk being kind and considerate was making his heart scream at the unfairness of it all.
Jeongguk let out an exhale that carried an ‘Okay,’ somewhere, and then made a move to sit on Seokjin’s bed.

“Could you turn the light off while you’re up there, Kook? Please?”

He barely remembered to tag on the ‘please’ at the end. It didn’t end up mattering though, because the light was off before Yoongi could think twice about it. He did wish in that moment, that Jeongguk would stop being so habitually kind. It would make his job at liking the younger a lot harder.

“Thanks,” Yoongi hummed. The room had turned into a black abyss, with the only light coming from the outline of the door in front of him. It was beyond comforting to Yoongi, and he knew then that he was definitely not going to leave his dorm that night.

The slight sound of sheets ruffling made its way through the room as Jeongguk sat and then laid down on Seokjin’s bed. As Yoongi’s eyes adjusted, he could make out the outline of the body across from him. It was facing him, funnily enough. Yoongi didn’t understand why, but he shifted his body so that he was doing the same.

Yoongi remembered faintly of the last time Jeongguk and him shared a room like this, with their bodies only a few feet apart, and while Yoongi struggled to recall why they’d done it he clearly remembered the fondness that had overcome him that night. He’d looked at Jeongguk, and he’d thought at some point that the younger could be too much for him sometimes.

He wondered now if that thought was a bit too introspective to be a coincidence.

The older barely saw Jeongguk curl his knees up to his chest through the darkness. He didn’t know why he was suddenly being so observant of the younger, but he guessed it was because of all the questions pounding through his skull. There were too many of them, and unless Yoongi opened his mouth and physically asked them then he wasn’t going to get answers.

But if he did open his mouth, Yoongi knew that whatever relationship they had would permanently be shattered. There would be no going back from the questions that would spew from his lips the second he opened his trap, and he didn’t want that. He wanted their dynamic to stay the exact same as it was now, because he’d caught a glimpse of what they used to be in the chemist earlier that day. It had only been a glimpse, but that single occasion brought about a new spark of hope for Yoongi. Things could return to normal, if he just grit his teeth and got over the fears that plagued him.
He could do that at least, and he was already on track to face his fears. All he had to do was share his heat with Jeongguk.

Simple.

He could handle this.

He had a grip on things, and whether he liked it or not he had to learn how to adapt. He needed to, really, if he was going to have any chance at getting over his inner thoughts and feelings.

Including the ones he needed to stop denying.

Yoongi watched Jeongguk settle into a comfortable position, and for the first time in his life, Yoongi admitted to himself that he might not be as straight as he first thought.

He felt like he’d taken the greatest leap of faith in his life by thinking that, and Yoongi allowed himself to smile into the darkness. It wasn’t like the thought was going to see the light of day, as he’d probably get over this crush or whatever it was within a few weeks. It was, at the end of the day, irreverent to the bigger issue; the problem of his status and all the instincts and urges that came with it.

So in the darkness of his dorm, he allowed his heart to stitch itself back together. Jeongguk may not like him back, but that shouldn’t limit his progress. He shouldn’t let it hinder him. These feelings were temporary, and he knew that. His thoughts were sheltered in the pitch black of the room, and Yoongi promised himself that his thoughts would remain there for as long as breath expelled from his lungs.

It would work out better for everyone that way.

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“We’re filming in our rehearsal rooms today, aren’t we?” Taehyung asked the group in the van.
Yoongi glanced down at his phone again and checked the time. He’d checked it literally half an hour ago but he couldn’t stop. The date was quickly approaching, where he and Jeongguk would spend their heat and rut together, and Yoongi would be lying to everybody in the van if he said he wasn’t worried about it.

His anxiety had been through the roof the last couple of days. He’d come close to a panic attack on one occasion, but Namjoon had been there to get him out of his distressed state. Where had he been again when he’d had it? Yoongi struggled to remember. All he could really think about was how long it had taken Namjoon to get him out of his strained mindset. The entire time, Yoongi was pretty sure he’d been mentally begging Jeongguk to rock up out of thin air and take away his stresses and worries, but Yoongi hadn’t dared to say his pleas out loud. Namjoon had deserved better than that, especially after dragging him out of so many panic attacks for years before Jeongguk came around.

Namjoon’s migraines had been on and off the past couple of weeks, too. Usually he only got one every month or so, but as of lately he’d been getting more of them more often. Yoongi blamed the pressures the media put on him as their leader for keeping him in this constantly stressed state, but Yoongi couldn’t deny that Namjoon added his own expectations onto the ones other people forced upon him.

So Seokjin had ended up in Namjoon, Taehyung and Jeongguk’s dorm on many of these occasions, and each time he had stayed to look after Namjoon, Jeongguk had given his bed up for the older. It took a lot for Yoongi to look past this as nothing more than an aspect of Jeongguk’s boundless kindness, but he did manage to look past it. Jeongguk had explicitly told him many weeks ago that his feelings held no meaning beyond being crazy, after all.

It wouldn’t make sense for Jeongguk to give his bed up for reasons other than him simply being kind enough to do so. It just, wouldn’t add up for Jeongguk to do so for any other reason really.

“Don’t ignore me!” Taehyung exclaimed with a disbelieving grin. “I want an answer from someone.”

Yoongi turned his phone off. He needed a distraction from the screen, and Taehyung was as good of a distraction as anything else. “Yeah, we’re filming a Run episode there today. Sejin-hyung said we’re gonna have time to learn a new choreography afterwards, so they want us in the practise studios for that.”

Taehyung nodded, and then silence returned to the van. Yoongi did a quick survey of the people around him, and immediately he noticed a few things. Hoseok, for one, looked like a deflated balloon, and Seokjin didn’t look much better. Yoongi supposed that since he, Seokjin and Hoseok were the oldest in the group, it did get tiring having to manage so many aspects of their activities.
Then, Namjoon had the added responsibility of keeping a constant stream of communication between their managers and the members, and suddenly it wasn’t difficult for Yoongi to imagine why their leader was having so many migraines.

The maknae line looked a little worse for wear too, but their excitement could still be felt vibrating through the van. Yoongi got that. Run episodes were always a nice break from their usual schedules, and it allowed them to act a little more casual than they would anywhere else. If Yoongi was allowed to put less effort than usual into something, he was most likely on board with it; filming Run episodes were no exception.

Their group’s manager, Sejin, was driving them that day. They’d pulled up to the new BigHit complex they all knew like the back of their hands now, and Yoongi shoved his phone into his pocket as they were instructed on which studio to go to.

It was all white noise to Yoongi, if he was being honest. They had two concert performances quickly approaching, and they were both closer to Yoongi’s due heat date than he would’ve liked. He and Jeongguk couldn’t really do anything about it though, since the date had been set in stone months ago, and Jeongguk had assured him that there was still a one day buffer between the second concert and their due dates. Granted, Jeongguk’s reassurances had been needed, but Yoongi didn’t thank the younger for them.

A thought at the back of Yoongi’s mind had yelled at him at the time for treating the younger so coldly, but Yoongi hadn’t given the thought any of his time. The sooner he got over his irrational emotions, the less time it would take for his and Jeongguk’s friendship to go back to the way it was.

That night in the chemist still hung around the back of Yoongi’s subconscious. It lurked in his dreams, and reminded him whenever it could that things were improving between the two of them. He just needed to stay on track with the plan.

Yoongi hopped out of the vehicle as soon as he could. It was a relief to get out of that cramped space. The collective stress that had accumulated in the van during the drive there was suffocating to Yoongi. He much preferred the polluted air of Seoul, and that was saying something.

The other members dragged themselves out of the car, and Yoongi forced himself to leave his phone alone in his pocket. He knew it was the 20th. He’d checked the date far too many times already, he didn’t need to check again. His phone still burned a hole into his pocket though. Yoongi knew there was a scowl on his face, but who cared?
They headed towards the complex entrance and glanced around for potential paparazzi before entering. Yoongi sighed when the heat of the building came over him. He was still tired, since he’d spent the previous night working on that same bloody track, but at least it was getting somewhere. Yoongi didn’t know where his random bout of inspiration came from, but he thanked the universe for it anyway. He’d needed it, especially with their latest album needing another few tracks before they could begin publishing it.

Jeongguk had brought him a cup of coffee and a slice of cake that night, too. He’d been asked by Hoseok, apparently, to pick Yoongi up from the studio, and the smile Jeongguk had greeted him with was nothing short of bashful.

“I assumed you haven’t eaten in a while so I got you something. I hope you, uh, like carrot cake?”

Yoongi did, in fact, like carrot cake. Yoongi will never know how, but he knew from the stupid grin on Jeongguk’s lips that the maknae realised this fact seconds later.

“Enjoy it, hyung! You deserve a little treat every now and again.”

It was difficult not to smile at the memory. Yoongi had to clench his toes to draw himself back into the present, and when his mind returned to the scene before him he had to take a moment to compose himself.

Why were there various ridiculous costumes hanging up behind the film crew in their dance studio?

Yoongi looked around their group to see similar expressions of confusion. The costumes had to be for their Run episode, they had no other reason for being there otherwise. The rapper waited patiently for the instructions he knew he would receive soon, and he didn’t have to wait long for their manager to come bustling into the practise room with a cheeky smile on his face.

“You’re in for an episode today, Bangtan!” he shouted to the group, and Yoongi could see the crew and stylists already adjusting Seokjin and Jimin’s hairstyles for the episode. His heart wasn’t pounding, and sweat wasn’t dripping from his forehead, but Yoongi still felt the adrenaline that rushed through his veins whenever he made a public appearance. He realised that there wasn’t a live audience this time around, but it still gave him a spark of energy that he didn’t have before to entertain. To be someone people would be entertained by.
He wiped whatever expression he’d had on his face off in the blink of an eye and replaced it with something more docile. He was ready to hear about whatever it was they were filming for that day. He gave a quick survey of the members around him and yeah, the others had similar expressions on their faces to what he knew was on his. They were ready to act, in a way. It was a part of the job description, and while they always tried to be genuine, they always tried to be entertaining too.

It was a delicate balancing act, one that Yoongi never felt he got right, but he didn’t think about it. He didn’t need to, so he didn’t.

Huh. He was getting better at that, it seemed.

Namjoon walked towards their manager and Yoongi did the same with the others. They’d done plenty of questionable things on BTS Run episodes before. Yoongi vaguely remembered Hoseok chopping off pig-shaped balloons during one recording, and he wouldn’t put it past their film crew to make them do something just as ridiculous again.

Judging from the outfits, Yoongi already had a fairly good idea of what they were going to do anyway.

“What’re we doing today, Sejin-hyung?” Jimin asked the manager, and Yoongi felt the presence of multiple lenses as the cameras started their recordings.

He noticed the other members had unconsciously moved so that everybody could be seen by the cameras, and it was a definite now that the episode was underway. Yoongi tilted his head at Sejin, and did his best to look curious about something he probably already knew. Probably was the key word in that statement though, Yoongi told himself. He just hoped his suspicions weren’t correct.

“Well, Bangtan, today we’re going to get you guys to...” and Yoongi narrowed his eyes as the manager paused for an unreasonable length of time. The stoppage lasted long enough for Yoongi to look at the costumes behind the cameras, mentally list the types of costumes hanging up, glance between the members’ varying expressions and stare at Sejin all over again.

Could Sejin not finish his sentence already?

The older chewed on his bottom lip. Even though Yoongi knew it was only a few seconds since silence had overcome the room, when Sejin spoke again he felt like a couple of minutes had passed in the blink of an eye.
“Do some partner dancing!” Sejin finally answered, and Yoongi nodded to himself because he’d been right. What else would a tutu and a Mexican hat be doing hanging up in their dance studio?

But Sejin wasn’t done yet.

“And the first couple that’s going to show us how it’s done, is Jeongguk and Yoongi.”

The entire room decided to stare at the two of them, and Yoongi stared back with blank, emotionless eyes. Then, slowly, ever so slowly, he turned to face Jeongguk, who had the biggest shit-eating grin the rapper had ever seen.

And Yoongi, ever so calm and patient Yoongi, decided right then and there that he was going to kill whoever organised their pairing.

Chapter End Notes

Okey dokey, I’m back! I hope you enjoyed this update, because I managed to stick to the upload time on my Twitter and I’m low-key proud of that.

I attended a march about climate change called ‘School Strike 4 Climate’ last Friday and I’m just wondering if this was a worldwide thing? I’m asking you guys because everybody over here (in Australia) made it out to be this massive deal but I didn’t hear that much about any other countries participating in it.

This is another random note, but I saw Captain Marvel last weekend! The special effects and soundtrack were incredible, so I liked the movie just because of that. I’m an easy person to please lol

So yeah, thank you so much for reading (as always), and I really hope you enjoyed this chapter! And please, have a great day/night wherever you are (And be sure to have some chocolate today because you deserve it ;)}
While the other members were invited by the camera crew to take a seat on one of the stools at the back of the room, Yoongi remained frozen in his position. Jeongguk was still giving him that grin, and it was all on camera. He was giving him that grin on camera.

Yoongi mustered up the energy to move to the centre of the practise room, but he made sure everybody knew how he felt on the matter first.

“This is not going to go well.”

He thought the comment could be seen as something typical of his character, so he didn’t stress over how many secondary implications the statement really had. It wasn’t like anybody would read into them. Hoseok, really, was the only one who’d thought he’d seen anything between him and Jeongguk, and Yoongi knew now that he couldn’t take the dancer’s word for fact anymore after Yoongi had made of fool of himself. Granted, nobody had exactly witnessed his stupidity, but it still pained Yoongi to think that Hoseok been the one to catch onto his own careless feelings.

He was going to get over his feelings though. He’d told himself this for weeks.

That didn’t stop him from wishing it had been someone else who’d told him though. Because that way, if someone else had told him, he wouldn’t have any doubts if what he was doing was right or not.

Taehyung pointed at Yoongi. “Hey, how do you know that? I’ve never seen you two dance together before so what makes you think you’ll do badly?”

The older whipped his head around to face Taehyung, and he had this boxy grin on display that told Yoongi he was amused, of all things. Yoongi had found one person to enact his wishes on, then.
“Yeah, hyung! Did you just assume we’d be the losing team before the challenge’s even begun?”

Yoongi could hear the disbelief in Jeongguk’s voice, but he could also hear the smile in it. So he was amused, too. Yoongi smiled at the floor.

“No, I just think my dancing will look stupid compared to yours. Our skills aren’t exactly equal, Jeongguk.”

To Yoongi’s own ears it sounded like a decent reason for his earlier presumption, but he wasn’t sure if that was the case for others. He hoped it was. There were cameras rolling now, and their job was to capture every moment as it was for their audiences to enjoy and analyse later. He couldn’t risk a single thought slipping through his mouth or facial expressions.

Everything revolved around risks these days, and Yoongi sure had to keep track of a lot of them.

Jeongguk decided to hop over to Yoongi, and then he—what the fuck was Jeongguk doing, grabbing Yoongi’s hand in front of so many lenses?

Yoongi could feel the tips of his ears burning, and oh god, he was not going to blush on camera in front of possibly millions of people. He was better at masking his emotions than that. He could hold himself together better than that.

Jeongguk dragged him off by their linked hands to the middle of the studio, and he was still giving Yoongi that same grin from earlier. It was going to drive Yoongi crazy if he didn’t get rid of it soon.

“You have no faith in our combined power, Yoongi-hyung! I’m pretty sure I stink at partner dancing from previous experiences actually, so I don’t think our skills will really play a part in this.”

Yoongi shrugged, because what other response could he give to that? Jeongguk finally looked away after speaking, and Yoongi didn’t know why his lips were suddenly so dry but he found himself licking them repeatedly seconds later. Thankfully, his ears didn’t feel like they still had a red tinge to them. He was pretty sure that him getting easily embarrassed over things was legitimately something his omega status had brought on, but he didn’t know for sure. He really needed to search it up after this Run episode finished.
Jeongguk let go of his hand, and Yoongi did his best to not notice how his palms weren’t the only things that had warmed at the gesture.

The maknae’s attention had turned to the crew behind the cameras, but Yoongi couldn’t get his eyes to do the same. “Do we get to choose the type of partner dancing?” Jeongguk asked, an eagerness Yoongi hadn’t expected evident in his tone.

Yoongi waited for Sejin or someone else to respond. He really hoped they got to choose the type of dancing, if he was being honest. That way he could make a suggestion that wasn’t meant to be romantic, at least. He knew that if the decision was out of their hands then the types of dances they would be doing would either possess a funny aspect to them, or would present an aspect that nobody ever discussed in the business but all knew about.

The industry wasn’t oblivious to the shipping communities that were fuelled off of content like this. Initially, it had disgusted Yoongi that people thought that way, but he’d realised later on that he could hardly judge others for what they enjoyed. It got a bit creepy sometimes, but at the end of the day Yoongi had concluded it wasn’t hurting anybody. It brought in attention to their group activities, so it was easier to accept when he thought of it that way.

Sejin’s voice boomed through the studio. “No, you won’t be choosing the type of dancing. The options you’ll have are on pieces of paper in a hat and you’ll have to randomly choose one of the options. It’s all up to chance.”

Words tumbled out of Yoongi seamlessly. “You know, for some reason I don’t think the pairings were up to chance.”

A few snickers could be heard from behind Yoongi, and he didn’t need to turn around to know that Jimin was probably clutching his stomach and leaning over dangerously close to the floor while Hoseok was pointing at him and stifling a laugh behind a hand. It wasn’t hard to imagine the other members holding in laughs of their own, but Yoongi knew those two were easier to amuse than most.

From behind the massive camera that followed their every move, Yoongi could make out Sejin shaking his head, albeit with a smile on his face.

“Yeah, you are right about that. We put up a survey earlier for Army, and they pretty much chose the pairings for us.”
Hearing that caused Jeongguk to face him with the brightest fucking grin Yoongi had seen on his face for weeks, and Yoongi physically felt his defences crumble for a split second at the sight. He knew he’d given a smile back, he knew he had, so now he had to resort to damage control.

“Why am I not surprised?” Yoongi muttered loud enough for his audience to hear, and he hoped it acted as a distraction from the smile still plastered on his lips. He should have more control over his expressions, but he didn’t mind his happiness seeping out for once. Jeongguk was still grinning at their pairing, so it couldn’t be that damaging to his image if he was smiling too. It was appropriate for him to smile anyway, if Jeongguk was smiling, right?

Taehyung’s voice suddenly echoed behind Yoongi. “Okay, enough chit-chat. I want to know what kind of dance these two are going to do!”

A chorus of cheers erupted through the room, and then Yoongi’s shoulder’s deflated when the Mexican hat was brought over and held in front of the two of them. So this was how they were going to be assigned their dance style. Not that Yoongi was complaining. All he could really complain about so far was his coincidental pairing with Jeongguk.

He wasn’t sure yet whether he should be thanking Army’s for voting on their pairing or not. It was a bit of a grey area still to Yoongi, but one thing was sure in the forefront of his mind.

It was going to take a lot more effort on his part to retain his feelings from everyone, if the simplest of Jeongguk’s actions and statements made Yoongi glow like a lighthouse in the midst of a murky ocean.

“You can pull one out, Kook,” Yoongi said before the maknae could suggest otherwise.

Jeongguk nodded once to Yoongi before pulling a piece of paper out of the hat, and the way Jeongguk held his tongue out against his upper lip did something to Yoongi. He looked away from the sight as soon as he possibly could.

“Oh!” Jeongguk exclaimed, and Yoongi had to admit that the younger’s eyes popped out of his head just a little. “We’ve got the waltz, hyung!”

And Yoongi, being Yoongi, compelled himself to scrunch his eyes up and shake his head at the announcement. He wasn’t about to grin from pure excitement. No, not Min Yoongi.
“Aw hyung,” Namjoon called out, “you’ll love this!”

Yoongi shook his head again, but there was a goddamn smile still peaking out. Could he really not control himself for more than a few minutes?

“You can hardly say anything, Dance Monster.”

A few ‘Oh’s reverberated through the room, and Yoongi made a point of shrugging as he grabbed Jeongguk’s hand and held it away from the two of them mid-air. Then, he closed the distance between their bodies and hoped the move seemed more like a demonstration of confidence rather than eagerness.

He hadn’t dared look at Jeongguk while he attached himself to the younger, but his gaze was unable to be ignored at this close a distance. The maknae’s eyes contained a hint of surprise, at Yoongi’s boldness perhaps, but the older tried not to read too much into it. It didn’t matter what Jeongguk thought of his actions.

The maknae’s stare left his own for the briefest of moments. “Cue the music, already! We’re clearly ready to impress you all.”

Someone behind him laughed, but Yoongi was in a different world at this point. Jeongguk was grinning at him so widely that Yoongi had to wonder if it hurt to hold his mouth open like that for such a long period of time. It just, wasn’t normal for Jeongguk to smile this widely at something as simple as a dance.

Yoongi clung onto that hope anyway, as gentle sway music filled the air and Jeongguk’s hand slipped in to clutch at Yoongi’s back.

The older quickly positioned his hand to hold onto Jeongguk’s shoulder, and as awful as it was to admit, he couldn’t lie to himself and think this experience wasn’t enjoyable. It shouldn’t have been, because Yoongi had been so sure he never would’ve gotten to this point, but here he was. Savouring every moment Jeongguk’s gentle hands remained on his body.

How the hell had Yoongi gotten so fixated on such tiny, insignificant details?
Jeongguk’s foot stepped to the left, and Yoongi being an idiot forgot that they were supposed to be doing a graceful waltz. He practically stepped on the maknae’s foot in his attempt to follow his lead, and a chorus of cackles filled the studio behind him. Yoongi blatantly ignored the pink tinge to his cheeks and soldiered on with his task, because at the end of the day that was what he was there to do. Complete the task.

So if he could stop focusing on the way Jeongguk’s features had brightened with uncontrollable laughter when Yoongi had stepped on his foot, that would be incredible.

Yoongi forced his attention to focus on his footwork so that he could take the next few steps without standing on the maknae again, and it was definitely harder than he would ever admit. Dancing was never his strength, never was and probably never would be, and despite everyone’s reassurances he knew his talent would never bloom in a form of dance. His art bloomed through music instead, and he was well and truly okay with that. He didn’t need to be the best dancer in their group because he was good at something else; something that was just as treasured by the other members of the group, and their company for that matter. So it didn’t bother him as much as it used to that his steps were always just behind the dancer’s, or that he always seemed to count down the seconds until the dance breaks during performances finished while the others relished in the moment.

It didn’t bother him anymore, so it wouldn’t bother him now.

A voice whispered to Yoongi that he should look up instead of down, and for once, Yoongi listened to it.

And he was greeted by the most endearing set of eyes he had ever had the joy of meeting with his own.

Jeongguk was giving Yoongi this charming smile that held more of Yoongi’s heart than he thought it would, and his head was tipped ever so slightly downwards so that he was properly looking Yoongi in the eye. The grip at the small of Yoongi’s back cupped the skin there so firmly that Yoongi felt the need to search Jeongguk’s gaze for the meaning of his confidence, but he couldn’t find it. It was possible it was hidden under so many layers of joy and happiness, but he might never know for sure.

That was alright, though. All that really mattered was how carefree Jeongguk was in that moment, and how the bellowing laughter and cheers around them seemed to support their every decision at that point in time. Nothing else mattered to Yoongi in that moment, not his status or his impending heat, or even the absurd feelings he couldn’t believe had fostered into what they were today because of a simple revelation Hoseok had spurred on. None of it mattered, and Yoongi allowed himself to grin back at Jeongguk because fuck everything else. He was allowed to have this
moment of serendipity.

The music picked up for the chorus, and in the midst of his serenity Yoongi heard that they had until the end of the chorus before their dance finished. So that gave him another few seconds until he and Jeongguk had to part, for the sake of Yoongi’s sentiment remaining confidential.

He was going to make the most of it then.

Yoongi tightened his grip on Jeongguk’s shoulder and leaned over so that they were rocking childishly back and forth instead of following the square Jeongguk had been leading him around. It felt like he was doing something goofy, something that might entertain their audiences more than the typical waltz they’d been doing up until that point, but above any other reason for doing it, Yoongi had simply wanted to enjoy himself.

From the bunny-like broad grin on Jeongguk’s face, he was enjoying himself too. That fact alone made Yoongi’s happiness flourish tenfold, and he knew he couldn’t control himself anymore. His happiness was evident for everyone to see through the crinkles around his eyes and the teeth that peeked out from behind his gummy smile. It wasn’t a secret anymore that Jeongguk made Yoongi happy.

And that was okay. Yoongi knew now that was okay.

Jeongguk made every one of the members happy, so it could hardly be a sin for him to make Yoongi experience that same cheerfulness. It was fine that people knew more about their dynamic now, because when they were mucking around in front of so many others Yoongi could almost pretend that nothing had changed between the two of them.

It was as if no time had passed from that fateful day in the dance studio, when Jeongguk had laid on the floorboards with as much energy as Yoongi usually possessed.

And if Yoongi couldn’t have his feelings reciprocated, which he knew he couldn’t because his feelings were irrational and temporary and unable to be understood, then he could surely have his and Jeongguk’s friendship back.

Please dear god, at least grant Yoongi the irreplaceable bliss of having that back.
“Ya Yoongi,” Seokjin shouted in between bouts of windshield laughter, “go back to copying Jeongguk otherwise your score will suffer!”

Yoongi was thrown back into the present violently, but he didn’t stop rocking Jeongguk back and forth in the process. Instead, he made a point of staring at Jeongguk while he pulled him from side to side even more childishly than before. He didn’t care, and it was so nice to finally feel like that was being truthful to himself.

Hoseok’s unmistakable cackle filled the air at Yoongi’s blatant message of ‘I don’t give a shit’, and even Yoongi’s usual defences couldn’t stop the laughter that escaped his own mouth at the sound. He would never tell anyone, but he was having the time of his life doing one of the simplest things he’d ever attempted to do.

Everything just felt so easy in that moment, and he knew then that he would do anything to come back to this feeling of contentment.

Anything.

Then the music faded out of the studio, and Yoongi had to try and remove his grip from Jeongguk’s shoulder before anyone suspected he enjoyed it so much more than he would ever let on.

“Wow,” was the first word to reach Yoongi’s ears as he detangled himself from Jeongguk’s hold. “That was something else, guys.”

Yoongi recognised the voice as Taehyung’s. Judging from his tone, he was simply teasing them, but Yoongi could never be too sure anymore. Taehyung had been the one to catch onto his status first, and he hadn’t let Yoongi keep that fact to himself when he’d found out. So that made Yoongi wonder to himself how much longer his feelings would remain in the dark for.

He really hoped that even if his feelings were revealed to somebody, that somebody would not end up being Taehyung. He could not begin to imagine how the younger would make him confront the issue. If Yoongi thought going through his heat with Jeongguk was a bold idea in itself, he hated to imagine what Taehyung would make him do to deal with his feelings.

Then again, maybe he wouldn’t force Yoongi to do anything else. He could have simply thought it wrong of Yoongi to hide something so significant from the rest of them, something that would
certainly affect them on an often enough basis as a group. Since Yoongi’s feelings wouldn’t really affect anybody else Taehyung might not suggest that he spill his emotions onto Jeongguk in the first place. Hell, Taehyung might even be against it if he thought Yoongi admitting his feelings would negatively affect their group dynamic.

Christ, Yoongi needed to stop thinking and say something.

“And that’s Taehyung’s cue for him and his partner to do their dance, if I’m correct?”

Someone snorted behind Yoongi.

“Well, you’re not wrong!” Sejin answered from behind the multiple cameras set up. “It is Taehyung’s turn to dance, but since he’s been put in a trio his dance is going to be a little different from yours.”

Oh, that was a relief to Yoongi’s ears. At least that meant his and Jeongguk’s dance wasn’t going to be the most embarrassing out of the lot of them. If three of them were expected to do a partner dance seriously then Yoongi could safely place his bets of him and Jeongguk not losing this challenge. He didn’t want to find out what the punishment for losing was, even. If it meant doing something again with Jeongguk that could be potentially dangerous in exposing things Yoongi meant to kept hidden, then he wanted nothing to do with it.

“Taehyung has been put with Jin and Hoseok, and they are all expected to play a part in the dance even though it’s meant to be a partner dance and they’re trying to do one with three people.”

“This’ll be interesting,” Hoseok commented with wide eyes as he shook his head in disbelief. Yoongi simply gave him a shrug when he looked in his direction. He wasn’t about to pity others when he had just been forced to partner dance with somebody he really didn’t want to get any closer to.

Jeongguk walked over to the stools and Yoongi quickly followed him. He was out of the spotlight for now, and that was all Yoongi could ask for. Well, that and the spare space next to Namjoon. He could ask for that from the world.

He got the seat, too. He wasn’t sitting in the spare seat next to Jeongguk, and the weight of stress he’d felt sitting in the pit of his stomach from the moment the cameras started recording lifted. He wasn’t being focused on by anybody else, and there was some distance between him and the
source of so many of his inner conflicts.

He wanted to be happy about all of this, he noted to himself as Seokjin pulled out a partner dance for the three of them to do. He wanted to be happy about the distance and the lack of attention directed at him and Jeongguk, but he couldn’t.

Some absurd part of himself actually wanted all of that, and it was a part of Yoongi that he had begun to label as irrational and illogical.

Him putting these labels on those feelings didn’t invalidate them, though, as much as Yoongi wanted them to.

“How are we supposed to do the tango with three people?” Seokjin’s shrill voice burst through the room. “You guys can’t seriously expect us to do this with these two as the men in the dance.”

Yoongi’s eyebrow rose instinctually.

“Wait,” Namjoon interrupted before Seokjin could continue. “So are you going to play the woman’s part in the tango?”

Seokjin held his hand up to his chest and dropped his mouth in disbelieving yet playful shock. “Of course I am! Hoseok and Taehyung possess the elegance of two hippos on land, if you haven’t already noticed. They could never pull off the kind of attitude the woman’s role requires in this dance.”

The mood in the room immediately shifted to something so much more lively than it had been before, and again, Yoongi had to wonder how Seokjin could so effortlessly switch the atmosphere of any place within a couple of moments. It was surely a talent of his that Yoongi would kill to possess.

“A-At what point did you forget that H-Hoseok-hyung is the professional dancer amongst us, hyung?” Taehyung sputtered out between laughter. “Oh, and I’m an actor too if you haven’t forgotten! What rules us out from having the right attitude for the role?”

Yoongi watched on as Seokjin crossed his arms and held his head up high. It seemed like he wasn’t giving up on his cause just yet, and it was such a small and pointless thing to note but Yoongi felt
just a little inspired from observing him.

“Just you watch,” Seokjin continued, a fierce smile now on his lips, “I’ll prove you all wrong with my skills. Because while I may not have the best footwork, I can at least show you what true sass is.”

Yoongi felt just as amazed by Seokjin’s antics as everyone else seemed to be. The older just knew when a speck of humour was needed to progress things along, and it wasn’t too much later that Hoseok hopped on the bandwagon and danced as an overly masculine man with his chest puffed out the entire time. Taehyung, Yoongi noticed, couldn’t seem to hold himself together for all of two seconds before bursting into laughter at both of his hyung’s acting, and when Yoongi heard a harsh cackle come from his side he knew Jeongguk was losing it, too. The image of Taehyung clinging onto Hoseok’s stiff frame as he guided Seokjin across the floor was an amusing one, even to Yoongi, but the sound of Jeongguk’s laughter stole his attention on more occasions than Yoongi would ever admit to himself.

Then, when Seokjin was dipped backwards by Hoseok so that the camera could focus on Seokjin, the older blew a kiss at the camera and winked with a certain cheekiness nobody had expected from him. The entire room, producers and film crew included, erupted into hysterical laughter at the sight.

But Yoongi missed it, all because of the grin on Jeongguk’s face that was too goddamn captivating for its own good.

~

It was clear from the very beginning that the trio were going to lose the challenge. The punishment wasn’t as extreme as Yoongi had imagined it would be, with it ending up being the group having to do the same dance again with blindfolds and wacky costumes of the other member’s choosing on. It was definitely a punishment meant to serve as a humiliation tactic against the losers, but Yoongi could tell that any one of them could have easily taken a loser’s place and felt comfortable with the embarrassing excuse for a tango they were doing.

It was more of an amusing punishment than anything menacing, but that doesn’t mean Yoongi isn’t happy he and Jeongguk aren’t the ones doing it. He could hardly imagine how disastrously that would go if they were the ones doing it. He’d barely made it through their first dance without revealing anything to either Jeongguk, the other members or the dozens of crew members and millions of viewers that would watch the video later, and that was honestly one of the most terrifying thoughts Yoongi had ever had in his life.
It felt like he couldn’t control anything these days, even though he currently had no excuse for not being able to keep his feelings and reactions to himself. Especially the feelings of embarrassment that arose out of nowhere now. He couldn’t keep those feelings to himself no matter how desperately he tried, and it was going to drive him insane because he never used to blush at anything.

Now, he felt like he blushed at anything Jeongguk told him. Surely that couldn’t be normal?

So when the recording was declared to be finished, Yoongi immediately pulled out his phone and sat in the corner of the studio so that nobody could sneak up on him while he did a bit of research. It was such a stupid thing to search up, and it was so insignificant to the bigger picture, but it was going to annoy him to no end if he didn’t find out whether him being an omega actually did affect something he couldn’t control outside of his heat for once.

He made an important mental reminder to clear his search history after this too, even if the search was relatively innocent. He just didn’t want people to think he cared about such unimportant things, like whether the rosy tint he got on his cheeks was because of untameable instincts or irrational feelings he was losing more and more control of with each passing day.

Terms he’d seen in passing but didn’t really know the definition of passed his eyes, and after spotting the words ‘biological compatibility’ and ‘courting’, he finally came across an article that held some promise.

He skimmed through the information quickly because he knew they’d be called back from their breaks any moment now to start their dance practise session. Yoongi could feel Hoseok’s excitement for their session already. Apparently the new choreography had just been emailed to them from the same American choreographer they’d worked with for years, and Yoongi could feel the younger’s excitement to learn and teach it from where he was at the opposite side of the room.

Frankly, Yoongi couldn’t wait for the session to finish so that he could get back to his studio, but he wouldn’t dampen Hoseok’s spirit like that. Not yet, anyway.

There. An answer to his questions. He’d finally spotted one, and Yoongi wasn’t sure at first if his stomach jumped from anticipation or terror. Probably a mix of both.

Huh. He’d kind of been expecting that.
Omegas, apparently, were more susceptible to feelings of embarrassment and shame once they presented. Yoongi kept reading and found out that this susceptibility had something to do with the kind of hormones his body began to produce as an omega, and he didn’t like admitting it, but it made sense. Weren’t men and women the same, after all? Because didn’t they experienced certain emotions easier due to the difference they had in their hormone types?

He actually felt a little idiotic for ever thinking there could be another reason for his uncontrollable blushes.

There was something written about alpha’s feelings, too. Yoongi continued reading, despite the people who had begun moving around him to leave the seven of them alone for their rehearsal. He could take a few minutes out of his break to try and wrap his head around Jeongguk’s position too. It was only fair he informed himself on both of their circumstances.

And then a few seconds later, understanding washed over Yoongi like a tidal wave.

Alphas experienced feelings of aggression and anger easier than any other status due to their own hormones. Fits of anger were harder to contain due to these easily provoked emotions, and the puzzle pieces Yoongi had collected over the past couple of months finally fit together. Everything made a little more sense now; he honestly couldn’t believe he hadn’t searched this up earlier.

Yoongi had visibly seen Jeongguk calm himself down before from unpredictable bursts of anger that had suddenly overtaken him, and Yoongi felt so stupid for not questioning the younger’s behaviour as much as he should have.

He should have noticed how difficult it was for Jeongguk to control his reaction when he found out Yoongi was an omega, and he should have wondered why Jeongguk felt the need to calm himself down after confessing his distrust towards Yoongi’s words in the chemist carpark. The signs of Jeongguk’s emotional changes were all there, and yet Yoongi hadn’t noticed them. He hadn’t realised Jeongguk was even feeling these emotions for a reason before reading this article.

Surely Jeongguk must have struggled with controlling his unreasonable feelings of anger? He’d confessed to Yoongi that he hated how he’d viewed his hyung as of lately, but he hadn’t mentioned the lack of control he had over his own emotions.

So there were still things left unsaid between them.
Yoongi wanted to tear his hair out. Everything was so unnecessarily complicated between them and he knew he wasn't going to do anything to simplify things. And then there were all the complications between them and the other members. Yoongi still didn't know if anybody other than Seokjin knew of his and Jeongguk's agreement for their next heat and rut. Taehyung certainly hadn't approached him about it, and since it was originally his idea Yoongi expected the younger to at least approach the two of them and thank them for taking on his advice.

He hadn't done that, so Yoongi could only assume everybody else didn't know.

Jesus, communication really wasn't Yoongi's forte.

“Let’s go guys. We’ve got two hours to learn the first verse, so let’s get stuck into it!”

Hoseok sounded far too energetic to start the rehearsal. Yoongi grunted to himself as he stood up from his corner and trudged over to the centre of the room, where the others were already stretching themselves. Jimin was watching something on his phone, supposedly the new choreography Keone Madrid had sent them. Yoongi thought that was the choreographer’s name anyway. It was difficult for Yoongi to keep up with all these English names at the best of times.

Jimin put his phone away and addressed the rest of the group. “Let’s watch the video a few times before we try to learn it. It’s pretty full on during the first verse, from what I’ve seen.”

Yoongi nodded. He wasn’t surprised that their choreography was demanding at the beginning of the song. They would have the most energy at the beginning after all. It was only natural to make the dance more challenging then.

The glances made between Namjoon and Seokjin weren’t missed by Yoongi. They looked about as worried over this new dance as Yoongi felt. At least he wasn’t alone, then.

“I agree,” Hoseok said. “Let’s watch it a few times, then let’s try and wrap our heads around the moves.”

Then began the laborious task of analysing the video like they had nothing better to do. This part of the job drove Yoongi a little mad occasionally, but he couldn’t really complain. While dancing might not be, in his opinion, his greatest strength, there were without doubt exceptional dancers among their group who took genuine enjoyment out of the activity. At times like these, Yoongi wished he could take that same enjoyment out of the choreographies, but he knew sitting in a
studio with a new beat blaring was his niche.

At least he got to observe the others’ enjoyment at practising.

After a few watches, Jeongguk stood up from the seated huddle they’d formed around a laptop and stretched his arms out. “Can we try learning Yoongi-hyung’s rapping bit first? It seemed the hardest to get, to me anyway.”

Yoongi stood up too, and was quickly followed by the others. He’d gladly get struck into the rehearsal if it meant this practise session would go by quicker.

“Sure thing,” Hoseok answered, an understandable eagerness clearly in his tone. He was in his element now, and Yoongi felt malicious for it but he was jealous over Hoseok’s passion for both making music and dancing to it. Yoongi could only ever find himself enjoying the former, and he did wish on more than one occasion that he enjoyed doing both. It would make his job that much easier at times.

Jimin began pointing various members to their new designated spots on the dance floor. Hoseok even listened to the younger, knowing that Jimin’s strengths aligned with giving positions and keeping group formations while Hoseok’s worked more with individual’s moves.

Soon enough, they were all in position, and it was only when Hoseok began giving out directions for them to follow that he realised there was a very big issue with all of this.

This issue being the section of the choreography that required Jeongguk and Yoongi to act, well, *intimately*, towards each other.

“Okay, now Jeongguk. At this point, while the others are dropping onto their knees and outstretching their arms towards you, you’re going to be approaching Yoongi-hyung while he’s completing his verse.”

Yoongi had seen the video a few times now. He knew what part they were acting out, and while Yoongi had always known he would be one of the two people standing up during his verse, he hadn’t anticipated the other person being Jeongguk. Because there was no possible way he could have been paired up with Jeongguk twice in the one day. His luck wasn’t that horrific.
Apparently it was, though, because Hoseok was still very much giving out instructions that Yoongi belatedly realised he was supposed to be following.

“Got that, hyung?”

Yoongi stared at him for a brief second.

“Ah, no.”

A silence nobody had anticipated came over their group. Hoseok glanced between him and Jeongguk once, and Yoongi swore he saw a flicker of realisation light up the orbs of his eyes. There was no way he could be thinking back to that conversation he’d had with Yoongi all those weeks ago, right? The conversation he’d had about Jeongguk being a... distraction to Yoongi.

Because if he was, Yoongi was certain of the confronting conversation that would come afterwards. Hoseok was like Taehyung in that way, where he always tried to figure out what problems people experienced in their daily lives. The real difference between them though, was that Hoseok was gentler in his approach to a solution.

Taehyung was far too abrupt and unreserved when it came to acting on solutions for Yoongi’s liking.

“That’s alright,” Hoseok muttered, drumming his fingers against his thigh for a moment. “If I demonstrated your part for you, would that make it easier to copy?”

Yoongi shrugged. He wasn’t actually that lost on the choreography, he just didn’t really want to do it. Especially with Jeongguk. He wasn’t sure if he could afford to, really, considering even a vague allusion to his newly registered feelings could result in a fair share of people jumping down his throat.

Everything was just so tedious, it was difficult to keep up with what Yoongi was trying to do and what he was actually doing in practise.

“Sure. Go ahead.”
Yoongi stepped aside and let Hoseok take his place. Everybody else stood up to watch, and Yoongi’s veins pulsed a little quicker at the notion of all of their attention soon focusing on him and Jeongguk in place of the current pairing. It was slight paranoia on his part for focusing so intently on this eventuality, but he couldn’t help it. He needed to prepare himself for his reaction, because if Yoongi had interpreted the hint of understanding that had crossed Hoseok’s eyes correctly, then his actions were about to be scrutinised indefinitely by the other.

He didn’t want to liken it to a game of cat and mouse, but Yoongi sure felt like he was an unwilling player.

Hoseok took Yoongi’s place in the studio and looked over at Jeongguk. “Do you know what you’re doing yet?”

Jeongguk considered the question for a moment before answering. “I think so. I’ve got the basics at least.”

The older dancer nodded before bringing his attention back to Yoongi. “Can you play your verse while we go through the moves please? It won’t be great or anything, but it’ll give you an idea of what you’re supposed to be doing.”

Yoongi nodded, pretending to need the instructions. “Yep, just give me a second.”

He quickly scrolled through the track until he reached the right part, and when he pressed play he felt like he’d just landed himself a front row seat to a theatrical production.

Hoseok walked backwards, one exaggerated step at a time, and he made sure to thrust the same arm out behind him as the leg that stepped back to put distance between him and Jeongguk. Jeongguk, however, pretended to stumble towards Hoseok as he stepped backwards, and when there was only a metre left between them Jeongguk grabbed Hoseok’s hair and glared at him as the older pretended to struggle against his clutch.

It was meant to signify struggling with a desire to have something that wasn’t meant to be sought after, but was enticing all the same. The physical representation of this struggle had Yoongi questioning the choreographer’s motives, though. Surely he knew that if a group like them did a move like this in the Korean music scene, speculation and theories would haunt them whenever they performed it.
Well, maybe that had been his intention. To cause speculation. Either way, Yoongi was expected to do this.

Hoseok then made his hands into guns as he kept staggering back, and with every step he took Jeongguk shifted so that he lurched closer to the floor with each shot Hoseok pretended to take. After a few more steps, Jeongguk collapsed entirely onto the floor so that the only thing left off its surface was his outstretched arm, reaching out for Hoseok’s mercy one last time. Hoseok merely lifted his knee and leaned in the opposite direction to Jeongguk, and with one finally flick of his wrist Jeongguk collapsed onto the ground so that he was in the same position as the other members would be around Yoongi at that point in the choreography.

Yoongi paused the music.

“Have you got a general idea now, hyung?” Hoseok asked as he walked seamlessly over to the older, as if he hadn’t just performed a masterpiece after studying a video for a little over twenty minutes. “Cause if you do you should try the part out with Kookie now while our demonstration is fresh on your mind.”

The older squinted. There was a challenge hidden in those words somewhere. Like Hoseok was daring him to practise the intimate choreography and prove to him that there were no obstacles Yoongi had to face in the process.

And as much as Yoongi didn’t want to accept the challenge, he did. He felt like he had to. Otherwise the room left for Hoseok’s own speculation would overcome him in a matter of moments.

“Yeah, I’ll try it. I might as well.”

Hoseok nodded and moved out of Yoongi’s position. He could feel the others’ eyes on him as he did so, and their attention irked Yoongi. He didn’t know if anybody else would be scrutinising him, but he had to keep up an act for Hoseok at least, and that stung. The fact that he couldn’t learn the choreography normally and display any emotions or reactions he would naturally have annoyed him to no end, but what else could he do? Remove his facade and fall victim to Hoseok and whoever else thought his emotions were their business?

Keeping up an act was simply easier.
Jeongguk stood up and returned to his original placement. The other members didn’t bother getting into position. They were all too intent on watching Yoongi and Jeongguk.

Yoongi scrunched his eyes up momentarily.

“You can play it now, Hoseok.”

A few seconds passed in darkness, and Yoongi’s voice rung out through the room. His eyes snapped open at the sound, and then Jeongguk began approaching him.

Yoongi barely remembered to move his arms as he stepped away from the younger. Whatever was in Jeongguk’s gaze now certainly hadn’t been there when he’d been demonstrating the dance with Hoseok, and Yoongi wanted to believe it meant something even though he was a dancer, and dancers acted when they were in their element. The want in Jeongguk’s eyes was pretence, an act Jeongguk was putting on as part of the choreography, and it held no meaning outside of the dance.

But that was only what Yoongi kept telling himself. What he wanted to believe was an entirely different story.

Then Jeongguk’s fingers latched onto Yoongi’s hair, and Yoongi was a fucking goner.

The hooded stare Jeongguk was giving him was hot. There was no other way to describe it. His role in this section of the dance was to be enticing, and he couldn’t fulfil his role any better if he tried. It almost came too easily to Jeongguk, this ability to seem intoxicating. Yoongi felt like he was choking under his gaze.

The hand clutching Yoongi’s fringe pulled, and Yoongi’s head jolted at the action. He feet were stumbling now, struggling to keep in rhythm with his own beat in the background. It shouldn’t be this difficult to complete such a basic part of the choreography, but Jeongguk was making it so difficult to focus on anything other than his piercing, sensual gaze.

Yoongi felt his blood travel to a different destination.

Fuck no. He was not about to get an erection from Jeongguk in front of everyone. Screw Hoseok. He could go fuck himself. He was not about to humiliate himself in front of everyone just to hide feelings Hoseok already suspected he had. He could be harassed by Hoseok and anybody else who
felt up to it later. What mattered right now, was getting the hell away from Jeongguk before all
dignity seeped out of his body.

He swore, if he was getting an erection easier now because of his omega status, he was going to
strangle somebody.

That somebody probably going to be Hoseok.

“Hyung, you’re forgetting your hand movements,” Jimin helpfully supplied, but Yoongi was going
to choke him anyway. He didn’t need his incompetency to be further explained to the rest of them.

Yoongi stopped moving. He had to get away from this. “I feel sick.”

Immediately Jeongguk quit his act and stood up straight. He leaned over Yoongi slightly and
grabbed him by his shoulders, but Yoongi wasn’t having it.

“I need the bathroom,” he managed to mutter as he ran out of Jeongguk’s arms, and he knew he
was exaggerating his situation but he needed to get away from Jeongguk. He was wearing jeans,
and he knew they were particularly useless when it came to hiding hard-ons.

Rushed footsteps followed him. Yoongi groaned in exasperation. Why was it so hard to get a
moment to himself? He ran to the bathroom entrance and threw the door open before locking
himself in the stall closest to him. Seconds later, the door opened again with the same urgency
Yoongi had seconds earlier. Yoongi panted in his stall, and prayed that the person on the other side
of the stall door wasn’t Jeongguk. He had a five out of six chance of the person being someone
other than Jeongguk, but with how his luck had been for the rest of the day Yoongi felt like the
odds were permanently tipped in the maknae’s favour.

“Yoongi-hyung,” a voice called out, and Yoongi could have let out a cry of relief if it weren’t for
the very obvious tent in his jeans. It was Namjoon. Yoongi could handle Namjoon. He wasn’t
aware of everything going on, so Yoongi still had some room to breathe around the leader.

“Hyung,” the leader said again, “we need to talk.”

Yoongi sat down on the toilet seat lid and held his breath. There was no way Namjoon was aware
of anything. Unless...
Oh shit. Hoseok had spoken to Namjoon first about Yoongi and Jeongguk’s relationship before bringing it up with Yoongi in his studio.

Oh shit.

“Because whatever is going on between you and Jeongguk is affecting the rest of us, and I can’t just sit back and do nothing about it.”

Yoongi listened dejectedly and let out a shaky exhale, willing his erection to go down immediately.

He should have known that no secret of his could ever be kept. All of his other secrets had been disclosed at some point, after all.

Chapter End Notes

I hope you all liked this update! I was very slow in getting it up so I’m really sorry about that. I’m going to blame my exams for not updating on time (I had 4 of them in 4 days end me) even though it was probably my writer’s block that hit me a few times during this chapter that delayed it being updated. Again, I apologise for this slower update!

I’ve definitely had a busy few days. I went to a fossil fuels protest yesterday and I had the joy of seeing our Prime Minister surrounded by protesters (peaceful ones might I add) that were trying to get him to listen to what we were saying. He’s all for digging up coal and it’s really aggravating that he’s refusing to listen to people’s protests against his priorities due to climate change. I just hope he starts listening to the people he’s supposed to represent soon...

On another note, we have a BTS comeback just around the corner! I can’t wait for the album to drop, the teaser with Halsey has me so excited because it’s a collaboration between two of my favourite artists and how can I not be over the moon that it’s happening?

I hope you guys liked this chapter regardless, and that you all have a great day/night wherever you are. And remember: it’s important to stay hydrated! (if somebody gets the reference I’ll love you forever)
“That’s bullshit Joon,” Yoongi commented with a bitter edge to his words. “There’s nothing even happening between me and Kook.”

He could imagine Namjoon pursing his lips at that information. “You expect me to believe that?”

Yoongi leaned onto the back of the toilet, a frown etched onto his face. Was there any point in lying anymore? It seemed like Namjoon didn’t need to have this discussion with Yoongi. From the sounds of it, he probably knew everything about their situation already.

The older grunted. “No.”

“A good.”

A brief silence crossed the room. Yoongi did his best to think about anything but the tent in his jeans.

“Hyung, I’d prefer it if we spoke to each other face to face.”

Yoongi hung his head low at the leader’s words. He wasn’t about to fulfil his request for the life of him. He’d rather be scrutinised for staying in the stall until his erection died down than face Namjoon with the reason he’d rushed out of the practise room.

Yeah, there was no way in hell he was about to face Namjoon with a boner. He might as well die from embarrassment.

“I wouldn’t.”

There was that silence again. Yoongi’s frown deepened. It felt like there was some distance between him and Namjoon now, a distance that was greater than just the stall door that separated
them. Yoongi knew he was probably contributing to this distance by keeping his answers curt, but he couldn’t help it. He felt like he was trying to defend his actions the longer he sat in that bathroom doing nothing other than waiting for Namjoon’s questions.

“Okay.”

Yoongi hated this silence. It was compressing the bathroom’s air and choking him slowly, leaving him with no room to struggle or breathe. Yoongi’s eyelids sunk a little lower at this realisation.

“Why are you here, Joon?”

A single, deep breath came from behind the door, and Yoongi involuntarily shuddered at it. What was Namjoon preparing himself to say?

“I don’t even know anymore.”

Yoongi was about to respond with, “Then leave,” when Namjoon continued.

“I, I was here for answers hyung, but I don’t think I’m going to get them. Not easily, anyway.”

There was something similar to humour in his tone, like he was amused at himself for not expecting Yoongi to be so closed off about this, and Yoongi almost smiled at the thought. The distance between them lessened then, for a reason Yoongi could not explain.

“Look,” Namjoon resumed, “if you tell me anything hyung, anything at all about what’s been going on recently, I’d... I’d greatly appreciate it. Because I’ve been worrying about you, hyung. I’ve, I’ve been worrying about all of the things that are going on behind closed doors that I know I should be helping you with, and, I don’t know. I want to do more than just watch from the sidelines, Yoongi-hyung. Of course it’s my job as leader, but it’s also my responsibility as a brother.”

Yoongi wasn’t one to get emotional, but Namjoon just, had a way with words. He blinked rapidly.

“You wouldn’t want to hear it, Joon. It’s not worth hearing.” His voice was hollow when he
replied, not at all the same as when he’d first spoken to Namjoon in the bathroom.

He didn’t know what he was talking about anymore, in all honesty. When he’d said Namjoon wouldn’t want to hear it, had he been talking about the mess of thoughts he had about being an omega or was he talking about the ridiculous, temporary feelings he’d developed for Jeongguk in such a short period of time? He didn’t even know what he was talking about anymore, so he really couldn’t expect Namjoon to have any idea.

Except Hoseok had spoken to Namjoon about Yoongi’s feelings already, and whether or not those assumptions had been true at the time, they were certainly true now.

So Namjoon at the very least was aware of that, no matter how oblivious he was pretending to be in front of Yoongi.

“Hyung, that doesn’t matter. Never has, and it never will.”

Yoongi was barely roped back into reality through that comment. He blinked sluggishly at the tiled floor beneath him and struggled to come up with a generic response. His erection had dulled down by this point, but that didn’t mean Yoongi wanted to face Namjoon because of it. If anything, he was afraid to face Namjoon for a different reason.

Namjoon had known him for the longest time out of all of the members, and because of their shared passions, dreams and struggles they knew each other better than most. That fact was what scared Yoongi. As he sat on the toilet lid and waited for the moment Namjoon decided to leave, this fact drove an underlying sense of fear through his conscience.

Because Namjoon knew him better than most, he was terrified the younger would simply see through Yoongi’s defences and discover the truth of his situation without him needing to confess anything. Since words had never really been essential to their friendship, he doubted Namjoon would need them to figure out what was going on behind the masks.

“Please remember that, hyung.”

Yoongi sucked in a breath. It was harder to do than he thought it would be. “I’ll try.”

After hearing all of that, Yoongi wanted to share something with Namjoon. The younger was
always so accommodating, so gentle with his words and reassuring with his actions, and Yoongi couldn’t believe he’d ever doubted Namjoon’s reasons for following him into the stall. He hadn’t forgotten to take notice of the lack of other members in the bathroom, either. Namjoon had done his best to approach Yoongi in a timely manner, and when things had taken an obvious turn for the worse, he’d tried to deal with things appropriately.

Yoongi’s previous hostility towards Namjoon melted off his attitude in waves. He couldn’t keep up that pretence for any longer if he tried.

Namjoon didn’t deserve it.

“Jeongguk and I are going to spend our next heat and rut together by the way.”

A few seconds passed in silence before Yoongi continued speaking, afraid that if he didn’t continue he would lose the courage to explain anything to his dearest friend.

“It’s not a, a new decision. Me and Kook made it a few weeks ago actually. I just forgot to mention it to anybody when we made it. Unless Seokjin asking about it counts. I’m not sure if he knows though. We just kind of talked about how my discussion with Kook went that night. I don’t think he knows about our final decision though.”

Yoongi hummed, deep in thought. It was always difficult to read Seokjin, and this time was no exception. During their conversation the older could have read between the lines and caught on that he and Jeongguk were going to go through their heat and rut together, or he could still be completely unaware of their choice because Yoongi hadn’t explicitly said anything.

Seokjin always caused Yoongi a headache when it came to reading him. He was too good at masking his thoughts and emotions. Yoongi envied him for this ability on more occasions than he could count.

Yoongi belatedly realised he probably should have asked Jeongguk if it was alright to share their final decision with Namjoon, but he decided that he was going to have to know about it eventually. As their leader, Namjoon would have to suggest to their managers that they clear their schedules from now on whenever Yoongi and Jeongguk’s respective heat and rut approached, and Yoongi knew that would be no easy feat. Of course, he and Jeongguk could always approach their managers themselves, but Namjoon’s role was to represent the group at meetings and such with the higher-ups. It was his duty in a way to bring forth this new issue to their organisers, and as much as guilt tore at Yoongi’s subconscious for this fact, he knew Namjoon wouldn’t allow him and Jeongguk to take his place.
Namjoon’s feet shuffled on the tiles beyond Yoongi’s door. “I’m going to take it that this is a good decision?”

There wasn’t exactly disbelief buried beneath his words, but there was a hint of curiosity. Namjoon was probably just curious as to why Yoongi made the decision. He was naturally inquisitive, after all.

“Yeah,” Yoongi breathily replied, because it was. It was a great decision, in his opinion anyway. Sure they would have sex and lose all sense of control for a good two or three days, but it was exactly the catalyst Yoongi needed to face his fears. He couldn’t keep running from his disgusting thoughts on being an omega, and he certainly couldn’t run away from the fact that he was going to become somebody he wasn’t for those two or three days. He needed to face these issues head on. He needed to face himself, too.

“I think it was a good decision. Even if it was only made to avoid being as miserable during my next heat as I was last time.”

Yoongi sighed at that depressing reality. He would never look forward to his heat, after experiencing what one felt like, but he felt something similar to relief flow through his veins at the thought of not being alone for the next one. Hopefully that would make as great a difference as Yoongi’s inner omega promised it would.

It was Namjoon’s turn to hum. “It was that bad last time?”

Again, Yoongi suspected Namjoon’s questions were originating from genuine curiosity rather than anything maleficent, so he answered it.

“You have no idea. I thought at first it would just be an uncomfortable few days, but it, ah, it ended up being really painful. I thought the worst of it had happened when I presented because, you know, I had physical organs move around during that, but apparently not.”

Yoongi had probably shared a little too much detail with Namjoon, but having no filter on was nice for once.

There was a delay in Yoongi getting a response, but he didn’t pay any attention to it. Namjoon was just being overly selective with how he phrased things, like always. There was no reason for
Yoongi to be fearful of his next few words.

“I’m sorry.”

Except he was.

“What are you sorry for, Joon?”

His response was immediate, but that didn’t mean he immediately understood Namjoon for saying it. There were dozens of things Namjoon could be sorry for, and Yoongi wanted to erase the vagueness that had encompassed their entire conversation. Everything was far too complicated already; Yoongi didn’t want to add misinterpretations from this discussion to his situation.

“I—” Namjoon began, but he cut himself off before he continued. Yoongi waited patiently in the stall for his reason. He couldn’t do much else.

“I’m sorry for trying to pull answers out of you.”

Yoongi snickered, but there was nothing funny about the apology. “You’re not the first.”

“To apologise?”

“To force answers out of me.”

Namjoon’s footsteps echoed through the small space. Yoongi hoped they were heading towards the door.

“Well, I’m sorry for that too.”

Yoongi heard the door handle to the bathroom swing with a disturbing creak, and he tried not to smile at the sound. Namjoon was going to leave him alone. He was going to leave Yoongi to his own devices.
He ended up smiling anyway.

“Hyung,” Namjoon addressed, and Yoongi compelled himself to listen to whatever his parting words were going to be.

“Just, please don’t forget that I’m here for you. That we’re all here for you. I wasn’t lying when I said that whatever is going on between you and Jeongguk is affecting the rest of us, so I need you to speak up when things get... difficult. I really need you to know that. Okay hyung?”

Yoongi barely had time to part his lips before Namjoon said his final statement.

“It’s alright to talk about these things with us.”

The older could sense Namjoon’s hesitance to leave. He was hovering in the doorway long after having opened it, but with a gentle sigh he finally left the bathroom, and Yoongi.

Yoongi didn’t expect to feel as relieved as he did.

He stood up from the toilet lid and shifted his feet on the tiles as he pulled out his phone. The time flickered on the lock screen, and thankfully it wasn’t too late in the afternoon. He could still do something productive with the hellish day he’d had so far.

His studio wasn’t too far from the level he was currently on, so he spontaneously decided to head there for the time being. Maybe he could send the edited version of that song off to Hoseok soon. He’d made quite a few adjustments to it since, and the beginnings of some lyrics had appeared since the dancer’s last visit. Yeah, he could definitely send off a portion of the song that night.

He knew he wasn’t going to return to the practise studio anytime soon. The tent in his jeans might have disappeared, but Jeongguk certainly hadn’t, and he wasn’t about to risk having three potentially disastrous interactions in one day by returning to their rehearsal.

So Yoongi shoved his phone back into his pocket and exited the stall with a kind of dreariness that came with constantly being on one’s toes. He was exhausted, frankly, from having to always smother his words and monitor his actions, but it wasn’t like there was much he could do about it.
Namjoon’s offer to open up was there, but there was no doubt in Yoongi’s mind that he would graciously pass it. He’d seen first hand what happened when he opened up to others, and whether or not Yoongi himself had confirmed anything that had been shared around about him, those rumours had still been spread. Whether Hoseok had brought his thoughts up to Namjoon because he wanted to talk about Yoongi’s behaviour with a friend or because he was concerned over a fellow member and felt obliged to bring it up with his leader didn’t matter, either. The information had still gotten around. Those things had still been said about him behind his back.

Yoongi couldn’t see how sharing anything personal with Namjoon would result in a different outcome.

He didn’t hate Hoseok for confiding to Namjoon. He imagined himself doing the exact same in his position. Rather, Yoongi hated the fact that Hoseok felt obliged to talk about Yoongi’s behaviour in the first place. Apparently, the severity of his emotions had required somebody to share his concerns with their leader, and Yoongi was partially ashamed of that. Hoseok shouldn’t have felt compelled to confess his worries to Namjoon, because he shouldn’t have been worrying over Yoongi at all. Yoongi was his hyung, and because of that it was Yoongi’s job to worry over Hoseok, not the other way around.

He felt disgraced in a way. Things never should have come to this.

Yet, here he was, running away from a rehearsal to escape the source of all his problems.

It was amusing to think that the same source provided Yoongi with most of his happiness, but he refused to dwell on that thought. It wasn’t that relevant in the grand scheme of things.

He arrived at his studio minutes later. He put in the passcode and pressed his shoulder against the door to open it, too tired to bother using the handle. The lights flickered on automatically, and Yoongi resisted the urge to sigh in relief when the door clicked shut behind him. He was finally alone, and he would be alone for as long as he wanted to be.

Yoongi was in ecstasy at the thought.

His legs moved on their own accord to the swivel chair in the middle of the studio, and he collapsed onto it with a great sigh of disbelief. It had been a long day, and Yoongi doubted he’d be very productive with any of his tracks that night but he was going to try editing them anyway. He needed to do something with his time to make up for not being productive at their earlier dance rehearsal.
While he booted up the system, he did his best to ignore the burning stare that wouldn’t leave his mind. Jeongguk’s eyes had been so hooded, and there had been something about his gaze that had convinced Yoongi there was more to Jeongguk’s appearance than simple acting.

Yoongi’s hand clenched into a fist the longer his thoughts remained on Jeongguk’s performance.

Why was he still thinking about it? Whatever had been in his gaze wasn’t real, and Yoongi knew it wasn’t real, so why was he still fantasising over it?

The track he’d slaved over for weeks now finally popped onto the screen, and Yoongi breathed out a tormented breath. He was nearly finished with this song. He was nearly there.

For the next four hours, he meticulously poured over every sound in that damned song and fixed every error that glared at him. He was now dynamic with his editing; he had been ever since he’d received advice from Hoseok on how to progress the song. It wasn’t often that wasted time ended up becoming time well spent, but Yoongi felt like this was one of those occasions. It was as if the song had done a full 180. It was marvellous, from a composer’s perspective, and miraculous from Yoongi’s own.

He’d thought for so long that this song had been a lost cause, but it had been brought out of the depths of incompletion and somehow, had been revived into something beautiful. It now boasted a graceful melody that coupled with a calm beat and a continuous rhythm, and Yoongi allowed the smallest of smiles to appear when he finished listening to the instrumental all the way through.

It was good. The song had feeling now, an irrevocable emotion about it, and Yoongi didn’t want to admit it but he knew exactly how that emotion had filtered into its sound. It seemed that Yoongi had always possessed the potential to complete this song, but he’d been hit with a barrier in the process of writing it. He’d since overcome that barrier, though, and it didn’t really matter how he overcame it.

He knew exactly what allowed him to overcome this barrier, but that didn’t mean he was going to acknowledge it to himself. No, there was no way he could do that. Why fan the flames to an inferno if the option to run from it was there?

Yoongi saved his progress and downloaded the instrumental before he could think twice about his decision. He wanted to hear Hoseok’s opinion on the finished product. His advice had been a pivotal part of the project, and Yoongi owed it to him to share the final result of his efforts.
It took a few seconds for the download to complete, but those few seconds were enough to make Yoongi doubt his choice. The file popped up on his phone and his finger hovered over the share button for far too long. He was going to share it. There were no lyrics yet to accompany the melody, so the song itself wasn’t deeply introspective yet.

So why did Yoongi feel like he was baring a part of his soul by sharing this with anybody?

He tapped the share button regardless. He needed to get over himself. It was a song, and it might hold personal meaning to him, but it didn’t hold meaning to anyone else. It was just a tune to anyone else.

Yoongi repeatedly told himself this as he sent the untitled file to Hoseok.

He quickly typed out *Thanks for the advice* underneath, and crossed his fingers that the others had since finished going through the choreography at the dance studio. He didn’t want them to hear it if he could help it. He only wanted to share it with Seokjin, Jimin, Taehyung and Jeongguk once the lyrics had been written, and he already knew from the buzzing in his mind that he would need Namjoon’s assistance with the lyrics. Some songs were like that, Yoongi found. Some songs simply begged others to place their experiences in its tune, and Yoongi would be a fool to deny the urge he felt to share these lyrics with Namjoon.

The message came up as read seconds after Yoongi sent the file. He hoped nobody was peaking over the younger’s shoulder as he typed out a reply, but Yoongi had learnt long ago that those kinds of things were well and truly outside of his control. He could only hope for things at the end of the day, and even then Yoongi knew sometimes that wasn’t enough.

He only had to look at everything that had happened earlier that day to find evidence to support his claim.

A text popped up from Hoseok’s profile, and Yoongi bit his thumb as he read it over.

*This sounds great hyung!!*

A breath he hadn’t realised he’d been holding released, and Yoongi felt so much more at ease all of a sudden. Hoseok’s approval shouldn’t mean anything to him, but it did. He was another composer, after all, and his opinion on musical subjects was just as valid as Yoongi’s own. He didn’t take the
praise lightly.

But then another message appeared underneath Hoseok’s previous one.

*What happened to make it sound so good? What changed from earlier??*

Static echoed through the room as Yoongi stared at the screen. He knew Hoseok was probably only asking these questions because he was genuinely curious, but a part of him wondered if Hoseok already knew the answer. Yoongi certainly knew the answer, but admitting it to himself was an entirely different matter.

He’d been avoiding these thoughts for as long as he could, but Hoseok, however subtle he was being about it, was not about to let him continue doing that. He was making him confront another fact it seemed, and Yoongi could no longer tell if that was a good or bad thing.

Jeongguk’s stare wouldn’t leave his goddamn mind, but a new memory snuck up on him the longer his eyes laid on the unanswered text.

The ghost of a gentle hand clutched at his back, and an even gentler gaze laid upon him. Music lulled in the background alongside other’s laughter, but he was trapped in his own little world. The stare Yoongi had received then was nothing like the stare he’d experienced later that day, but that made it all the more memorable. All the more meaningful.

Yoongi’s fingers hovered over the keys. Could he really write down his honest answer? It had been proved to Yoongi over and over again that he couldn’t trust others with his truths, but this was more than just a truth to Yoongi. This was a confession. This was a means of owning his own truth, and accepting it by first sharing it with others. It was the only solution Yoongi could come up with to move on from this realisation that shouldn’t mean anything to anybody but still meant all too much to him.

The words came naturally to Yoongi then. All he had to do was remember Jeongguk’s eyes on him.

He hesitated for only a moment when he saw his thoughts reflected back at him. He needed to get this off his chest. He needed to admit this to himself so he could move on from it. He needed to stop denying everything.
Yoongi scrunched his eyes up as he clicked ‘send’, but he did not regret his decision. He’d needed to admit it to himself eventually, so for now he could only be thankful that another obstacle had been navigated in his endeavour to get back to being his regular self.

As he shut the producing program down, the words he’d sent back rang loud and clear through his mind, but the best part about it was that he didn’t regret them. He didn’t regret admitting it.

He glanced once more at their conversation and memorised the words on the screen. Jeongguk’s soft smile echoed through his memories as he reread his answer, and a grin he didn’t try to hold back appeared in the darkness of the studio.

*I found my inspiration, Hobi. I’d been missing inspiration before, but now I know where to find it.*

His heart beat just a little faster as he tucked his phone back into his pocket.

Maybe he had experienced good luck that day. Maybe.

When the faint smell of lavender entered Yoongi’s nose, he knew something was very, very wrong.

“Jeongguk,” he asked, panic lacing his voice, “you’ve been taking your sweat reducing pills, right?”

The younger looked up from his phone and lowered his eyebrows at the question. “The ones that like, reduce my scent? Yeah. I’ve been taking them.”

Yoongi tried not to swear. He did, anyway.

“Why?” Jeongguk asked tentatively, and Yoongi’s nostrils flared as he easily picked up on the scent in the car again.

“I can smell you from here.”
They were on their way to the Olympic Stadium in Seoul, where they would be performing their next two back-to-back concerts, and Yoongi had already been stressed enough about surviving his next heat with Jeongguk without worrying about the thought of the younger’s rut coming on a little earlier than expected. He hoped the lavender that had begun to permeate the car was a sign Jeongguk’s rut was still days away, and not a matter of hours away instead.

They couldn’t afford for that to be the case. Literally thousands of people were counting on his rut and Yoongi’s heat coming on a day after the second concert finished, and they couldn’t just call a concert as big as this one off last minute. It was too large a hassle, and Yoongi knew that the two of them would be consumed by guilt afterwards if their concert schedules were affected by their rut and heat. They hadn’t bothered to inform their staff of their statuses, so Yoongi felt that any right they had to reschedule the concerts was lost the moment they decided to keep their secondary genders secret from the rest of their company.

Yoongi assumed Jeongguk felt similarly, but he couldn’t tell for sure. He just hoped for the best at this point, because everything felt like it was out of his control already and he hadn’t even felt his omega tug the strings of his mind yet.

He knew the moment that happened though, they wouldn’t have much time left to isolate the two of them from everybody else. Yoongi wanted to hug the ideal of independence for as long as he possibly could in front of Seokjin and his dongsaengs, so he was going to fight his instincts with everything he had until he and Jeongguk were alone.

What would happen after that though, Yoongi refused to think about.

He could worry about that later, when it became important. For now, he had to panic about the faint smell of lavender that Yoongi both rejected and welcomed into his senses.

Yoongi had let his thoughts trail so far down a beaten track that he’d forgotten Jeongguk was still in the same car as him. He brought his head up to face the younger, and he would be an idiot if he thought Jeongguk looked totally calm after hearing Yoongi’s worries. If anything, he looked more stressed than Yoongi felt, and that was a feat in itself considering how tightly wound Yoongi’s insides were.

“That’s normal though, right hyung?” Jeongguk asked the question this time, and while there was fear in his eyes there was also hope in his voice. Like he was expecting Yoongi to quench his worries about their upcoming performances.
Oh, how Yoongi wished that was the case.

“Kook, I, I don’t think it is. In the lead up to my last heat you could only smell my scent a couple of hours before I completely lost my shit.”

Jeongguk didn’t show much of a reaction to this other than the hand that moved to itch the junction of his neck and shoulder. Yoongi tried not to fixate on the spot as the maknae’s fingers traversed across his skin.

Then he hummed.

“Well, maybe it’s different for alphas?” Jeongguk argued, but he sounded like he was trying to convince himself too. “Like, maybe my scent gradually gets stronger in the lead up to my rut while yours might only get really obvious a day out from your heat. Or maybe I’m becoming more resistant to the drugs? That might be it.”

Yoongi appreciated the younger putting forward the possibility, but he knew it was only an attempt to divert their worries from the problem at hand.

At the very least, Jeongguk’s rut was steadily approaching them, and clearly neither of them felt prepared for it.

Yoongi nodded slowly, and moved on from the real issue with it. “Yeah, maybe.”

Minutes later, their driver parked in the underground staff parking for the stadium and shut the engine off, Yoongi seeing through the soundproof window separating them a hand that pointed to the open door on their left. That was their cue to leave.

Yoongi noted that both he and Jeongguk were frozen in the back seats of the car despite the hint.

He felt like there were still dozens of things left unsaid between them, but it was all too late to discuss any of it. They were deep in the throes of their issues now, and there was nothing they could do to get away from them. The same issues were latched onto the heels of their feet, and would continue to trip the two of them up until eventually, they both fell from the struggle of simply keeping their head up.
They were running a losing race against time, Yoongi realised, and as twisted as it was he wanted to smile at the fact. His life felt too sickly poetic to be real.

It was almost ironic that he, a lyricist felt this way. Too ironic.

“I need you to tell me if anything happens today, okay?”

The words tumbled out of Yoongi before he could properly process them. Since when had he been so concerned over Jeongguk?

Oh. Right. He’d become overly concerned over him the moment he fell for the stupid maknae. This wasn’t new information, so he didn’t understand why he still questioned these feelings whenever they arose.

Maybe some distant part of himself still couldn’t believe he’d fallen for the younger. He wouldn’t be surprised, considering how rarely he understood his own thoughts and emotions.

God, Yoongi needed to get out of his own mind more often. Jeongguk was looking at him funnily, and Yoongi couldn’t tell if that was because he’d dazed out of their conversation or because of what he’d asked the younger. Knowing Jeongguk, it was probably a mix of both.

Then, Jeongguk gifted Yoongi a small grin.

“Oh of course, hyung. Why wouldn’t I do that?”

When Jeongguk opened his door and hopped out of the car immediately afterwards, Yoongi swore his heart was beating erratically.

There was no doubt in Yoongi’s mind that it was embarrassing just how quickly Jeongguk had managed to wrap Yoongi around his little finger. It wasn’t even unusual anymore for Yoongi’s heart to lose its rhythm around Jeongguk. It was pretty much normal now.
As Yoongi followed Jeongguk out of the car, he briefly wondered if his heart would still lose its rhythm around the younger after his heat. Part of him did hope for that; the logical, sensible part of him, but a greater part of him didn’t.

That was the part Yoongi knew he would have trouble keeping in check over the coming hours.

The first thing Yoongi thought of when he entered the complex, was that this entire situation was far too similar to the last time Yoongi’s heat hit. They’d been in the public eye then too, and had been subject to other’s scrutiny for the entirety of their comeback stage because of their odd behaviour. Thankfully not many of their fans questioned a lot of the moments that had happened on stage, but Yoongi couldn’t be so sure they’d do the same the second time around.

For one, a concert lasted a lot longer than a comeback stage. There were more opportunities to screw up, and while Yoongi might not particularly notice any signs of his heat yet, the first sign of Jeongguk’s rut had already revealed itself.

How much time the two of them had left was questionable at best. Or maybe they’d already run out of time. Maybe they were on track for a repeat of what happened last time.

Or even worse; they were on track for a repeat of what happened backstage last time, in front of thousands of people this time.

Yoongi swallowed around the knot in his throat.

Namjoon, Taehyung and Jimin were already waiting in the lobby when Yoongi walked in, and he habitually took out his phone to waste some time while the last car containing Seokjin and Hoseok made its way to the stadium. They didn’t usually use multiple cars to get to their venues, but some higher-ups had thought it was necessary considering the lengths sasaengs in Korea often went to just to get a glimpse of their idols.

When Seokjin and Hoseok arrived minutes later, nobody needed to be told what to do next. Yoongi, alongside the other members, followed one of their staff personnel down a hallway that would probably lead them to a dressing room, and he wasn’t proven wrong when they opened a door to the room they were going to spend the next few hours in.

If anybody else smelt Jeongguk’s lavender wafting through the room, they certainly didn’t comment on it. Then again, Yoongi didn’t expect them to. He was an omega, he reminded himself,
so it was easier for him to smell the alpha. His senses were attuned to alpha’s scents, after all. Just as Jeongguk’s senses were attuned to omega’s scents.

“We should get our sound check out of the way before the stylists get here with our outfits for tonight,” Namjoon stated as he placed a bag of his on the ground. “They’re hoping to get us dressed in a different look tonight, so I’ve been told they’re going to need more time than usual for that.”

Yoongi nodded half-heartedly with the others and sat down on one of the many couches in the room. As much as he loved to perform, he knew from past experience that he did not particularly enjoy performing with heat symptoms. Maybe if the excessive sweating and thirst for water had been it, he might have been able to tolerate it, and if Yoongi was feeling generous he might have considered enduring the cramps as bearable too. However, the things that stripped away his own self control were ultimately the reasons he would never consider experiencing a heat tolerable.

It was the loss of control Yoongi experienced that made them unbearable, he’d discovered shortly after his first erection had hit him during his first heat. It was never just the cramps or the sex drive.

Hell, even the ability to carry children as a man paled in comparison to the lack of ability he had to control himself in heat. He realised his priorities were probably out of order but he didn’t care. His feelings were valid, and the way he thought about things meant something to him. That was all that had to matter.

“Hyung?”

Yoongi snapped out of his own daze and looked up to see Jimin smiling down at him gently. How long had Yoongi been staring out at space for?

“You all good?” Jimin asked innocently enough, but a hint of concern Yoongi couldn’t bypass was wrapped around the edges of his irises. Yoongi wasn’t foolish enough to ignore that look. Jimin wanted answers.

Yoongi smiled back. He wasn’t going to give them.

“Yeah, I’m fine.”
He looked around the room quickly to find out the others had already left for the stage, but that didn’t bother Yoongi. Jimin probably thought he’d finally managed to corner Yoongi, and the thought didn’t leave a bitter taste in his mouth like he thought it would. He wouldn’t be surprised if Jimin was simply concerned over Yoongi’s wellbeing, but a whisper through the back of his mind told him otherwise. It always told him otherwise.

He was getting better at ignoring it, though.

“Well,” Jimin began, but he bit his lip before he could continue. His eyes didn’t leave Yoongi’s once, and because of that decision Yoongi could see the emotions flittering through his eyes as clear as day. Jimin was easier to read than most, so Yoongi took great delight in devouring every change of his expression. He hadn’t felt this kind of power during a conversation in a long time.

An allusion of confusion crossed Jimin’s eyes momentarily before he straightened himself and stepped away from the older. The emotion had crossed his face so quickly Yoongi had had trouble identifying it at first, but when Jimin smiled at Yoongi once again he realised what it had been.

Regret. Jimin had regretted bringing this up with Yoongi.

“Let’s get out there already then. We’ve still got so much to do, right?”

This time, Yoongi felt like he was the victor in their fictional battle for information and privacy respectively. It wasn’t something Yoongi felt he was supposed to be proud of, but he was. If he was this close to his heat and he wasn’t acting submissive to others, that had to mean something. Yoongi hoped it did.

He smiled at Jimin again, but it was genuine this time. “Yep. Let’s get these checks out of the way so I can go back to catching up on sleep afterwards.”

When Jimin laughed at his statement, it was with his full body, and the mood in the room immediately lightened to something Yoongi could deal with. He realised Jimin cared about him, but perhaps he did so too fiercely sometimes.

Jimin was already halfway out the door when he replied to Yoongi. “Whatever you say, hyung.”

There was no malice in his tone, but that didn’t mean Yoongi wasn’t weary of it. Jimin had proven
to Yoongi before that he was sometimes too introspective for his own good, so Yoongi had grown to watch Jimin with a weary eye. It was almost natural now, for Yoongi to wait for Jimin’s words of concern.

It wasn’t as if Jimin had ill intentions. Really, his intentions were anything but. That didn’t mean though that Yoongi could turn a blind eye to it. He’d turned a blind eye to Hoseok before and look where that had ended up.

Everything was all about risk, Yoongi remembered as he stepped out onto the stage and saw thousands of empty seats that wouldn’t be empty for much longer. Every action of his carried a certain amount of risk, and it was up to him to decide what things were worth risking and what things weren’t.

These seats were going to be filled in a matter of hours. Yoongi’s reputation was going to be on the line in a matter of hours. Jeongguk’s reputation too, was going to be at risk that night. One wrong move by either of them would result in absolute chaos. That was a certainty Yoongi felt assured on.

Was performing on the same stage Yoongi was standing on worth that risk? Was it?

A figure standing by itself on the other side of the stage caught Yoongi’s eye. The body turned around slowly to look across the stage, and then Jeongguk was facing Yoongi with eyes that bore into his soul.

His eyes were blown wide, and his shoulders were slouched over considerably. Jeongguk looked like a shell of himself, a man who was collapsing in on himself, and Yoongi had never wanted more than in that exact moment to know just what was going through Jeongguk’s head.

It wasn’t often that the maknae showed this side of himself to anyone, so for him to do it on stage in front of all of their staff and group members meant something was very, very wrong.

Oh fuck. What if Jeongguk was already feeling the symptoms of his rut?

What if they’d already run out of time?

What if Jeongguk was seconds away from losing control?
Yoongi shuddered violently. Jeongguk would tell him if that was the case. Jeongguk shared that kind of information with him now. He’d told Yoongi earlier that he would.

But he hadn’t promised Yoongi that. He’d avoided the word ‘promise’ entirely.

Yoongi’s insides churned at the thought.

“Yoongi-ssi.”

A voice from his side brought his attention away from Jeongguk, and he tore his eyes away from the maknae’s to find one of their technicians holding an earpiece and attached microphone out for him.

“We’re running through mic tests now,” she explained curtly as she handed the mic and earpiece over. She then positioned herself behind Yoongi to place the communication pack on to the back of Yoongi’s pants.

The small disruption had been enough to divert Yoongi’s attention elsewhere. Jeongguk would tell Yoongi if there was something wrong. They’d learnt from their last heat and rut that they couldn’t keep hiding these things from each other. Unless they wanted a repeat of what happened last time, they needed to remain open with each other.

And yes, Yoongi was being a hypocritical fucker because of the amount of secrets he was still harbouring from Jeongguk, but they were hardly relevant to the current situation. They were simply insignificant secrets. Stupid thoughts. Crazy feelings, just like Jeongguk’s.

These feelings really needed to stop meaning something to Yoongi, before they ripped his and Jeongguk’s already tattered friendship to shreds.

The technician patted the equipment at Yoongi’s back once to ensure it was properly attached before leaving Yoongi, and then Yoongi’s distraction from his peril left him. He turned around to try and find Jeongguk on the other side of the stage, but he wasn’t there anymore.

Yoongi narrowed his eyes at the space Jeongguk had just been in. He’d probably left to complete
more audio checks with somebody, but this probability did nothing to reassure Yoongi’s conscience.

What if he’d left the stage to put some distance between him and Yoongi, because he didn’t want the older to figure something out?

What if Yoongi wasn’t the only one still keeping secrets?

Hands with a vice-like grip wrapped around Yoongi’s throat as he scanned the seats for the maknae. He needed to talk with the younger, and soon. It didn’t matter how tough Jeongguk thought he was. Yoongi had learnt the hard way from last time that whatever strength you thought you held ended up melting away in a matter of moments when your other half comes out to play. He needed to tell Jeongguk this.

Their reputations were on the line, for Christ’s sake. Their life’s work was dangling on a thin piece of string over a bottomless chasm. They’d held this string over the chasm before, and had barely managed to keep it away from the hungry abyss the last time their heat and rut had dawned on them.

Yoongi would do anything at this point to avoid letting that string snap over the chasm.

He would even confide to Jeongguk every single one of his useless thoughts and irrational feelings if it meant those things were preserved from other’s eyes. Because in all honesty, there were a lot worse people than Jeongguk in the world that Yoongi could imagine sharing that kind of information with. Telling Jeongguk any of it would be a favourable alternative to telling any journalists or hell, even telling his fan base.

Really, when his situation was put through that perspective, telling Jeongguk didn’t sound that bad. Not really.

It was almost a comforting thought, to get all of his toxic thoughts out of his head, but he didn’t allow himself to dwell on it. That would be too cruel.

They ran through a few sound checks with the microphones, and when Jeongguk was asked to test his equipment Yoongi spotted him at the outskirts of the indoor entertainment stadium. He was standing next to only one other staff member, who must have been double checking his earpiece was working properly because he left seconds after Yoongi spotted them.
Yoongi didn’t know how, but as soon as the technician left Jeongguk, he looked up and they locked eyes across the stage. He wasn’t sure due to the distance between them, but the maknae looked less nervous than he had been earlier. The reason for this remained a mystery to Yoongi. He’d seemed so... stressed before. It had been so out of character for him.

Before Yoongi’s thoughts could continue down that rabbit hole, Jeongguk took a small step forward and kept his eyes locked with Yoongi. Then, with hesitance no longer evident in his body language, he strode towards Yoongi with purpose in his walk. When he got closer to Yoongi, he finally noticed the uncertainty that lined his eyes too, but from a distance Yoongi could have easily mistaken him for being fine.

Every muscle in Yoongi’s body was tense. He didn’t know what to expect from Jeongguk. Maybe he was about to confide to Yoongi about how close his rut actually was, or maybe he was just here to call off their agreement all together. Yoongi wouldn’t exactly be opposed to that suggestion.

No, wait. He couldn’t think that way. He needed to share his heat with Jeongguk otherwise he would never grow accustomed to his new body and his new status and his new feelings and every other new thing Yoongi couldn’t bother listing. He never knew it would be this difficult to preserve his own image alongside his and Jeongguk’s friendship, but those goals were proving to be so much harder to accomplish than Yoongi could have ever imagined.

Jeongguk looked down at his feet for a moment, the ghost of the teenager he’d once been hovering over his aura, but then he straightened his posture and faced Yoongi with a caring gaze that reminded Yoongi of the man he’d since become.

“Hyung, you told me earlier to tell you when anything happens, and... something has. Something’s happened to me.”

Yoongi took a step towards Jeongguk and grabbed him by his shoulders, trying to make his concern for the younger as obvious as possible. A wave of lavender, still faint though, reached his nostrils but he didn’t pay any attention to it. He needed to hear this. He was beyond grateful that Jeongguk had approached him like he said he would, but it would mean nothing if he didn’t tell Yoongi why. Yoongi needed to know, and Jeongguk needed to speak up.

When Yoongi saw the subtle bobble of Jeongguk’s Adam’s Apple, he realised the younger knew this too. With that, the trust Yoongi had in Jeongguk amplified just a little; enough to make Yoongi reconsider some of his past decisions.
Then, Jeongguk took in a deep breath and locked his sincere orbs onto Yoongi’s.

“I can’t get enough of your scent hyung and it’s been— it’s been driving me a little bit crazy,” Jeongguk admitted with a slight twitch of his nose. “And I know this is a lot to ask because we’re in public and we don’t really do this and I’ve never asked you about this before but, can I...”

Jeongguk took in one last breath.

“Can I please scent you? Right now?”

Chapter End Notes

Hello everybody! I hope you all enjoyed this chapter <3

It might not feel like it, but this fic is going to come to an end soon. I’ve become so attached to writing about these boys that I’ll most likely centre my next fanfic on them too, and I do have a few ideas in mind! I’m going to focus on finishing this story first though, because I don’t have the mental capacity to write two things at once 😔

Thank you to everybody who’s read this far along btw! And thank you also to everybody who’s left kudos and/or comments for me. Your support really makes my day Have a great day/night wherever you are!
Yoongi did his best not to gape at Jeongguk. It was very difficult.

“Right now?” Yoongi echoed, even though he knew Jeongguk had already answered this.

Jeongguk didn’t seem to mind providing clarification though. “Yeah, right now. Right here, right now.”

He knew he shouldn’t, but Yoongi looked around to see if their exchange was being watched. It shouldn’t matter if other people were watching them, but Yoongi thought it mattered. Both of them were being scrutinised by curious eyes, and while Yoongi couldn’t see those eyes on him now he couldn’t risk it. The five of them knew Yoongi’s heat and Jeongguk’s rut were quickly approaching, so Yoongi knew they were going to be extremely vigilant for the next few days.

He’d already taken away from his conversation with Jimin earlier that the dancer was keeping an eye on him for the indefinite future. On top of this, he knew Namjoon and Hoseok were at the very least suspicious of Yoongi’s mindset, and were already walking down a trail that would lead them to the truth of Yoongi’s feelings. Yoongi needed to be methodical now more so than ever. He needed to be careful. Responsible, considering just how easy it was for either him or Jeongguk to lose all of their self-control in a matter of moments.

He could forgive Jeongguk for approaching him with a request like this. He’d experienced the urge to hold the alpha close before, the need to bury his own mint scent amidst the lavender. So he could forgive Jeongguk for wanting to satisfy his urges while he still possessed total control over his own thoughts and emotions. Yoongi could understand why he came to his hyung like he did, because his urges were a perfectly reasonable excuse for his behaviour.

The thing was, Yoongi didn’t have an excuse to let Jeongguk to scent him.

The only reasonable one he could think of was to help Jeongguk out with his urges, but that excuse was hardly a reason. The other members would expect him to be the responsible one out of the two of them. The four year age gap was meant to mean something in their eyes.

Yet, Yoongi already knew what his decision was going to be. He’d known the moment Jeongguk
had asked him.

“We can’t do it here.”

Jeongguk’s eyes widened marginally, like he hadn’t expected that response at all but was trying his best not to show it. He was too considerate for his own good. The corner of Yoongi’s lips tugged into a brief smile before he glanced around the stadium once again. Where could they go?

An idea dawned on Yoongi. “The dressing room will be empty for a while.”

The younger’s nose twitched again. Yoongi couldn’t imagine what kind of urges he was feeling already, while he himself was still unscathed from the effects of a heat. He prayed that would be the case for the next two days.

Yoongi whispered his next words despite their lack of audience. “Let’s go back to the dressing room and go to one of the stalls.”

The words were cascading out of his mouth, like a waterfall unable to be contained, but he didn’t mind as much as he thought he should. Thankfully, Jeongguk didn’t seem to mind either.

“Uh, yeah. Yep, let’s— let’s go there.”

Yoongi almost laughed at Jeongguk’s expression as they crept along the sides of the stage and disappeared beneath the platform. The maknae looked like he couldn’t believe his luck. His eyes were wide, and a disbelieving smile was creeping up his face.

When Jeongguk’s eyes caught Yoongi staring, the smile broadened slightly.

Yoongi didn’t look away. Well, how could he? With that smile, Yoongi might as well hand his feelings over to the younger. He was fighting a losing battle at this point, but strangely enough Yoongi didn’t particularly care.

He’d agreed to help Jeongguk out, hadn’t he? And he wasn’t stupid enough to believe he’d agreed to let Jeongguk scent him just because he wanted to help him out. There were other reasons for his
decision, other selfish reasons he wasn’t willing to disclose that made guilt churn deep in his stomach.

But those reasons didn’t matter, because they were already out of the stadium and back down that same corridor that would lead them to their dressing room. Faintly Yoongi remembered Namjoon saying something half an hour ago about their sound checks this time being shorter than usual, but it was barely a pressing thought. It just meant Jeongguk had to scent him quickly before somebody either noticed their absence and suspected something, or walked into the dressing room to start trying on wardrobes for their performances that night.

Neither option was all that enticing, so Yoongi promised himself to allow Jeongguk all of five minutes to sate his instincts before returning to the stage. Any longer than that was sure to draw unnecessary attention, and hopefully five minutes would be more than enough for Jeongguk anyway. Yoongi assumed he was still in the early throes of his rut, as no other obvious symptoms had appeared in the past few hours, so maybe Jeongguk wouldn’t even need a minute of Yoongi’s time before his urges were satisfied. Logically, it made sense to Yoongi.

So he clung onto this logic as they came to their dressing room, and gently opened the door to an uncertain future.

There were couches and seats throughout the dressing room, but both of them knew those places were inadequate for what they were about to do. If anybody were to enter the room, they would see the pair immediately and Yoongi couldn’t stomach having to defend his and Jeongguk’s decisions this close to their heat and rut. Other people couldn’t judge them for their choices. They weren’t in their situation.

But he knew they would judge them, and criticise them for their actions, so they had to hide from them. It was only sensible, really. They were being cautious.

Jeongguk took the lead and walked to the back of the dressing room, where a few mobile felt walls sat obscuring a section of the room. This would usually be where they were expected to change their clothes before a performance, but they all knew each other well enough to not bother using it anymore. They all changed in the same room nowadays, so when Jeongguk walked into the secluded section butterflies flittered through Yoongi’s stomach. Nobody was going to wander in here. They would be perfectly alone in here.

Yoongi followed Jeongguk inside without hesitation.

He wasn’t about to make a mistake, that he was certain about. He wanted to do this. Jeongguk was
never going to find out why he was agreeing to let him scent him, so Yoongi saw no harm in letting on he was following Jeongguk inside for different reasons. So what if he craved for Jeongguk to touch him intimately? So what if his feelings were interfering with his ability to make good judgements? Jeongguk was never going to know, so there was no problem for Yoongi to worry about.

The ghost of a smile haunted his lips.

Jeongguk was facing Yoongi when he entered, and his eyes immediately fixed themselves on Yoongi. There was that confidence again Yoongi wasn’t used to. It suited him; this mature aura Jeongguk carried. If suited him so well.

The maknae licked his lips. “Hyung, I just need to ask... You’re sure you want to do this?”

The consideration in his tone threw Yoongi off guard. He was fairly sure of his choice coming into the secluded room, but was he still so sure now that Jeongguk was asking him to confirm it?

Yes. Yes he was.

“I’m sure.”

There was no need for any other words. Yoongi was sure, and that was that. Judging by the nervous smile Jeongguk gave him, he knew it too.

“Okay. Alright.”

Jeongguk held his stare for a few seconds, and Yoongi waited in anticipation of what was about to happen. Jeongguk seemed to hesitate then for a moment before taking a small step forward, and then he took another and another until there was no space left to close between them.

Yoongi looked up into the maknae’s eyes, and tried to imagine this happening under different circumstances. He pretended Jeongguk was looming over him because he loved him, and wanted to show that devotion to Yoongi purely because he wanted to. He imagined in his little fantasy that the hand that came to rest at the small of his back was there because Jeongguk treasured his presence and wanted to hold him close for as long as he possibly could, and Yoongi beamed simply at the thought of it.
In reality, Jeongguk beamed back too.

“Thank you so much for this, hyung,” Jeongguk whispered into the space that was their own, and Yoongi saw the twitch in his nose as he leant down to his level but dreamed Jeongguk loved his minty scent outside of his rut. He dreamed they were standing in Jeongguk’s dorm, and he dreamed they had a choice of three beds to lay down on before they began properly scenting each other, properly displaying their love and affection for each other.

Yoongi pretended this was happening sometime else, somewhere else, and with that he was transported to his own small utopia.

Jeongguk nudged his nose against the junction of Yoongi’s neck and shoulder, and Yoongi couldn’t contain the hum that came from the sensation. Jeongguk’s nose was moving along his collarbone, forming its own trail across the skin of Yoongi’s chest, and Yoongi struggled to stay in his own fantasy when his reality was so much more exciting. A rumble reverberated through the body that was beginning to lean into Yoongi, and the omega didn’t need any other cue to tilt his head for his alpha.

A flood of satisfaction overcame Yoongi when Jeongguk growled into the base of his neck, and a whimper nearly escaped Yoongi at the sound. He’d satisfied his alpha, and that was his purpose. He’d fulfilled part of his purpose. He practically collapsed into his alpha’s hold at that information. He had to continue pleasing his alpha. He had to be the perfect omega for his dear alpha, his dear Jeongguk.

The hand at the small of his back grasped him passionately. Yoongi smiled in ecstasy as the alpha’s other hand came to rest at the back of his head, and there it cradled Yoongi’s hair with a delicacy Jeongguk had never treated him with before. The delicacy wasn’t unwanted, however. It was craved.

Yoongi craved it, and he craved his alpha’s care desperately.

The lavender that had barely been present in the room earlier had pervaded every single sense of Yoongi’s since. Yoongi drank the scent up greedily as his alpha continued digging his nose into the crook of Yoongi’s neck, but the movements had lost their relaxed touch.

There was a desperation to Jeongguk’s movements now, and Yoongi revelled in it. He knew he was soaked in his alpha’s lavender scent, and he knew the face that was pressed to his scent gland
was there because his own mint scent was irresistible. He’d successfully drawn in his alpha’s attention.

And he was willing to do anything to keep it.

He had to please him. It was his job. A primitive part of himself that he didn’t yet understand glowed whenever the alpha showered him in love and attention, and he couldn’t simply ignore this part of himself. It had a right to happiness, just as any other part of him did, so he chased after his joy while he could. He tipped his head back for Jeongguk’s lips, and he breathed broken breaths as his alpha placed weightless kisses along the edge of his ruffled shirt collar.

He was chasing after his euphoria while he could, and from the sudden desperation in Jeongguk’s touches Yoongi could tell he was too.

Yoongi was enjoying this under the pretence of helping Jeongguk out, but he couldn’t tell if the same explanation applied to Jeongguk. It was all too possible every one of his actions was being carried out by simple instincts and urges rather than feelings.

But Yoongi didn’t really want to think about any of that. He currently had Jeongguk’s lips pressed to his skin, and that had to mean something.

That something was enough for Yoongi’s omega.

Jeongguk shifted his position and pressed his entire body against the omega’s, and Yoongi docilely obeyed the unspoken order. He dragged his feet across the floor as he stepped backwards, and when his back pressed against one of the felt walls containing their affair a shiver ran up his spine. Jeongguk had him cornered, and Yoongi couldn’t imagine himself ever wanting anything else.

He’d submitted himself to his alpha the moment Jeongguk’s nose had been allowed to touch his skin, but this was a different kind of submission Yoongi was displaying. He wasn’t just an equal in their situation anymore; he was a lesser. He wasn’t controlling what happened to him anymore. He was giving the reigns over to his alpha, and he was doing it willingly.

Jeongguk must have realised the shift in power, because he pulled away from Yoongi’s body long enough to gaze into the omega’s eyes. He was curious, from the way his head tilted ever so slightly, but he definitely wasn’t against the change in dynamics. Yoongi could’ve laughed from the eagerness Jeongguk was trying to hide if he wasn’t so obsessed with getting the alpha’s lips
back on his skin.

Jeongguk’s eyes narrowed as he examined Yoongi, and the hands still holding on to Yoongi’s hair and back tightened as his gaze focused elsewhere. Yoongi grinned in anticipation as the alpha made no attempt to disguise the eyes that dragged themselves over the rest of Yoongi’s body,

A guttural sigh left Yoongi at the pure want in Jeongguk’s gaze, but the sigh’s audibility was nothing like the groan that escaped him when teeth grazed the scent gland on his neck.

It was fucking euphoric. Yoongi clawed at the felt wall behind him for purchase, and more groans escaped him as Jeongguk dragged his teeth tantalisingly across Yoongi’s collarbone. The omega prayed the alpha would live up to the mood he’d created. They couldn’t just dive this far into the ocean and not reach their paradise. That wasn’t a future the omega wanted to sign up for. Yoongi wanted security. He wanted domesticity. The omega wanted exactly what his more rational counterpart wanted, except he wanted it now and wasn’t stupid enough to play games with a very capable alpha.

Yoongi grabbed the back of Jeongguk’s head and shoved it towards his scent gland. He was going to get what he wanted, and he was going to make it very clear to the alpha just what that was.

It was a mutual want, after all.

The alpha’s breaths traversed across Yoongi’s breastbone enticingly. Then, agonisingly slowly, the alpha widened his jaw to place the tips of his teeth against the swollen scent gland Yoongi knew was expelling near toxic amounts of his mint scent. Oh god, Yoongi could taste their future on his skin. He could feel Jeongguk’s desire through his jeans, could see Jeongguk’s devotion through his hooded gaze, but the best part was the love.

Yoongi could feel Jeongguk’s love for him in that moment, and the omega didn’t bother considering where this love came from because it was love all the same. It didn’t matter to the omega where it came from. If love was there, then the omega would bathe in it.

He wondered briefly if his alpha ever thought the same.

Wait, fuck. His alpha. That wasn’t right. That wasn’t fucking right.
The pressure Jeongguk applied onto his teeth amplified until Yoongi could feel his skin bruising at the bite, until the muscle around Jeongguk’s teeth cried out at the pain—

“Stop stop stop stop Jeongguk, Jeongguk stop right now, right fucking now!”

Yoongi shoved the alpha away, and while he could have trusted the maknae to pull away in time he hadn’t. He hadn’t trusted him. He couldn’t. Not after an innocent request to scent him had turned into a near mating.

Jeongguk’s eyes were a little unfocused, still probably caught up in a reality that could have been. Yoongi glowered at him.

He knew Jeongguk had previously had trouble containing his urges, but he hadn’t expected that trouble to create an event as cataclysmically close to devastation as this one had been.

He didn’t dare throw all of the blame at Jeongguk this time, though. He’d learnt over the past couple of months that he had his own shortcomings to address if he was ever going to transition into a happier period in his life, and those shortcomings certainly needed to be addressed right now.

“I’m so fucking sorry Jeongguk, just... shit. I’m so sorry.”

The maknae blinked at him blearily, and Yoongi knew the feeling well. He could have been looking in a mirror, if he’d just orgasmed and was still floating around in his own little high. He knew the expression intimately, and he could relate to it and the struggles that recently came with it due to his rare status.

That understanding was what made the moment Jeongguk finally came back to Earth all the more heart-wrenching.

“I— oh god. Why are you apologising? I just, I practically just f-forced myself on you!”

Yoongi didn’t miss that stutter of Jeongguk’s.
“Don’t you fucking start this. You didn’t force yourself on me, you weren’t doing anything of the sort—”

“Hyung, you can’t just forgive me for this! I wouldn’t forgive myself for this, for Christ’s sake!”

“Stop right fucking there. I played a part too, okay? I let you come onto me. I let you continue even when I shouldn’t have, so we’ve both done this to ourselves.”

Jeongguk’s eyes were glassy as he stared at Yoongi in disbelief, like he couldn’t quite process what he was saying. Maybe he couldn’t. Yoongi was feeling a little shocked by his own words, if he was being honest.

He was used to not being the voice of reason when issues concerning him and Jeongguk arose, but it seemed that on the one occasion Jeongguk couldn’t manage a situation Yoongi was miraculously able to. It could be because Yoongi finally decided to grow up, or it could be because the look of utter devastation Jeongguk was giving him compelled him to take charge of something for once. Regardless, here he was, being the voice of reason simply for Jeongguk’s sake.

Yoongi willed the tears in Jeongguk’s eyes to disappear. Jeongguk wasn’t meant to be taking the blame for this, because he certainly wasn’t solely responsible for their screw up.

It was a joint effort. It was both of their faults, and the quicker Yoongi made that clear the quicker Yoongi knew he’d erase those tears of Jeongguk’s.

Jeongguk sniffed. “I still took a-advantage of you, for fuck’s sake. I-I did exactly what I’d been—been terrified of doing to you since I found out you were an omega.”

A shudder rocked Yoongi’s world. Jeongguk rarely swore. When he did though, it was because he had a reason to, or at the very least felt like he had a reason to. Yoongi knew on this occasion the latter was true, but he didn’t know how to convince the younger of this. He was adamant it seemed, to take responsibility for their close call.

Yoongi knew that in a different time, he would have happily allowed Jeongguk to take the blame if it meant his own image remained unscathed. Those days weren’t even that far behind him, if he was being realistic. He would have stepped back from the situation and allowed things to run their natural course, but he...
He couldn’t do that anymore. He wouldn’t do that ever again.

Jeongguk had been forced to grow up far too soon, and a man had since taken his place to make up for the pressures of performing. Yoongi could see that now, and he could see how his own personal development had stagnated in comparison. Sure, Yoongi might have achieved a lot and he might have been productive with his work, but his friendships had suffered as a result.

His friendship with Jeongguk had suffered especially with the reveal of their new statuses. He’d practically blocked the younger out of his world because he was, in Yoongi’s eyes, a threat to his secret omega status at the time, but Yoongi could easily tell now that that had been one of the greatest mistakes of his life.

Jeongguk would have understood his situation better than anybody else, and yet he hadn’t been the one to first find out about it. Jeongguk would have listened to his problems with an empathetic ear, yet he wasn’t given the opportunity to comfort Yoongi because Yoongi had denied him of it. Jeongguk had always been an optimist, but Yoongi had so often rejected his presence that he’d dared to question why his world felt so bleak and empty.

Jeongguk had always been the solution to Yoongi’s never-ending list of problems, and somehow Yoongi wasn’t blind to this anymore. He could see the answer to his issues clearly now, and it was standing right in front of him with tears in his eyes. Yoongi had caused those tears.

So Yoongi was going to get rid of them.

“Jeongguk, I get where you’re coming from, I really fucking do. But... it’s not true. You did not take advantage of me, and whether you believe it or not everything we did was consensual. Okay?”

There were no tear tracks on the maknae’s cheeks yet, so Yoongi took that as a small victory. He continued, albeit slowly.

“I should have controlled myself better too. I should’ve had a better grip on myself. But don’t you dare go around thinking everything that just happened was your fault.”

Truer words had never been spoken, and Yoongi felt like adding that on too but Jeongguk’s own words cut his thoughts in half.
“That hardly matters though. I was the one who asked if I could scent you, and you should have been able to help me out without having to worry about me m... m-mating you.”

There was no emotion in his tone, and Yoongi’s heart fractured into small fragments at the sound. Jeongguk was beyond simply feeling responsible for their mistakes. He was devastated over them.

Their choices had ripped a hole through Jeongguk’s usually sensible demeanour, and all that was left was this hallow replication of the man Yoongi was trying to heal. It was clear Jeongguk’s guilt was going to eat him alive. Yoongi knew what the problem was at least. The issue, however, was convincing Jeongguk he wasn’t the only one responsible for their near miss.

Except he didn’t know how to convince Jeongguk.

_He didn’t know how to convince Jeongguk._

Yoongi’s eyes widened when Jeongguk backed away from him.

“I just. I need to clear my head before I do something again,” Jeongguk stammered as he neared the exit to their small felt wall paradise. Yoongi stared back at him, frozen against the wall, for all of two seconds before he made an attempt to approach the younger.

Jeongguk had known he was going to do this though. He’d already run to the dressing room’s exit and left the older’s presence before he’d been able to call out his name.

“Kookie...” Yoongi drawled, but it was too late. Jeongguk was gone.

So was every ounce of Yoongi’s self control, apparently.

He knew he was emotionally vulnerable because he was an omega, but the sense of distress that overcame him in that moment had never drowned him so _completely_ before.

Yoongi’s vision blurred, and fat, unwanted tears streamed down his cheeks moments later.
Why did he have to screw up every single thing he touched?

He should’ve seen all the red flags that had been waving in his face and heeded their warnings. He should have rejected Jeongguk’s request, he should have preserved his own sense of control and dignity and composure.

He should have done so many things, but because Yoongi was Yoongi, he’d thought he could get away it. He’d believed he could be selfish, and he’d thought for a moment that he could pretend he was living out his own fantasy in reality.

Yoongi should have known well before things began crumbling down that he couldn’t pretend things were perfect forever. Because living in that fantasy, even if it had only been for a moment, had permanently made his reality even harder to bear, and it was all because Yoongi couldn’t do anything for anyone that didn’t benefit him.

The bottom line was, he’d been selfish, and he was suffering every goddamn consequence he could think off the top of his head because of it.

God, Jeongguk had also taken the blame for Yoongi’s opportunism. So it wasn’t bad enough that Jeongguk felt responsible for nearly mating the two of them for life, he also felt guilty because he thought his request for help was the reason Yoongi had agreed to let the maknae scent him.

Was it even possible for Yoongi to become a shittier person than he already was? He didn’t feel like it was.

A clock on the wall told him he had only a few minutes left before the sound check would likely wrap up, but the tears he desperately wiped from his eyes over and over again just kept coming. Fuck him. Fuck his emotions. Fuck his lack of self control, fuck his unpredictable moods and uncontrollable emotions.

Fuck his omega status, and fuck Jeongguk while he was at it too. Fuck him for destroying where the centre of his universe used to lie and fuck him for shifting Yoongi’s centre to the maknae.

Yoongi wailed softly into the silence, and he didn’t know why he thought that would help because it really didn’t. It just made him feel even more pathetic for causing the ridiculous mess he’d created.
At least he wasn’t about to have a panic attack. That was the only good thing Yoongi could focus on.

He knew he still looked pathetic though, and he couldn’t let anybody see him like this. He had a show to put on later, and he had to match the image he’d projected of himself for years to his audience that night.

The sniffing mess he was now was not the man millions of people payed hundreds of dollars to see. He couldn’t be seen like this, reduced to a blubbering mess because of a single man’s words and actions.

So Yoongi ran too, and he hoped Jeongguk hadn’t locked himself in the same bathroom stall he was hoping to hide in.

As he locked the stall’s door, he bitterly thought to himself that he would have happily chosen to hide in a bathroom if it was because he had an erection like last time rather than whatever the hell his reason was now. Things were a lot simpler weeks ago, even if they sure didn’t feel like it. Yoongi could see that now, with hindsight.

He can also see that being selfish was the greatest mistake he’d ever made in his life, but knowing this was so helpful after the damage had already been done. Yoongi, in short, had ruined things royally. He’d practically obliterated his friendship with Jeongguk, that was for sure, and he’d definitely damaged the group’s dynamic for the night.

If only he’d taken into account all of the repercussions that were bound to kill them before he’d agreed to let Jeongguk scent him. If only.

Then, Yoongi realised the black cloud was still only looming over him. The full damage from the storm had yet to settle in, and Yoongi had no clue how he could possibly prepare for it. The gentle drizzle he’d experienced earlier was going to be nothing compared to this monsoon.

Because Yoongi had already agreed to spend his heat with Jeongguk. He’d already agreed.

He was going to spend his heat with Jeongguk, and if their little scheme from earlier acted as any hint then Yoongi knew his neck wouldn’t remain unmarred for much longer. He was going to lose control of himself again, but he wasn’t going to regain any semblance of independence or self acceptance by the end of it.
Instead, he was going to gain a bite mark on the side of his neck. A bite mark that was going to last the rest of his life.

What the fuck had he been thinking?

He couldn’t spend his heat with Jeongguk. The maknae was still hours away from his rut, yet the alpha within him had the ability to appear at a moment’s notice. He’d clearly seen that from earlier. All it had taken was a proper whiff of Yoongi’s mint scent and Jeongguk had been a goner for the omega. Just like how Yoongi had lost himself in Jeongguk’s hold all those months ago backstage.

The conclusion Yoongi reached left a horrid taste in his mouth, but it had to be made.

He couldn’t trust Jeongguk to remain in control anymore.

Not unless he wanted his entire life ruined.

Their friendship, whatever it had been before Jeongguk scented him, was now in tatters. Yoongi couldn’t imagine how difficult it was going to be to communicate with the younger during the next few hours, if they even communicated at all. He doubted Jeongguk would go out of his way to talk to him, since he still somehow considered all of this to be his fault, so Yoongi could already picture the younger’s guilt wrapping around his throat.

Jeongguk would never forgive himself for what had happened, Yoongi knew, so Yoongi needed to convince him it was alright to share the blame. He needed to be the responsible one this time, the one with clarity in their reasoning and a calm composure to their argument.

Yoongi needed to act like the hyung for once.

He would do that later, though. He would do that when he felt like he was physically capable of talking to somebody without bursting into tears seconds later.

The tears were gradually slowing their descent, but they weren’t doing it quick enough. Yoongi could already see the other’s confusion when they opened the dressing room, expecting to see Yoongi since he’d disappeared from the stage earlier, only for him to not be there. He didn’t dare
think about where Jeongguk had run off to, though. That thought hurt too dearly to prod over.

He should have done more to keep Jeongguk from leaving, because the mess they’d created was all because of such a minor issue of communication. They both needed to speak up when it counted, and Yoongi in particular needed to say exactly what was on his mind more often. He needed to stop bottling things up, and he really needed to stop thinking that this bottling up was helping him.

It wasn’t. It wasn’t doing anything to help him.

But he kept doing it anyway. He kept suppressing his thoughts and feelings, and he kept on remaining silent until that same silence lashed out against the people he cared about; the person he cared most about.

His silence during their scenting had hurt Jeongguk more than any other insults could have, because now Yoongi knew the maknae thought that silence had meant nothing more than acceptance. Jeongguk thought that silence meant complacency, and resignation.

Yoongi should have said anything to convince Jeongguk of the opposite, because the opposite was the only true thing about the rapper’s feelings.

He’d embraced the affection because he’d wanted to, and he’d treasured every moment the younger’s lips had pressed against his skin because he’d felt loved. He’d wanted Jeongguk’s actions to mean something more, but because they hadn’t Yoongi had dissolved himself into his own fantasy.

This absorption had created his complacency in reality, and Yoongi couldn’t express how miserable he was over that single decision. He couldn’t comprehend how his own selfishness had interfered so rashly with his friendship with Jeongguk.

So he couldn’t spend his heat with Jeongguk. All of the original reasons he’d had for spending it with the younger were, to put it simply, selfish, and Yoongi couldn’t allow that selfishness to further ruin what they already had. So what if he wanted to conquer his fears of losing self-control, or if he wanted to finally accept the fact that he was a male omega who was emotionally vulnerable at all the wrong times?

He couldn’t keep his word and spend his heat with Jeongguk, because to do that would mean undermining everything he’d learnt from Jeongguk’s scenting. He couldn’t keep ignoring these
obvious warning signs, and he certainly couldn’t keep risking his and Jeongguk’s friendship for something as minor as relief for a couple of days.

Every single risk that came with sharing their heat and rut outweighed any benefit Yoongi could think of, and when things were put in that perspective it was so... easy for Yoongi to make a decision.

He just wouldn’t ever share his heat with Jeongguk.

It was better for them both that way. So much better.

The tears stopped flowing down Yoongi’s cheeks. His thoughts stilled for a peaceful moment, and it was wonderful. Maybe he was finally being the mature one out of the two of them.

A small, harsh laugh escaped his lips.

He hoped he was, anyway.

~

“Where’s Jeongguk?” Namjoon asked a staff member, his eyes frantically searching the backstage crew for the missing maknae. The staff member replied that they currently did not know the maknae’s location, but that they were working on it. He also instructed Namjoon and the other members to stay put, as the crew didn’t want to go searching for everybody else around the stadium once Jeongguk had been found.

Yoongi shrugged when the leader’s eyes landed on him. His and Jeongguk’s little escapade hadn’t been as subtle as they would have liked it to be, because as soon as Yoongi had left the bathroom and returned to the main stage, every single member’s eyes had glanced in his direction. The only pair that were missing were Jeongguk’s, but Yoongi hadn’t questioned it. Jeongguk had been distressed earlier, and upset with himself, so Yoongi had understood his need for solidarity.

The group’s need for his presence was greater, though. They needed Jeongguk to perform, and he still hadn’t arrived. They only had minutes before they were due to step out on stage, and from the frantic eyes of their leader Yoongi could tell they had no idea what the younger was doing.
So that was why Namjoon’s gaze had settled on him. He assumed Yoongi knew something about Jeongguk’s disappearance, or he suspected Yoongi was the reason Jeongguk wasn’t with them.

It didn’t surprise Yoongi that Namjoon was the first to notice the correlation. Namjoon had known him longest out of all of the members, and he was aware of whatever the hell was going on between him and Jeongguk.

He was also ridiculously intelligent, so Yoongi wasn’t that surprised Namjoon practically already knew what was going on.

What surprised Yoongi, however, were the other eight eyes that were staring just as expectedly at him.

Yoongi squared his shoulders. “I don’t know where he is.”

“You were the last person to talk to him, though,” Hoseok commented.

“And you were the last person to see him,” Jimin added.

Seokjin crossed his arms then, and Yoongi felt like shrivelling under their gazes.

“I still don’t know where he is,” Yoongi defended, but his words sounded weak to his own ears. “He could be anywhere, doing anything. It’s none of my business.”

Numerous sighs surrounded Yoongi, and Yoongi tried to not think about what they implied.

“Of course it’s your business, hyung!” Hoseok argued, and everybody knew that when Hoseok was angry, he was angry for a reason. “We’re minutes away from starting and Jeongguk’s no where in sight. He knows we rely on each other to do these things, yet he’s not here.”

Yoongi’s hands formed fists.
“So?”

“So Jeongguk must have a reason for not being here, and you know it!”

Yoongi’s arm sprung up to point at Hoseok, because what exactly did Hoseok hope to gain from this argument? Namjoon though, ever the saint, stepped in between them.

“Even if he did, shouting’s not going to get us anywhere.”

Hoseok’s mouth clamped shut, but Yoongi didn’t care about the basic of manners.

“Like you would fucking know.”

Yoongi watched Taehyung duck his head at the insult, and from the corner of his eye he saw Seokjin fiddle with the sleeves of his suit. He’d made them uncomfortable, apparently.

Oh. Oh.

He’d just needlessly insulted Namjoon.

God, he really did just do that.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean that.”

Namjoon looked at him blankly.

“I really didn’t. It was unnecessary.”

“I—” Namjoon began, but for one of the few times in his life he appeared lost for words. “It’s not that I don’t believe you hyung, I just. I didn’t expect you to apologise for it. Like, at all.”
Yoongi tried to not feel offended about that.

“Like, the last time you were nearing your heat you were cold and snappy, so I didn’t think you’d be, well, sensible this close to your heat.”

A beat of silence crossed the air, but it was destroyed by an exaggerated gasp that Taehyung let out.

“Wait. What if the reason Jeongguk’s not here is because his rut has already begun?”

Okay, maybe it wasn’t so exaggerated.

“He would have called us,” Seokjin interjected before anybody could begin freaking out. Yoongi looked over at him to see if he was lying just to ease their consciences, but the older’s body language was unable to be deciphered. He was simply standing with his hands clasped in front of him, and his face was completely impassive.

Yoongi hated it when he couldn’t read Seokjin.

“Are you sure?” Jimin asked, and from the way his hands were wringing themselves over and over again Yoongi could tell he was beyond anxious about Jeongguk’s whereabouts. At least Yoongi wasn’t alone. “Like, what if he’s already lost control of himself like last time? He couldn’t even recognise us then, remember?”

For the third time that night, all eyes turned to Yoongi.

“Why do you guys think I know everything?”

A few awkward gazes went around the group, and it was impossible for Yoongi to not notice their hesitance. They all knew the answer to Yoongi’s question it seemed, but nobody happened to have the courage to say it. Yoongi looked down at his feet. There were many things he loved to hate, but he despised being left in the dark about things.
Then, Hoseok cleared his throat. It seemed he’d taken up the challenge of responding.

“Because you’re the omega. We expect that because of your status, you’d have a better idea of what Jeongguk might be going through. That’s why.”

Yoongi couldn’t help the slight grimace he made at being outwardly classified as an ‘omega’ by a fellow group member, but nothing else about Hoseok’s response particularly irked him.

His mouth hung open for a second. “Is that it?”

“U-Uh,” Hoseok stammered, “yeah.”

“That makes sense.”

Yoongi felt the other’s disbelief rolling off them in great waves, so he decided to address it.

“Okay, so why are you all shocked now?”

“Because you’re being completely reasonable!” Jimin answered before anybody else could.

Yoongi’s eyebrow rose.

“I know that sounds awful to say but it’s completely true! We... we were prepared for you to be all closed-off and irrational but you’re not? We, uh. Well I can’t really believe it.”

Yoongi did a quick scan of the other members, and everyone except for Seokjin was displaying agreement, however reluctant it was. That was enough information for Yoongi though.

“I’m sorry you thought— god, you thought you had to prepare yourselves for me? Fuck. Sorry. I didn’t notice until... until recently how awful my attitude could get sometimes.”
And maybe that was a bit of a heavy thing to admit, when people around them were shouting questions and yelling Jeongguk’s name in a frantic state, but Yoongi had stopped caring a long time ago. He needed to get over himself, and what better time than the present, right?

Even if the person who needed to hear it most wasn’t there, he’d still gotten it off his chest. He’d gotten something that had been wearing down on him for months off his chest. He wasn’t exactly relieved, because he was incredibly thirsty and sweat was beginning to collect around his armpits, but he was close enough to relieved.

“Okay,” Taehyung responded, “I didn’t know Yoongi-hyung could be so self-conscious and apologetic but there’s a first time for everything.”

Yoongi gave a pained smile. If Taehyung thought Yoongi wasn’t self-conscious, then the older had quite some news to tell.

“We’ve gone completely off topic,” Hoseok interjected, but he didn’t do it maliciously. Yoongi could see the concern and worry looping through his eyes, and there was no doubt in Yoongi’s mind that Jeongguk’s absence was troubling him.

“Yeah, back to being an omega Yoongi,” Seokjin said. “Do you think Jeongguk could have gone fully into his rut already? Or is it impossible?”

The eyes that were focused on Yoongi weren’t intimidating anymore, and for that Yoongi was the smallest bit thankful. They were all just concerned now. Yoongi could deal with their concern. He knew Jeongguk was, physically at least, perfectly fine after all. That was all the information they needed, and it was the only thing they were currently concerned about.

So yeah, Yoongi could deal with their concern. It was a piece of cake.

Then people began shouting louder than earlier.

“Found him!” somebody announced as Jeongguk ran into the room with a phone in hand, and within moments all hell broke loose around him. The rims of Jeongguk’s eyes were no longer red, Yoongi noticed, but when Jeongguk looked his way he noticed that the moment they made eye contact was a difficult one.
Jeongguk still thought he was responsible for everything, and Jeongguk still thought he and Yoongi were spending their heat and rut together. That much was clear from the way Jeongguk’s head immediately dipped once he spotted Yoongi in the group, and if the others had only been suspicious of Yoongi earlier then they were certainly definite of his involvement now.

Yoongi needed to make things right between them, and he needed to do that right now. They couldn’t go out to perform in front of thousands of people with Jeongguk looking like a kicked puppy whenever he so much as spotted Yoongi. They couldn’t do that.

If there was anything worse than their fans finding out about their statuses, then this was it; them thinking something horrendous had happened between the two of them to make them as cold to each other as they currently were. Yoongi couldn’t let this stupid lack of communication go on, even if it had only started hours earlier. He should have called or texted Jeongguk earlier, he knew with hindsight, but he needed to confront Jeongguk now before things got out of hand.

He wouldn’t let Jeongguk appear broken to all of their fans for the duration of a concert.

“We’re already two minutes behind schedule, let’s move it people!”

Wait. No. He needed to talk to Jeongguk. He needed to make sure he wasn’t nearing his rut, he needed to convince the maknae he wasn’t the only one responsible for the scenting incident, he needed to wipe that horrible frown off the younger’s lips before their fans saw it.

It was bad enough that the other members had seen it. Everything was already bad enough.

But then it got worse.

Because the potent scent of lavender that was surging from Jeongguk’s body invaded Yoongi’s senses, and Yoongi couldn’t ignore it. He physically couldn’t ignore it.

The slick gathering in his boxers was a testimony to that.

Chapter End Notes

Hi guys! Thanks for reading and I hope you all liked this update ❤️
I won’t say much here be I’m really tired but I just hope you have a good day/night today.

(Also just because I’m curious and this is a BTS fanfic, I’d like to know who your bias is in the comments! Mine’s J-Hope )
Love is a maze damn, but you is amaze yeah

Chapter Notes

Thank you to everyone who was so patient with me in getting this chapter written and uploaded. I love each and every one of you for waiting 63 days for me.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Yoongi had the strangest sense of déjà vu come over him, because there was no way this was happening all over again.

They weren’t about to step out on stage, right? They surely couldn’t be expected to perform in the state they were currently in. Yoongi could feel the liquid seeping out of him, and while it was thankfully only trickling instead of gushing out his hole, it was still there.

It shouldn’t be there in the first place. Not yet anyway. He was supposed to have had another two days at least until his heat had been due, but yet again the universe couldn’t care less about any plans he’d concocted.

He could only imagine the panic Jeongguk was feeling in that moment. He still thought he was a massive screw up of a human being, and Yoongi still hadn’t really attempted to persuade him otherwise since his first attempt. There was practically no chance of that happening now, Yoongi realised. He’d run out of chances. They’d run out of time.

Yoongi pinched his nose just as a sense of discomfort settled in the pit of his stomach.

“Positions everybody!” someone called out from behind them, but Yoongi stood still. He couldn’t do this. He couldn’t go through this all over again; he couldn’t risk every little secret he still held close to his chest over a single performance. Nothing would ever be worth that. Nothing.

Everybody stood just as still as Yoongi for a moment, but then the calm was interrupted by the last person Yoongi expected.

It was Jeongguk.
He walked towards their huddled group, and Yoongi was tempted to close his mouth too if it meant that damn lavender wasn’t pervading his brain.

“I’m really sorry I’m late guys, but we—” Jeongguk coughed once, and it didn’t take a genius to see that Jeongguk had inhaled something and was doing his best to get it out of his system. The slight glance the maknae awkwardly gave Yoongi was all the information he’d needed.

So not only was he leaking slick out at Jeongguk’s pheromones, he was emitting a scent that was sure to ruin Jeongguk’s sense of self control.

Yoongi squirmed as more shouts were directed at them from crew members and stage organisers. He wanted to shut them up so badly, but he knew he couldn’t because they didn’t know. None of them knew the truth, none of them knew exactly what was happening except for the six people standing in front of Yoongi with equally unsure expressions dawning on their faces.

They didn’t know what the hell they were supposed to do.

Jeongguk seemed to have noticed this though. Yoongi watched the maknae suck in a harsh breath that physically strained Yoongi from just watching, but then he stood up a little straighter and held his head up high, like he was trying to reassure them of something.

“We need to get this show started.”

Several things happened all at once.

Jimin asked a hurried, “Are you sure you’re good to perform?” at the same time music began reverberating through the floorboards. Their music.

They were already supposed to be walking out on stage, but they weren’t.

Yoongi didn’t think that he could.

His legs trembled to the rhythm of the bass, and he licked his lips over and over again as the melody kicked in to the song he wrote. It was the same song he and everybody else were supposed
to be performing right now, but his feet were welded to the floor. He was sure of it. He couldn’t feel them anymore.

A gentle pair of fingers pried open his fists, and Namjoon’s hand entwined with his so that the younger’s steadying presence was physically there for Yoongi. It was nowhere near enough what Yoongi needed in that moment to return to reality, but it was something. It was doing something at least.

Yoongi swore he’d never been more thankful for his and Namjoon’s shared struggles than in that moment.

“We need to go!” Jeongguk shouted over the deafening roar of the crowd outside, and through the slithers between the curtains that hid them from the restless world outside, Yoongi saw his greatest fear.

And the thing was, Yoongi was pretty sure Namjoon wasn’t the only one who was aware of this. Yoongi doubted the others would have gone against the directions of their superiors if it wasn’t for a reason, and a significant one at that.

“Kook—” Namjoon began, his voice straining over the boundless noise from the stadium around them, but either Jeongguk didn’t hear him or he chose not to acknowledge him. Because Jeongguk was running away from them, and he was running towards the one thing that made Yoongi’s stomach churn with nothing but anxiety in its purest form.

He was running towards a confrontation, and Yoongi couldn’t stand it.

He couldn’t stand the fact that Jeongguk was running towards something he was sure he couldn’t handle, because Yoongi had finally seen the signs. They were there, and Yoongi couldn’t just do nothing about them because he was better than that.

Sweat had dripped down Jeongguk’s forehead the moment he’d entered the room, and Jeongguk hadn’t tried to hide the twitch of his noise when he’d first identified Yoongi’s scent. The most worrying sign of all, however, was the impulsiveness. The eagerness to prove something, however dangerous it might be.

Yoongi was seeing all the signs of a reckless alpha, and Jeongguk was so absorbed in righting his wrongs that he couldn’t see the symptoms Yoongi knew were clear as day. All somebody had to do
was know a little about the long-forgotten world to realise exactly what was going on with Jeongguk on stage.

And Yoongi knew it was stupidly reckless, and ridiculously impulsive, but he ran right after Jeongguk. Shouts trailed his heels as he trailed after Jeongguk, but he didn’t care about them. He only cared about Jeongguk. He was the only person he was supposed to care about now, because Jeongguk needed help and he needed it soon. Yoongi was supposed to be a good omega, after all.

Even if Yoongi still held the reigns to his own thoughts, he knew this.

So there was no hesitation when he stepped out onto that stage, horribly out of cue with their schedule and disastrously out of time with the roaring melody he’d constructed. None of it mattered though, because it was all static to Yoongi’s ears. The only senses that seemed to work anymore were his sense of smell and sight, and even the latter severely lacked in comparison to the ethereal lavender that tickled his nostrils.

Jeongguk was waving at the thousands of people who had come to see them perform, and there was no doubt in Yoongi’s mind that they were all wondering where the other members were. They usually come out at the same time during concerts, so Yoongi nearly sighed at the thought of this audience already being suspicious. He managed to hold it back though. He hadn’t lost his mind just yet.

Another chorus of cries came from the crowd, and Yoongi could sense he and Jeongguk weren’t the only ones on the stage anymore. So at least the other five could act as backup if something Yoongi couldn’t handle happened during the course of the next few hours.

Judging by the dampness of his underwear, he’d be lucky if he had even that much time left though.

But he shouldn’t think about himself. He wasn’t the one who was feeling miserable, and at fault, and he definitely wasn’t the one who was unknowingly risking everything he holds dear to himself. He was knowingly risking it all, but Jeongguk wasn’t. He was being impulsive, and rash, because he was an alpha and Yoongi forgot that alphas were like that when they were near their rut.

He hadn’t forgotten that alphas were more prone to feelings of anger and frustration though. He couldn’t afford to forget that. Especially if those feelings arose unnecessarily often during this concert. That would just encourage their audience to theorise, and they’d already secured their curiosity by missing their cue to start the show.
God, Yoongi just wanted to bury his head in the sand and pretend none of this was happening, but that would be so selfish of him. Wasn’t he trying to get rid of that attitude? If not for his own sake, then for Jeongguk’s?

“Hello everyone!” Hoseok’s greeting echoed through the stadium. Yoongi tossed his useless thoughts aside a moment later, and tried to take in a deep breath without letting the whole entertainment centre hear it. He just needed to get through a couple more hours. He didn’t know why he was freaking out minutes ago about performing actually. Other than the uncomfortable liquid gathering in his pants, no symptoms had appeared to warn him of his heat’s imminent presence.

He was going to be just fine, he told himself as he got into position for their first song of the night. Jeongguk’s scent wasn’t that strong considering the huge stage they’d been granted with for their performance. His lips were only a tad dry, and the cramps he knew were emerging in his lower back were barely able to be felt. He’d be fine.

He only had to worry about Jeongguk; only had to look after the maknae. That was his job. He might be an omega blindly trying to tend to his alpha’s needs, but he was a hyung first and foremost.

The other member’s greetings rang out through the stadium, and Yoongi belatedly joined them in welcoming the crowd to the show. He smiled at fans’ signs of absolute dedication, and he laughed at somebody’s shirt in the front row which showed Namjoon doing a derp face next to the words ‘Jimin, you got no jams’. Yoongi could almost pretend this was just any other concert, with the backdrop of their music barely keeping him tethered to the reality he knew he often unintentionally disconnected from. He could forget about the ruins that were burning to ashes around him for a moment.

But the twinge in his back brought him right back to the roaring crowd and Jeongguk’s scent and oh. He hadn’t been able to smell it that strongly a minute ago.

He didn’t have time to comprehend that, though, before the lights of the stadium dimmed and Yoongi’s cue to get into position arose. The clamour of the crowd quietened then, and Yoongi was given mere seconds to get his bearings before he was expected to begin their meticulous choreography.

His feet dragged their way across the stage to where the others were already huddled in their positions, but Yoongi didn’t need his nose to tell him that they were all making a mistake. The drowning darkness couldn’t hide how Jeongguk rubbed his nose repeatedly as Yoongi approached,
and the older cringed when Jeongguk let out a steadying breath that accidentally got picked up by the microphone.

Namjoon wasn’t visibly panicking, but Yoongi could pick up from his aura pretty easily that he was. He hadn’t hyped them up as they’d made their grand entrance onto the stage, and he certainly hadn’t given any encouraging gestures to the other members as they’d gathered into their beginning stance. Yoongi could only make out Seokjin’s face from his starting place, too, but it didn’t give away any indication as to whether he felt the same panic Namjoon was trying so desperately to hide.

Yoongi wrapped his arms around his chest, and it felt like for a moment he was doing it do legitimately comfort himself rather than mimic the choreography he’d spent weeks learning and months performing. He focused on evening his breaths out and that was a mistake, because lavender was the only thing his damned nostrils could inhale apparently.

He tried focusing on the audience’s cheers instead. That at least drew his attention away from the dampness of his boxers and that potent scent of Jeongguk’s.

Music thrummed through the stadium’s floors, and Yoongi jerked his head up in time with a beat he’d learned to memorise long ago. The chords were acting as his second heartbeat, but Yoongi knew that for the first performance of his life, that heartbeat belonged to someone else. It may beat inside of him, and it may be situated between his ribcage, but it didn’t beat for him. Yoongi had been a fool to think that had been the case for several months, if he was honest with himself.

His heart was beating for Jeongguk, as it had for months and months, and Yoongi could do nothing but accept it. His heart was untameable, and irrational, and it had always harboured emotions Yoongi was reluctant to ever share with anyone. But Jeongguk had tamed it, in a way. Jeongguk had controlled Yoongi’s heart’s desires, and had unknowingly manipulated it into thinking this control meant anything more than a one sided infatuation.

Yoongi’s limbs moved to the sound of his second heartbeat, and his body danced to the pulsing of a heart that no longer beat for himself. His music threaded in between Jeongguk’s intricacies, and Yoongi could only fall victim to this coalescence as the one passion he used to cling to wove itself into another.

Yoongi had two passions, now. A passion he could control, and a passion that controlled him. He didn’t need his omega instincts to tell him that. It was the humane part of him that had whispered these facts to him.
His body had been on autopilot for most of the track, but he was ripped from his tranquil oasis not by the hint of lavender. No, for it was a wave now; a wave of lavender he had no hopes of simply ignoring anymore.

The smell cascaded down his cheeks and filtered through his nostrils, his mouth, anything it could possibly enter, and it violated his senses. Yoongi held his breath once he realised this scent would only get stronger the closer he got to Jeongguk, and he knew that the following section of the choreography required them to mirror each other’s actions for a good few seconds.

Yoongi hadn’t dared to rise his gaze to meet Jeongguk’s. He didn’t want to see the hurt that would be swirling in his eyes, and he couldn’t bare the thought of finding out just how horribly he’d damaged Jeongguk’s perception of himself. He didn’t want to confront him, and god, he couldn’t fathom doing it in front of tens of thousands of people.

Was it just him, or was the song lasting longer than it usually did? He’d anticipated on having to hold his breath for a few seconds, sure, but this was getting a bit ridiculous. Maybe they’d slowed down the music? Yeah, that had to be why Yoongi was suddenly seeing all of these small black spots on his vision. He only had to hold his breath for a few more moments, and then he would have a safe amount of distance between him and Jeongguk.

Then he wouldn’t have to worry about lunging after the maknae’s delectable scent.

Jeongguk held his arms up, and Yoongi copied him subconsciously. He wasn’t really that conscious, honestly, but he could follow his cues well enough when he was given them. Why he wasn’t really there in the moment, he couldn’t tell you. It could have been because his heat was settling in a lot quicker than he’d anticipated, or it could have been because of his close proximity to Jeongguk, or it could have even been because he was still holding his breath so that he didn’t take a page straight out of Jeongguk’s book and pounce on him like an animal.

The bridge to the first chorus began, and Yoongi tried to not run away from Jeongguk as he got into his new position. He might be feeling a little out of it, but that didn’t mean he lost all semblance of common sense. If he was recorded by one of the many phones zoomed in on him practically running away from the maknae then Yoongi might as well kiss his covert situation behind. He would be asking for press coverage then, and theories, and the demeaning silence of fans as their judgements rang out through the stadium.

Beads of sweat trailed down Yoongi’s temples, and he knew in that moment that he would not last the rest of the concert. The ache in his back was settling deep within his body, and it threatened to throb to the beat of the music that barely kept him grounded in the moment. His lips were dry, and he only just realised as he licked them that he was doing that pretty often.
A twinge of pain hit Yoongi unexpectedly. If Yoongi wasn’t going to last much longer, which looked increasingly likely as more and more symptoms randomly popped up over the course of the song, then that implied Jeongguk wasn’t going to last either. They’d learnt from their first heat and rut that they practically triggered each other when they were left to their own devices just before their respective reproduction cycles began, so Yoongi knew they were effectively ticking time bombs the longer they danced their heart out and sang to melodies they all knew intimately.

The song was nearing its end, and Yoongi’s verse was rapidly approaching. Somehow, Jeongguk’s verses hadn’t sounded any differently from any of his other performances, and Yoongi would have been silently admiring his talent if he wasn’t inherently jealous of this natural ability.

Yoongi’s fingers were trembling as he brought the microphone up to the curve of his lip, and he resisted the abrupt urge to face Jeongguk as he breathed in air he promised himself to not choke on. Why was it suddenly so difficult to act? Why was the mask he so often relied on failing him when he needed it most?

His part came up far too quickly, and his tongue tripped on its first syllable. Fuck. He was okay. He had this under control. There we go, one line down, another seven to go. He could hold it together for another seven lines. Six lines now. Cool. He had this. He was going to be fine.

Wait, was this part always as quick as he remembered it being? His voice, usually timed to the rhythm of any song perfectly, was falling behind the familiar beat. This couldn’t be happening. He couldn’t seriously be this weak, in front of the same people he pretended to be strong for. He couldn’t lack this much control over himself after being on stage for less than five minutes.

He couldn’t remember when he’d closed his eyes, but he did remember why he’d closed them. The audience’s confused stares had petrified him, and the other member’s eyes were drilling holes into the back of his skull. He was letting them all down, and everybody knew it. Jeongguk didn’t even need him on stage. Jeongguk didn’t need his omega to look after him.

There was no reason for Yoongi to be on that stage, especially in his condition, and this fact tore him apart, limb by limb, as his lethargic tongue struggled to catch up to the beat. Only one more line left, then this nightmare would be over. He could jump into an abyss after he’d rapped one more line.

The line passed slower than Yoongi had anticipated. He had to focus on pronouncing every word that threatened to slur in his mouth, and a stab of pain halfway through the lyric nearly coaxed a whine out of him. He had to go on, he knew he had to, but all he wanted to do was curl into a ball and hide himself from the eyes that threatened to leer directly into his soul and see him for what he
truly was; a failure. An omega. Someone who Jeongguk didn’t need, despite Yoongi needing him more than he ever could have imagined.

The lights were spinning around him. Or was he the one spinning? He couldn’t really tell. He was probably entering a state of delirium, now that he tried to think about it. It would make sense as to why Jeongguk had suddenly appeared in his line of vision, and why his mind suddenly felt a lot more *fuzzy* than it had a moment ago. He barely recognised the tingles that spread across his skin, but the emotions they drew out were far from unfamiliar. He knew what desire felt like, regardless of his state of mind. He could tell what his body wanted even when his mind was screaming at him to act in two totally opposing manners.

He desired his alpha, his body whispered to him. Actually, it wasn’t really a whisper. It was more of a shout, or a screech, but it was only because Yoongi was struggling to keep himself in the moment that he couldn’t really hear his body’s demands above the white noise that churned relentlessly around him. The confusion was nice in a way, because he couldn’t concentrate on the confused stares the audience was probably giving him or the anxious questions the other members were asking him. He couldn’t tell if they were asking questions, though. Hah, he couldn’t even tell if he was still standing anymore. Everything just felt too surreal, too fabricated, and Yoongi wanted to blame the omega that was beginning to rear its head for the utter confusion he was experiencing, but he knew he couldn’t blame it for what was happening. That would be stupid of him; he knew the real reason had appeared to him with the tightening of his chest and the sudden struggle he’d experienced in trying to take a single breath.

Despite the white noise, and the noise that wasn’t white noise, and the noise that Yoongi couldn’t be bothered trying to classify, there was one sound he could make out amongst the chaos. One voice. One... person.

Jeongguk was talking to him, and yeah, it was taking all of Yoongi’s willpower to make out any of the words he was saying, but at least he could hear him through the unbearable ocean. It was fucking *something* for Yoongi to cling to amongst the tidal waves.

“Hyung, you need to take in a deep breath, okay? Can you do that for me?”

The microphone that had once been attached to Jeongguk’s chin was now hanging limply from his neck, and the cord that once connected it to the broadcasting pack at the small of his back had been clearly snapped in two. Nobody could hear whatever he was saying then. Good. Great. Yoongi tried to let out a sigh of relief but all that came out was a strangled gasp.

“Hyung, please. You’ve got to take in deep breaths and release them slowly, okay? We’ll do the first one together.”
Jeongguk took in a slow, regulated breath and Yoongi wanted so badly to just copy what he was doing, because he was fucking hyperventilating on stage and was having a fucking panic attack in front of tens of thousands of people all at once and he needed to get over himself. But he couldn’t. He couldn’t concentrate on anything, literally anything, except the level tone of Jeongguk’s voice amongst the churning waves consuming him. He wasn’t holding on. He couldn’t hold on if he tried.

But then he found his anchor, the anchor Yoongi knew he needed if he was ever going to ground himself in his hellish ocean, and of course it was Jeongguk. It was never not Jeongguk.

His hands had moved to clutch at his shoulders, and he’d gently brought him to rest against his chest. Yoongi, too panicked to do much more than lean against the maknae’s body, accepted the haven he was offered and buried his face into Jeongguk’s shoulder as the screams around him got louder and louder and louder. Jeongguk might have become his anchor, Yoongi thought darkly as he attempted to bury his face further into the maknae’s body, but he hadn’t become his shield. That was asking too much from the alpha. There was no saving Yoongi from this. He’d done this to himself, in a way, the moment he’d decided to step out on that stage with the knowledge he was hours away from being well within the throes of a heat.

Jeongguk truly was the mature one out of the two of them, even if Yoongi had at first thought the maknae needed his help when he’d insisted he was alright to perform. Yoongi should have trusted him. He should have taken his word and accepted it, instead of rejected it because he could have been lying. Jeongguk had done many things, Yoongi realised, over the course of their history in becoming an alpha and omega; but consistently lying to him hadn’t been one of them. If he hadn’t been alright, he wouldn’t have tried to perform.

What a fool Yoongi had been.

Why did he always expect the worst from everyone? Why did he never trust anyone?

Yoongi whimpered into Jeongguk’s hold, and the microphone still attached to his cheek picked up on the sound.

The machine was ripped from its place a second later, and a jolt startled out of Yoongi at the sudden movement. Jeongguk was whispering something to him now, but he couldn’t hear a word of it because even Jeongguk had become a part of the white noise. All he could sense was lavender, lavender, lavender, and it was coating everything he felt in a thick, impenetrable glaze. Yoongi was fairly certain the only reason he hadn’t stopped breathing was because Jeongguk was holding onto him so tightly.
Was he walking? No, he couldn’t physically bring himself to do that. All he wanted was to erase this moment of humiliation from existence and pretend he’d never experienced it in the first place. Was that possible? Probably not. He wished it was. But he was moving, which was odd, considering the fact that he couldn’t feel his feet that had frozen still or his legs which quivered under the weight of fathomless pressure. To put things simply, he wasn’t sure how he was moving.

Actually, screw that. He knew exactly how he was moving, but he didn’t want to acknowledge it. It was Jeongguk, and that was exactly why he didn’t want to acknowledge it. The alpha was the one gently chaperoning him away from the screaming grandstands, the one trying to protect him from an onslaught of stress Yoongi had thought only minutes ago he himself would protect Jeongguk from. The tables had turned in the worst possible way, and Yoongi could only clench his eyes as tightly as they could manage while his feet were dragged off the stage and his shoulders unconsciously shrunk it on themselves.

There was so much fucking noise and Yoongi couldn’t breathe.

“Hyung, hyung, come on hyung, find something to focus on, okay? Find something to concentrate on, please. Please.”

Yoongi was drowning, still drowning, but Jeongguk was right there; right within his grasp, and he would be an idiot to not reach out for the only thing he knew was keeping him conscious.

His arms blindly clawed for the body that was maintaining his little sanity, only to realise that the body he was searching for was still pressed against his own and rocking him back and forth gently. Yoongi absentmindedly thought that the motion must be trying to calm him down, but he didn’t think it was working. He couldn’t even breathe yet without sobbing. That was a new experience, even for him.

“Hyung,” Jeongguk begged, but Yoongi’s mind couldn’t recognise him as that anymore. It wasn’t Jeongguk holding onto him anymore. It was an alpha that was going to protect him, an alpha that was going to keep him safe from all the screams and cries of shock and ocean currents that had already swept him overboard twice over the last couple of months.

It was his alpha, Yoongi’s mind helpfully supplied, and this alpha had proved his true worth to the omega that night. The sole act of protecting the omega while the alpha himself was at his most vulnerable was all Yoongi could think about. He couldn’t look past it, he just couldn’t, because it proved this alpha was right for him, and always would be if he could put his omega’s needs above his own in a moment as remarkable as the one that had just passed.
The alpha was his. The alpha belonged to Yoongi.

And that belonging, the omega remembered through the haze of his panic, was mutual.

So he buried his head into the neck of the body hugging him close and instantly, instantly, Yoongi was able to breathe.

Lavender had been dancing across his skin earlier, but the moment his nostrils pressed against the hidden gland on the alpha’s neck the scent burned his flesh alive. He felt like the floral smell was seeping into his pores, infecting each and every part of his body with a virus the omega wanted to contract. He wanted the scent to attach itself to him, needed it to really, and a somewhat settled sensation crawled through his chest as the scent dragged itself further into his senses.

Yoongi could barely focus on anything, other than the luscious lavender he just kept chasing and chasing, but the one thing he could clearly hear amongst the never-ending chaos was the distinct sound of someone’s breathing quickening.

Huh. He couldn’t hear anybody else but his alpha. He couldn’t be bothered trying to focus on anything else when everything he could have ever wanted was already in his arms. His alpha wanted him to focus on something, hadn’t he? So he was focusing on his alpha. His lovely alpha.

It still didn’t make any sense to Yoongi that his alpha’s breathing was quickening at an unhealthy pace. He couldn’t find any reason for it. He was supposed to be calm and happy now, right? His omega was growing more content in his arms, and Yoongi knew he was producing enough slick to send his alpha into a frenzy any moment now. His alpha was supposed to be happy, he decided. Happy, and excited.

Not panicked. Not anxious.

Yoongi didn’t get it. Was he forgetting to do something to gain his alpha’s complete and unwavering attention?

Oh. Yes he was.
He wasn’t presenting himself.

As much as it pained Yoongi to separate his nose from the junction of Jeongguk’s neck, he knew he had to. His alpha’s happiness relied on it. The omega’s own protection relied on it. If his alpha didn’t want him, truly, then he would reject the sign of submission and Yoongi... he didn’t know what he would do with himself, but he hadn’t thought that far ahead. His alpha was probably just stressed because his omega had been panicking only minutes earlier. Yeah. That was it. Of course it was it. An alpha would never willingly reject an omega in heat.

This thought echoed through the omega’s mind as he bared his neck for the alpha, and once again the noise surrounding him became nothing more than a blur. All he could focus on was the pain and the suffering and the cramps and the slick and the alpha’s sticky skin gliding across his own and his alpha’s dick pressing harshly against the top of his thigh and—

Why the fuck was Jeongguk pulling away?

Yoongi scrambled after his protection, his love, his everything. He needed his alpha so desperately and he knew the maknae knew it. His legs were soaked, and he could feel the sweat that glistened off every inch of his skin. He probably looked crazed, from the way he scrambled to his feet just to grab the back of the alpha’s head and push it down to his own scent gland. He didn’t care though. When he was like this, he didn’t care about anything except his body’s needs and his alpha’s desires.

A distant part of Yoongi thought this was the way he should think outside of his heat, but its voice was tinny and hollow. It was hardly a significant revelation, especially when his damned alpha was writhing in his grasp with the intention on escaping his loving hold.

Yoongi remembered the last time this happened, this exact fucking thing happened, and he realised that there were so many similarities that he should have anticipated but could never have prepared for. Jeongguk being completely calm and in control on stage, Yoongi losing himself the moment the alpha touched him, and then there was the worst realisation; the one that made Yoongi scream with unfathomable misery in front of dozens upon dozens of people.

The last time this had happened, other people had been forced to separate the two of them.

This time, however, they were separated by Jeongguk’s hand.
The alpha, his own alpha, shoved him back and Yoongi stumbled away in shock. Wails of sorrow immediately left him, and while Jeongguk’s face at least twisted with pain at the sound, it wasn’t enough. Yoongi was suffering, and would continue to suffer, because of Jeongguk now. Because of the person the omega had been certain minutes ago would not hesitate to take a bullet for him.

The sensible part of Yoongi however, the part that had long since been lost to the throes of a heat, knew that Jeongguk had just taken the worst kind of bullet for both of them.

That part was silent though. The only thing the omega could hear now were the sounds of his own distress, and it was beginning to drive him mad.

Lavender had swum through his veins seconds ago, but before Yoongi could comprehend it, all that remained was the pain a beautiful smell had somewhat dulled for hours. Yoongi scraped at his own skin, trying to bring himself any semblance of comfort the alpha’s arms had been able to give him moments ago, but all he could experience now was pain.

And there was so much of it.

Yoongi groaned into the empty space that surrounded him, that choked him with a vice-like grip he couldn’t seem to shake off. He shouldn’t be suffering as he was then, he shouldn’t be alone when he was at his most vulnerable, his alpha was supposed to be bringing him the comfort he so desperately needed but his alpha wasn’t there, was never going to be there, was never his—

Someone pulled at his arms, and while Yoongi’s first reaction would have been to pry them off of his burning skin, he couldn’t bring himself to do it. He couldn’t muster any energy to even consider getting rid of their touch. The fight had left him. His will to kick and scream had been shattered, and all that remained of his spirit were the shards of his heart that dug into his ribcage and left him breathless.

He was being taken somewhere. Someone was leading him somewhere, but he couldn’t focus on the who or the where just yet. He was still reeling from his alpha’s blatant rejection, from the panic that had clearly settled into Jeongguk the moment Yoongi had bared his neck.

The younger couldn’t have been afraid of Yoongi, right? He couldn’t have feared what Yoongi had become in his heat and run away from a man he didn’t recognise, right? Right?

His soaked pants squelched hideously against a leather seat Yoongi couldn’t remember sitting
down on, but then he took in the steering wheel and absently registered he was in a car. His vision was slightly glazed over, but if Yoongi squinted he could somewhat take in his immediate surroundings.

From the back row, it was obvious nobody else was in the small vehicle. He squirmed around in his seat and tried opening the door, only to find it very much locked. He attempted to get a good look at the area surrounding him but there wasn’t much more to see than a relatively empty car park. Whoever had put him here in the first place had left him alone.

Except Seokjin came running down a corridor into the car park seconds later, and a man carrying a tripod and camera came rushing after him. Seokjin’s hand held a phone to his ear, and while Yoongi’s vision wasn’t the best from this distance he could still tell that the older was shaking at the other end of the car park.

Yoongi stared as Seokjin halted suddenly, and then turned to face the man following him with a smile even Yoongi could tell was pretty forced. He was rapidly speaking to whoever was on the phone with him, and if Yoongi didn’t know any better he’d think that the phone Seokjin was using wasn’t his.

The older looked out at the car park, and made immediate eye contact with Yoongi.

Why did he want to shrivel under that gaze?

Maybe it was because Seokjin was looking at him with a mix of pity and concern, and the fact that Yoongi had never wanted to see those emotions directed at him. Or maybe it was because Seokjin was clearly talking about him, as he paused his speech to carefully take in Yoongi’s appearance before he continued talking into the line.

Or it could be a great mix of both. Yoongi didn’t really care because he was in pain and his alpha had rejected him and the stench of mint and his own sweat was suffocating him in the confinements of his cage.

Seokjin appeared to end the call, and he handed the phone to the guy standing beside him with a little bow. Then, he was running again, but this time he was running directly towards the car Yoongi was trapped in.

The door opened, Seokjin jumped into the driver’s seat, and the engine jolted to life all seemingly
at once. Then Yoongi felt his hyung’s eyes bore into him through the rear view mirror as they drove through the carpark and pulled out onto a street.

“We’re gonna get you home Yoongi, okay? You’ll be with your alpha soon.”

Yoongi’s nose scrunched up, but he was too disgusted with the way he’d been addressed to really take notice of what Seokjin had said.

“Please don’t fucking talk to me that way.”

Seokjin’s eyes dashed from the road in front of him to Yoongi’s reflection in the mirror, and held Yoongi’s gaze for a second despite the fact that he was driving.

“Noted. How are you feeling?”

Seokjin’s eyes flitted back to Yoongi for another moment before he reluctantly returned his attention to the road. Yoongi narrowed his eyes at the treatment.

“Awful, but what’s new.”

The air was thick with mint, but also uneasiness. Seokjin clearly wanted to say so much more, possibly ask Yoongi more questions about his condition or even about his stunt with Jeongguk earlier, but Yoongi could feel he was biting his tongue to prevent the words from spewing out.

Yoongi was fed up with all of this tip-toeing around him. He was a bit sick at best; not a ticking time bomb Seokjin needed to worry about setting off.

He’d gotten better, hadn’t he?

“Just spit it out, hyung.”

Seokjin let silence encompass the car again before he let out a hesitant window-wiper laugh. Yoongi gave him a shrivelled glare.
His hyung didn’t seem to notice it. “Isn’t it funny how even now, you can talk to me like that but still use honorifics?”

Yoongi was on the verge of leaping out of his seat and strangling Seokjin right then and there, but a cramp ripped through his lower back before he could entertain the thought.

“Shit, Yoongi,” Seokjin cursed when Yoongi verbally grunted and curled into his stomach. “We’ll be home soon, I swear.”

If Seokjin hadn’t been pressing the accelerator a little generously earlier, then he was well and truly now. The car was actually rattling with the speed he was driving at. Yoongi appreciated the move, and he really appreciated Seokjin’s concern, even if it didn’t particularly help Yoongi with relieving the goddamn stabs his back was experiencing and the sense of absolute loss he couldn’t seem to get over.

“I can only fuckin’ hope,” Yoongi panted through a particularly sharp rod of pain. Seokjin took his eyes off the road again to glance at Yoongi in the mirror.

“Being with Jeongguk will help you though, right? It’ll do more good than harm?” the hyung asked before silently sliding his gaze back to the road. Yoongi, whose own gaze had been fixated on the mirror for the duration of the drive, finally shifted to the same road Seokjin’s eyes were on.

They were both looking at the same problem, the exact same situation, and yet as the white markings on the road blurred together to create the illusion of one continuous line, Yoongi realised just how distorted his hyung’s perspective was; how distorted all of the other members’ perspectives were. Because Yoongi hadn’t told anyone anything. Because Yoongi had kept a secret again, and had held it close to his chest for as long as he possibly could before it inevitably spilled out of his hands and stained everything it touched.

He’d improved, he’d told himself for weeks now. He’d changed for the better because he was more open now. He let things out that were weighing too heavily down on his figure, and he spoke up about the things that mattered. He’d improved in every way possible as a human being.

Except he really hadn’t.

Because he was still the same person who clutched too tightly onto damaging information, the kind
of information that wielded blades he always tried to keep blunt and hidden. Despite his efforts, though, Yoongi could see now how the secrets always ended up penetrating not only a member’s skin, but his own. Both bodies were always left a bloody mess in the aftermath of Yoongi’s mistakes, but he couldn’t seem to stop making them.

Why couldn’t he learn from any of his goddamn mistakes?

Why couldn’t he ever let the words gush out in a way that wouldn’t drown everyone surrounding him?

Yoongi clenched his hands into fists and looked at the road instead of Seokjin’s eyes because he was a coward, a coward who would never stop running away from his problems, and he finally knew it.

“No,” Yoongi muttered, a single bead of sweat trailing down his temple as he avoided Seokjin’s eyes. “It won’t...”

The car braked, and Yoongi thought at first that was Seokjin’s reaction to this new information. He realised a moment later that his hyung had simply pushed on the brake a little too harshly to stop at a red light, but this realisation didn’t calm Yoongi down in the slightest. Seokjin was supposed to be unreadable. He was supposed to constantly shroud his thoughts in mystery, and he was meant to be outwardly void of any emotions.

But when Yoongi hesitantly glanced at his hyung in the mirror, he could see a small frown on his lips.

Yoongi wasn’t meant to be able to see that.

“Why, Yoongi? Joon told me you’d agreed to do this in the first place because it would help you.”

He didn’t mean to flinch at the words, but the awful timing of a cramp in his lower back and a gush of unexpected slick down his underwear made him jolt slightly in his seat. It was enough of a movement to be seen by Seokjin, though. Nothing Yoongi wanted to slip past Seokjin ever seemed to actually get past, apparently.

“What aren’t you telling me?”
And then hot, wet tears began leaking uncontrollably out of Yoongi’s eyes because he’d had enough. He was done with trying to hide secrets, he was done with trying to protect himself from other’s judgements and scoldings. He couldn’t take it anymore.

He couldn’t take being an omega anymore.

“I let Jeongguk fucking scent me before the concert started and he tried to fucking mate me! He tried to bite me and you know what, hyung? You know what?”

Yoongi heaved in a breath his chest couldn’t quite contain, and the tightness in his chest only seemed to increase and increase. The car was moving again, but Yoongi knew Seokjin’s eyes were practically dancing between the road in front of him and the mirror Yoongi was depicted in.

He shouldn’t be sharing any of this, but he couldn’t contain the secrets anymore.

They’d been bursting the seams of his soul for long enough, anyway.

“I-I nearly fucking let him.”

Yoongi kicked the seat in front of him, the one Seokjin wasn’t in, partially to distract himself from the pain, but mostly to express his utter frustration at every single unwanted problem being an omega caused him.

But then the car stopped moving.

On no.

They’d arrived back at the dorms.

Oh god.
Yoongi licked his upper lip and tried not to shake at the building glaring at him.

“Jeongguk’s waiting inside for me, isn’t he?”

Seokjin shut the engine off and turned around to face Yoongi, his eyes at first slits but then as wide as saucers. Yoongi really didn’t give his hyung nearly enough credit for catching onto things so quickly.

Seokjin pursed his lips. “I don’t have a phone on me. I had to use that photographer’s earlier because I left mine in the dressing room.”

Heavy silence passed between them. Yoongi couldn’t hide his shaking even if he tried.

“I-I’m going to go crazy the moment I go in there, hyung,” Yoongi started, an imaginary pressure tightening around his throat the longer he spoke. “His scent’s going to drive the bat-shit crazy omega in me mad.”

A hand wrapped itself around Yoongi’s upper arm, and it did manage to keep him grounded in the moment. It wasn’t going to last long, Yoongi knew, but it did its job.

Seokjin was looking at him with so much care in his eyes, so much compassion and concern, that Yoongi’s eyes swelled with another wave of tears. He’d already lost himself in a way, hadn’t he? This bumbling mess of slick and tears wasn’t him. That was the saddest part of this all, possibly.

The fact that he didn’t think he recognised himself anymore.

“Yoongi.”

Slowly, Yoongi wiped away the tear tracks on his cheeks and did his best to meet Seokjin’s eyes honestly. He’d done enough lying. He’d caused enough damage.

“Yoongi, I’m going to go in there first and make sure everyone knows what’s happening now; Jeongguk included. Then I’m going to come back here for you, and only then will you be able to come inside, okay? Jeongguk will be locked in his room by then and even if you’re kicking and
screaming, I’m going to drag you to your room and lock you in it. Okay? Do I have your consent to do this?”

His mouth was incredibly dry, and his eyesight was a little fuzzy around the edges, but Yoongi had heard and understood every word that had left Seokjin’s mouth. He knew what was being asked from him.

And he couldn’t be more thankful for it.

“Yes. Yes you do, hyung.”

They held stares for a moment, Yoongi’s probably being desperate while Seokjin’s appeared calm and controlled. There was a twitch to the older’s mouth though that Yoongi could swear on any other occasion would have been easily smothered by now.

That was the only indication of Seokjin struggling to keep his composure, however. Every other aspect of his figure indicated that he was perfectly in control of every one of his movements.

Yoongi envied Seokjin sometimes.

Their stare lasted a moment longer before Seokjin hurriedly turned in his seat and unbuckled his seatbelt. The door was kicked open a second later, but the hyung hesitated from immediately stepping out of the vehicle.

Yoongi blinked sluggishly.

“I—” Seokjin began, his voice cracking with the word. He cleared his throat quickly. “I just want you to know that I don’t think there’s anything wrong with being an omega. I, I don’t think of you any differently, and I’m trying not to treat you any differently. Being who you are, what you are, isn’t something to... be ashamed of. I want you to know that.”

Seokjin glanced back at Yoongi once, an emotion Yoongi struggled to identify as sincerity clearly overtaking Seokjin’s features. It only lasted a moment though, because Seokjin was hopping out of the car a second later and rushing to the side entrance of their dorms.
The car door had been open for a maximum of twenty seconds, but Yoongi already knew that those twenty seconds had sealed his fate. For the faint scent of lavender had entered the car, and slick had uncontrollably gushed out of Yoongi the moment he’d smelt the irresistible scent.

He didn’t know how he’d managed to convince Seokjin that he was still himself during the last few moments of their conversation, but that hardly mattered. The door had been left unlocked. Seokjin was nowhere in sight, which meant Yoongi could leave the car and seek out his alpha without being stripped from his grasp moment’s later.

He needed to make up with his alpha. He needed to convince his wonderful alpha that he’d made a mistake rejecting him.

So the omega opened the car door and followed the lavender that faintly danced in the wind and hoped against hope that his alpha was seeking his own mint out, too.

It was all an omega like him could ever ask for.

Chapter End Notes

So much has happened since I last uploaded, wow! The OST for BTS World as well as the game came out, Bring The Soul was revealed to be showing soon, and JK *finally* has adorably fluffy long hair! Call me a simple mind but I’m living the high life rn 😊

I hope you enjoyed this update! I’m so sorry you had to wait so long for it. I really freaking appreciate how many people reached out to me and asked how I was doing btw. Like, you guys have no idea how wonderful that was to experience, so thank you for doing that

Be sure to have a great day/night wherever you are, and here’s another question for you (bc I like asking questions lol): What’s your favourite BTS song?
Take my ay ay hand, don’t let go

Chapter Notes

Thank you so much for waiting nearly 3 months for this chapter. You’re all so wonderful for putting up with my slow updates

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jeongguk’s foot wouldn’t stop bouncing. Ever since he’d been driven back to the dorm, he’d been restless. Namjoon had thankfully spared Jeongguk the embarrassment of explaining to Taehyung, Jimin and Hoseok what he and Yoongi were planning on doing as soon as Seokjin got back home with the omega in tow, so all that was left for him to do was wait.

He couldn’t just sit on the couch and do nothing, though. Jeongguk always found a way to do something productive with his time.

So, to utilise said time, he thought. He contemplated everything that had happened between himself and Yoongi up until that moment.

His leg bounced even more aggressively as his mind wandered down an endless trail. He should have seen it coming. He should have anticipated Yoongi pushing his limits for the alpha, should have realised sooner that Yoongi wasn’t nearly as healthy as he thought he was on stage. The agency would need to make a statement now because he’d failed to see what the repercussions of his actions, and in this case his lack of action, would be.

Jeongguk distantly noticed the shivers that ran down his spine. He could feel his own sweat seeping off of him in waves, and he could practically taste the scent of his own lavender on his tongue. He knew his panting most likely made him appear feral and animalistic to the remaining members in the living room, but honestly, he was past the point of caring about their reactions.

No one was able to contact Seokjin, apparently. Namjoon had tried calling him multiple times to see how much longer Jeongguk had to wait in this stuffy room for, but he’d received no response. So while everybody else stressed out of their minds about what the implications of this were, Jeongguk just continued bouncing his leg, up and down, up and down, to the sounds of the others’ distress.

The only sound of distress he could bother caring about was his omega’s, because it was his duty to ease the sound away, and he’d failed at doing that.
That was possibly the worst part about all of this waiting; this constant self-directed criticism was all he managed to think about. The rest of his thoughts were a buzz of anxiety. He struggled to think of ways he could have treated his earlier circumstance more effectively, but every new possibility tore a sector of his self-esteem to brand new pieces. His emotions were still in tatters from having nearly mated Yoongi earlier, but then he’d had to openly reject Yoongi in such a vulnerable state and Jeongguk...

Jeongguk wasn’t sure if he’d ever suffered a worse experience in his life.

The physical pain that had exploded behind his eyelids the moment he’d shoved Yoongi away had blinded him. He’d only been able to comprehend Yoongi’s screeches of agony amongst the bombardment of other sensations, but that had been enough to torment Jeongguk for centuries. He’d done that to Yoongi. He’d caused his hyung so much pain, and the longer Jeongguk felt like he was the cause of it, the easier it became for him to believe Yoongi would never forgive him for it.

A rush of blood suddenly ran to his groin. His rut was well and truly beginning, but there was no way in hell he was going to lock himself in a room without Yoongi and sort himself out alone. He could wait a little longer.

Then, Seokjin’s distinct voice rang out through the apartment.

“Do not let Jeongguk out of there when I come in, you hear me?” his hyung bellowed from outside of their apartment. Jeongguk jolted. Seokjin’s voice rebounded through the living room, the closed door doing apparently nothing to stifle his volume.

Why did Seokjin not want him out again?

Oh, that’s right. He had no idea. No one else seemed to have any idea either, though, so that calmed him down minutely.

Namjoon had made his way to the door during Jeongguk’s time of contemplative thinking, but for some reason he still hadn’t made a move to open the door. It was locked, Jeongguk knew, because when they’d first arrived at the apartment Jeongguk had well and truly lost his composure for a moment and done his best to escape his hyung’s clutches. He’d run towards their apartment’s entrance, done his best to fiddle with the door handle before quickly giving up on that endeavour and deciding that simply slamming into it would be more effective, and had tried for a good ten
seconds to get into their home just to get a whiff of Yoongi’s scent.

Taehyung had run forth, shoved the key into the lock and twisted it roughly over and over again as Jeongguk grunted and shook from his hyung’s attempts of calming him. They were giving him reassuring touches on his back, and were also gently brushing their fingers through his hair, but all of their subtle efforts were, sadly, for nothing. His craving hadn’t been sated. It couldn’t be sated by his hyung’s actions.

Jeongguk was an addict. He couldn’t get enough of that exotic mint, and it had driven him completely mad when they’d first opened the door to the apartment. Yoongi’s smell had been everywhere, on every piece of furniture and item of significance, and the scent had, to put it simply, overwhelmed Jeongguk. He’d thrashed out of Namjoon and Hoseok’s arms and immediately sprinted towards Seokjin’s and Yoongi’s room, where that intoxicating mint seemed to almost be endlessly ebbing from.

He’d managed to barely get inside their room when Namjoon had practically tackled him from behind and held him against the wall of the bedroom. Jeongguk knew he was acting completely irrational, hell, Yoongi wasn’t even in the apartment and he’d honestly say that he’d already lost his mind to the alpha lurking within.

All that was on his mind was the fact that Yoongi would be home soon, and the place of most comfort to him was obviously his own bedroom. So of course Jeongguk would need to provide for him there. He needed to make the place as homely as possible for the next few days, and he needed to prepare for every one of Yoongi’s needs. If he did, then Jeongguk’s deepest desires would be sated, and then, only then, would Jeongguk be able to think about approaching his hyung on anything related to their earlier incident at the concert.

Somehow, even while clearly under the influence of a rut, he’d been led away from the bedroom and sat down on a couch in the living room fairly easily. Namjoon, Hoseok and Jimin this time were responsible for restraining him as Taehyung madly ran about the apartment, spraying everything in his sights with a disgusting peach-flavoured air freshener. Jeongguk’s nose wrinkled at the foul smell, and he growled in resentment when the delightful mint of his omega’s home was doused in putrid peach.

His attitude towards his hyungs has soured then, but he’d also returned to a more sane state of mind, so Jeongguk really couldn’t complain about their actions that much. He may be incredibly uncomfortable, with a growing pain in his crotch now spreading to his abdomen and thighs, but at least his thoughts for the time being belonged to him.

It was around this time that Jimin had hesitantly asked Namjoon, “Do we need to lock the front door?”
The same front door they’d installed locks on both sides for when, on some freak occasion, a sasaeng decided to pay them a visit they didn’t appreciate. Jimin didn’t explicitly say why they needed to lock it, but they all knew. They didn’t want Jeongguk sprinting out of the apartment as soon as the faintest whiff of Yoongi’s scent got caught in his nostrils, and they certainly didn’t want Jeongguk and Yoongi to lock themselves up somewhere other than their apartment and spend their heat and rut together there.

So that was how Jeongguk knew the front door was locked.

He still didn’t know why Namjoon wasn’t opening the door, though.

“Do you have Yoongi-hyung with you, Jin-hyung?” Namjoon asked quietly.

Jeongguk’s brow furrowed. That was a dumb question, wasn’t it? Jeongguk clearly hadn’t lost his mind in an effort to get to the door, so the answer to that one was a clear ‘no’.

Oh. Jeongguk shook his head. He needed to stop being so unfair on his hyungs. They were doing their best, even when they were so obviously out of their depths.

“No. He’s waiting in the car downstairs still.”

Jeongguk shook his head again to escape his thoughts. Of course it had to become harder and harder to focus on anything the longer he sat there without Yoongi. That was his body’s biological response to not having an omega nearby during his rut, wasn’t it?

It wasn’t psychological by any means.

Namjoon glanced at Jeongguk, a hint of wariness lacing his eyes briefly, before slowly turning a key into the lock and opening the door to Seokjin.

Mint immediately seeped into the dorm like an overflowing faucet, not exactly flooding Jeongguk’s senses but still splendidly gracing him with its presence. He had to dig his knuckles into the armrests of the couch in order to restrain himself from chasing the scent. He could control himself, he knew. He’d done it before, so he could do it again.
Seokjin stepped into the room with an aura that reeked of anxiety. Jeongguk stared at the older with a gaze of steel as he tried to discern what exactly he was so afraid of. Was it Jeongguk himself, in his near maniacal state of mind? Was it the other’s reaction to something he had to share?

Or oh. Oh god.

What was wrong with Yoongi, if he was still down there in the car suffering from the onslaught of a heat when he could instead be wrapped up in the comfort of an alpha?

“Why isn’t hyung here?” Jeongguk found himself asking, all heads suddenly swivelling around to look at him properly. “Why’d you leave him down there?”

There was no malice in his tone, or, well, he tried to ensure there was no malice in his tone, but maybe there was and he just hadn’t been able to control it. Everybody knew about the agreement they’d come to, right? Nobody was still left in the dark about what was happening.

And yet as soon as Jeongguk had asked those questions, Seokjin had paled. Like he was the one hiding information from them all. Like he was the one leaving them in the dark.

“What’s happening now, Jin-hyung?”

He barely managed to get that sentence out before his body doubled over with pain from his lower groin. He knew exactly what his body was preparing him for, but after his last rut he was sure he never wanted to experience this sensation ever again. This type of pain now represented thoughts Jeongguk couldn’t claim as his own. He should be ashamed of even thinking in the first place.

For what kind of fucked up person fantasised about sticking their knot up their hyung’s ass and creating their own little family with them?

Jeongguk nibbled at the tips of his fingernails as Seokjin took in a long, troublesome breath.

“Yoongi is currently in the car, waiting for you to get locked up in your own room.”
The taste of blood abruptly entered his mouth. Jeongguk must have bitten too harshly at his nail.

“What?”

“He wants to stay away from you, Kook.”

“What do you mean?”

Jeongguk’s eyes flicked from one member to another, desperately trying to find if they believed Seokjin’s words as feebly as he did. But he saw no visible suggestions of disbelief. Hoseok may be staring at the floor in contemplation, but his gaze wasn’t sceptical. Namjoon’s own eyes were full of questions, but certainly not doubt.

He pulled his hand away from his mouth and stared at the minuscule swell of blood beginning to form on his thumb.

“Why does he— he wants to...?”

“Kookie,” and there it was. The not quite condescending, yet not entirely respectful use of his nickname. Whenever Seokjin called him by it with that tone, Jeongguk knew he was trying to explain something to Jeongguk he believed the maknae wouldn’t understand.

What the others often never accounted for, however, was Jeongguk getting sick of this treatment; this constant dumbing-down of easy concepts and new material. He wasn’t a child, and sometimes he wished the others would acknowledge that more often.

“Kook.”

Jeongguk looked up from his bleeding thumb and gave Seokjin an empty stare.

“Yoongi does not want to spend his heat with you anymore, so we need to keep you two separate in here.”
He had just enough time to widen his eyes in complete and utter disbelief before another rod of pain ripped through his groin.

“Argh, fuck!”

It felt as if someone was twisting the muscles inside of his balls and then pulling them towards the floor relentlessly. He’d tried to minimise his swearing in front of his hyungs up until this point, but now that he couldn’t focus on anything other than the lightning hot pain in his lower stomach and the image of Yoongi suffering inside a car so close yet so far away from him, the words seamlessly slipped from his quivering lips.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck, fuck!”

The sound of frantic footsteps immediately cluttered the air, but again, Jeongguk couldn’t focus on it. The pain was just too much. He could barely even see the mental image of Yoongi in the car through the haze of his body’s suffering.

Distantly, he heard Taehyung yelling; his booming voice overcoming others easily in a contest of reasoning. Even Namjoon had been rationalised into silence, if the static in Jeongguk’s ears told him anything.

Then, something was being pressed against his lips.

Oh. A water bottle.

Jeongguk snatched it from someone’s hand and guzzled practically the entire bottle within seconds.

Once he’d finished it he couldn’t help the shudder that rolled through his torso. His skin itched against the fabric of his shirt, and his jeans were becoming more and more of a prison for his legs the longer he sat there and did nothing. He needed to do something. He needed to say something.

“What are you on about, hyung?” Jeongguk pointedly asked Seokjin, accidentally casting more venom into his voice than intended.
Seokjin seemed to notice it, too. His gaze hardened. “I mean exactly what I said. Yoongi wants to be alone the next few days, and that’s his choice.”

Jeongguk’s limbs moved of their own accord, and before he could comprehend it he was marching over to Seokjin and mustering up the courage to say exactly what was on his mind.

“Well, Jeongguk, he’s changed his mind, and you just need to accept that.”

“Can I not just text Yoongi-hyung to get a straight answer from him?”

Seokjin sighed, loud and exasperated, and it was then that Jeongguk decided he had his evidence. “No, you can’t. He doesn’t have a phone on him.”

“Then can I go down and see hi—”

“Jeongguk, we don’t have time for this!”

The maknae’s mouth fell open.

“Yoongi is down there, waiting for you to get into your damned room so he can come up and not lose all of his composure the moment he comes into the dorm. He just wants his privacy, okay? That’s all he wants right now, so can you please just go into your room so I can bring him up already?”

He’d figured Seokjin out. He knew what he was doing.
His hyung was lying to him.

He must be. They’d agreed to spend their heat and rut together, they’d purposely spoken about it, and they’d double checked with each other to make sure everything was going according to plan. Sure, that plan to get through their concerts and then spend their heat and rut together were now in tatters, and Jeongguk didn’t even want to think about what the rest of the world had to say about the dramatic escape they’d made from their own stage earlier, but they had made a plan.

A plan Seokjin was doing his absolute best to destroy.

He probably didn’t trust Jeongguk to take care of Yoongi. Or maybe he thought Jeongguk was too immature to handle the omega in heat. Maybe he even thought them having sex would ruin their friendship, and in turn would bring their group’s dynamic crashing down with them.

Whatever. His friendship with Yoongi had pretty much been destined for ruin the moment his heartbeat began speeding up at the mere thought of his hyung.

Jeongguk ran his tongue over his cracked lower lip and glared at Seokjin as he crossed his arms over his chest.

“Fine. I’ll go to my own fucking room, Jin.”

Nobody spoke as he stomped out of the lounge room with forceful footsteps, and no one followed him as he made his way down to the bedrooms. Good.

He opened the door to his own room, and slammed it shut behind him. He hoped that would let the others believe he’d locked himself in his room. He kind of prayed for it. He needed them to believe he was here if his plan was going to work.

There. Perfect. Taehyung has left his key for the dorm on his bedside drawer. They’d purposely made all of the keys identical, and got all of the locks in their apartment to work with the same key so that people like Namjoon didn’t need to have multiple keys that they would surely lose. It had mainly been a decision for convenience, and now more than ever Jeongguk thanked his lucky stars that they were all too lazy to own multiple keys.
Because this key not only worked for the front door, when Taehyung locked it earlier to keep the maknae inside, but it worked for his own bedroom too.

Jeongguk grinned, but it quickly turned into a grimace when a burning heat ran down his dick and chaffed the sensitive skin there against his boxers. He was sweating obscenely from every crevice in his body, and even he couldn’t deny how close he was to losing his sensibility to the desires of an alpha.

Enough stuffing around. Jeongguk needed to get into position.

He swiped the keys from the table and took a deep breath in as he approached the door again. His dick was protesting against the confines of his skinny jeans, and he barely managed to smother a cry of pain when he crouched down to open the door.

It hurt his stomach and cock so much. He could barely see past the tears brimming in his eyes as he nudged the door open bit by bit. When it was finally open enough for his body to squeeze through the gap, he had to concentrate on not making a sound as he pressed the door closed and waited for the inevitable click of it shutting.

The members were speaking around the corner in hushed voices, and Jeongguk struggled to make out what they were saying as the door slid a few more centimetres across the floor.

“I trust Jin-hyung, okay?” Jimin’s voice carried down the hallway. “He wouldn’t lie about something like this, even if it was the right thing to do.”

“Are you saying keeping them separate was the right thing to do, hyung?”

Taehyung’s husky voice remained unanswered.

“Look.” Namjoon whispered to break the tense silence. “All I know for sure if that a couple of weeks ago, Yoongi-hyung told me he and Jeongguk were spending their... um, heat and rut together this time. I was unaware there’d been a change in plans.”

“We all were,” Hoseok muttered.
So the others were thinking along similar wavelengths to Jeongguk. It was a reassuring thought. It meant he wasn’t the only one suspicious of Seokjin’s motive.

This discovery only spurred him on as the door clicked shut. He slowly slipped the key into the keyhole, waited for the distinctive ‘click’ it would make when it locked, and then jostled the key out of the hole before tentatively shuffling his crouched figure over to Yoongi and Seokjin’s room.

The moment his body was inside the room, relief washed over him. He’d done it. All he needed to do now was shut the door to his omega’s haven and then he’d done it.

His cheeks were dusted pink at the thought of his omega being pleased with him. He’d do anything for his omega, even defy the orders of his hyung. Yoongi’s comfort and happiness took precipice over anything else in Jeongguk’s world.

The door slid shut without so much as a squeak, and Jeongguk silently rejoiced. Yoongi was going to be so happy with him for managing to find a way they could get through this together, despite the obvious lack of support from their oldest hyung.

Ha. Seokjin might think he knows what’s best for them, but he really couldn’t have a clue. He’d never had to experience the pain of a rut, the awful heat that accompanied the stabbing pains and the terrifying primitive need to look after the omega that mattered the world to him. He had to idea, and yet he felt like he could control their lives with the excuse that his older age meant he was wise.

It infuriated Jeongguk.

But if was fine, because now, he would prove to the others that Seokjin was wrong. He could be trusted to look after his beloved omega. He was mature enough to handle his omega in heat. He could deal with the consequences of having sex, and take it in his stride. He would never sacrifice their group’s dynamic for the sake of intimacy.

He was partly appalled Seokjin even thought any of those things in the first place. Surely he knew Jeongguk well enough by now to not assume these things.

Well, at least he had an opportunity to care for him omega now. He would prove to the others that he could look after his omega, and once they realised Yoongi’s pain could be quelled by Jeongguk’s presence then they’d have to leave them alone. They’d have to let Yoongi and
Jeongguk look after each other, just like how they’d agreed to in the first place.

They couldn’t let something as trivial as Seokjin’s opinions ruin the heartfelt agreement they’d made.

It was just then, when a lightning hot rod of pain pierced itself into Jeongguk’s lower stomach, that the beautiful sound of Yoongi’s voice echoed through the apartment.

And Jeongguk’s face lit up at the very sound of it.

“I can’t believe I was stupid enough to leave the car unlocked...” Seokjin laughed, but there was an edge to his tone. Jeongguk, even in his intoxicated state, could sense that Seokjin was trying to cover up his anxiety through making a joke of the situation, as Jeongguk knew he often did. He had no idea what Seokjin was being anxious over, though. Like it mattered though, when Yoongi was probably walking through the living room that second and approaching the refuge of his own dorm.

“I cannot thank you enough, hyung,” his omega said further down the hallway. Jeongguk’s smile twitched. “I’ve got no fucking idea of what came over me. I... I’m just so lucky you found me before, b-before—”

“Hey, hey, it’s fine,” Seokjin reassured merrily. “Just as long as you tell Jeongguk afterwards that it was actually you who wanted this, then all of this will be water under the bridge soon enough.”

An unsettling whine echoed down the hallway, but Jeongguk’s legs wouldn’t carry him towards the sound.

“How— argh,” Yoongi grunted, “how is he?”

Jeongguk’s hands began to tremble.

“Ah, he’s a bit angry at me,” Seokjin chuckled. “He probably thinks I’ve made all of this up, you know.” He paused. “Ya Jeongguk, if you’re listening, you better believe me now!”
It was Yoongi’s strained laughter that carried down the hallway this time. Jeongguk’s entire body quivered, causing reverberations through the bed frame that shifted the quilts on it around mercilessly.

He’d made a mistake.

This had all been a mistake.

“Well,” Yoongi began, but paused briefly to groan. “I hope he’s not in too much pain because of me.”

Seokjin remained silent at that.

“Thanks again, hyung,” Yoongi whispered, but Jeongguk could still hear it past the static surrounding his ears. “For everything.”

Light then burst into the room, but Yoongi’s back was to him. Seokjin was looking at something on the floor.

“It’s never a problem.”

The room returned to its former darkness when the door slid gently shut, and Jeongguk just... stared at Yoongi.

The omega shoved his pants to the floor haphazardly, but just as quickly as he’d completed the action, he paused. Jeongguk knew, then, that Yoongi knew.

It was then that the omega within him had finally took the reigns of his hyung.

“Alpha.”

Yoongi sprinted over to him with a hunger in his eyes Jeongguk had never seen before. Even the relative darkness of the room couldn’t obscure the glossy shine to his lips, and Jeongguk’s cheeks
tinted with shame when his gaze caught the sight of Yoongi’s restricted member. It was straining against the confines of his boxers, and where the tip of his cock pressed against the fabric a patch of dampness stood proudly on display.

But it was his scent that drove Jeongguk mad.

The sweet smell of mint was rolling off of him in waves, and Jeongguk couldn’t help but indulge himself in it. Its gentle pervasion of the air settled part of the pain in Jeongguk’s stomach, and the moment the body emitting the scent touched Jeongguk himself, he became the true addict he’d tried so desperately to avoid being.

His hands clasped onto the back of Yoongi’s shoulders, and he allowed the omega to nestle his face into the crook of his neck as he stroked the damp fabric of the older’s shirt. Yoongi’s whimpers of relief allowed a slither of satisfaction to enter his heart, but the moment of pride didn’t last for long.

Because Yoongi had started pulling at the buttons on his shirt, but Jeongguk knew, he knew now, that it wasn’t actually Yoongi doing it.

The alpha stilled as his omega ripped the buttons off his shirt in one distressed movement. The shirt was then flung to the ground, but Yoongi hadn’t finished there.

He began pulling at the waistband of his boxers, and immediately Jeongguk’s cheeks lit up with shame.

He could never take advantage of his omega like this. He could never betray his trust like this.

It went against every cell in his body, but Jeongguk somehow managed to place his hands on either side of Yoongi’s hips. It prevented the omega from pulling off his boxers, and Jeongguk almost couldn’t meet the older’s heavy gaze when he lifted his head from Jeongguk’s shoulder and gave him a questioning, saddened stare.

“Want them off, alpha. Need ‘em off.”

Yoongi shifted his hips in a half-hearted attempt to loosen Jeongguk’s grip, but even in his hazy headspace the alpha succeeded in keeping his grip firm. He would not make the same mistake as
last time, a primitive part of his mind demanded. He would not take advantage of his omega, no matter what the circumstance was, for his own benefit. He’d severely damaged the relationship he treasured with his hyung the last time he let his own desires come before the omega’s, and he would never let that happen to his wonderful omega again.

Because all the alpha ever wanted to do, was please his omega.

Not just the omega who writhed in bedsheets, but the one who poured his heart and soul into living a dignified life, too.

The omega Jeongguk dreamed of one day holding hands with outside of a heat or rut. The omega Jeongguk dreamed of cuddling on a couch while watching a bunch of random drama reruns in the background.

The omega that made his alpha heart soar above the clouds, even when the skies surrounding him were blanketed with darkness.

He wanted to please his omega, no matter the gorgeous man’s headspace.

“I-I know, but you c-can’t— can’t move them,” Jeongguk stuttered out as his omega settled into his lap. He could feel Yoongi gently grinding against the front of Jeongguk’s jeans, and it took all of Jeongguk’s willpower to not lift the omega off his lap, throw him onto the bedsheets and jump on top of his lithe form.

Yoongi’s lips trembled when he failed to retrieve a response from the alpha.

“Why?”

Jeongguk couldn’t move his gaze from Yoongi’s plump lips.

“Why d’you—ARGH!”

Yoongi’s face contorted with pain, and Jeongguk immediately shifted their positions so that Yoongi’s legs were wrapped around the alpha’s waist and the omega’s neck was easily accessible.
Instinct guided him to press his nose against Yoongi’s neck, and when he began caressing the scent gland there with his gentle ministrations, he sensed his omega’s pain quelling to a viable size.

Even if the physical pain had lessened though, the omega’s body still trembled in his alpha’s hold.

Jeongguk wrapped his arms around Yoongi’s bare torso, and he rubbed his nose over and over the other’s gland while broken sobs joined the shivers of his body. Jeongguk’s ribcage constricted when he felt tears drip onto his collarbones, and his heart clenched at the image Yoongi surely resembled now; a broken man, somehow lost in his own mind, while physically suffering.

The alpha’s dick chose to erupt with unfathomable pain then, and Jeongguk had to clench his teeth around the inner flesh of his cheeks in order to contain his own agonising cries. In a way, being this close to his omega whilst being unable to heal him properly was the worst kind of torture Jeongguk could imagine experiencing.

But then he remembered he could have been locked up in a separate room from his omega and suffered even more at the hands of his own lonely misery, and he remembered that this all could have ended up so much worse for the both of them.

Yoongi’s hands gained a life of their own. They sandwiched themselves in between Jeongguk and Yoongi’s bodies, and Jeongguk watched his movements with curiosity before he realised what they were up to.

He barely saw Yoongi slip his hand down his boxers before he compelled himself to turn his head away. Yoongi didn’t want him to see this. Yoongi didn’t want him to get involved, either.

So Jeongguk released his hold on Yoongi and tried to unravel the omega’s legs from around his waist. His fingers landed on the omega’s knees, but the delicate legs simply tightened their clutch around his hips when he tried to pry them away. Jeongguk panted in exasperation when a particularly strong wave of mint eroded his senses, and couldn’t ignore the urge to catch his omega’s eyes when the need suddenly presented itself.

Yoongi’s pupils were dilated beautifully. His eyelids rested lazily upon his gaze, and his lips were covered with small scrapes and blotched of blood; most likely from him biting his lip in pain too often. His chest was glistening with sweat, and his pebbled nipples stood out from his otherwise flat chest.
Jeongguk cursed himself over and over again when he imagined the man in front of him with a swollen belly and enlarged breasts.

What the fuck was wrong with him?

“He help me alpha, please, please, please.”

The whine spoke to Jeongguk’s soul. In another world, he would’ve closed the distance between them and kissed his love feverishly, because that was exactly what he deserved. He deserved to be comforted, deserved to be looked after and pampered. He deserved to be loved, and in another time, Jeongguk wouldn’t have hesitated to place his lips against the older’s neck and bite the sensitive scent gland there.

But he didn’t live in that world. He wasn’t living in that time.

So Jeongguk could only shake his head, slowly, agonisingly, as Yoongi’s cries returned to fill the silence.

“Why, alpha?!” Yoongi gasped, crumbling in on himself a moment later. He was clutching the skin of his stomach madly, as if he was trying to soften the inexplicable pain he felt there through his own touch. “I-I can please you, alpha. I can— please…”

Yoongi’s begging struck a nerve within Jeongguk. He couldn’t believe he was simply sitting there, pliant, when his own loving omega was suffering at his own hands. He was well and truly capable of looking after his pained omega, but no matter how often he entertained the thought, his omega’s own words spoken only a handful of minutes ago came to remind him of his bitter reality.

“I hope he’s not in too much pain because of me.”

Yoongi, Jeongguk knew, was selfish. He’d done many things over the past couple of months that confirmed this fact, but Jeongguk kept turning a blind eye to all of it because Yoongi had been struggling. Even Jeongguk knew Yoongi had been grappling with the logistics of his newfound biology, and who was Jeongguk to tell him how to react to an unbelievably unprecedented event?

The alpha knew the status he’d been granted was a blessing, in some form. He’d realised that after witnessing the identity theft Yoongi had been struggling with at the hands of his inner omega. He could
have presented as anything, anything at all thanks to his genetics, but the world had chosen to be kind to him and cruel to Yoongi.

So to hear Yoongi admit aloud, to anyone, that he was the cause of someone’s pain, when he was already suffering so harshly from his own miseries, drove a cold stake through his already fragile heart. Yoongi may have been selfish in the past; he’d blamed Jeongguk at first for his status, performed on stage recently when he clearly wasn’t healthy enough to, and then finally buckled under some unknown pressure that compelled him to stay away from Jeongguk entirely during his heat. He’d been selfish, but Jeongguk never held this flaw against him.

Because now, Jeongguk knew all too well, that he’d been selfish too.

He hadn’t given Yoongi time to process his thoughts on Taehyung’s proposal before saying himself that he, to put it simply, wouldn’t mind having sex with his hyung. He had asked Yoongi to scent him so, so close to the start of the concert, knowing he could jeopardise their chances at making it out of their performances unscathed, and then he’d gone against Seokjin’s wishes because he thought, as an alpha, he knew best.

So yeah, Jeongguk had been selfish too. It just meant they were both victims suffering from each other’s selfishness.

Maybe that was the only thing keeping Jeongguk from leaning into Yoongi’s lap and engulfing his lips with his own.

Maybe they deserved every moment of pain they got.

All Jeongguk could hope, as Yoongi rutted his palm relentlessly against his dick, was that they would no longer be suffering when their heads cleared.

Yoongi deserved that, at least.

Jeongguk had not come once yet. Yoongi had, twice, to be exact, but it had been with a cry of pain rather than pleasure on both occasions. Jeongguk didn’t know what to do. He’d tried scenting the other, tried wrapping their bodies together to comfort their aching skin, tried drinking in the other’s
mint to suppress the pins and needles digging into his flesh.

It had all been to no avail. The alpha couldn’t fathom how long they must have been trapped in that room for already. It must have been hours, at least. There was no way they’d been locked there for any length of time shorter than that.

Yoongi had, on multiple occasions, tried to strip Jeongguk of his clothes. The alpha had allowed him to take his soaked shirt off minutes after the omega had experienced his meltdown over Jeongguk’s rejection of him, but when the older had attempted to unbutton Jeongguk’s jeans, fear overtook his body. The alpha’s arms clutched onto Yoongi’s, but Yoongi didn’t seem to properly process it. His eyes were unmoving and glassy, staring at the alpha’s clasp around his wrists as if he couldn’t quite believe the sight before him.

Jeongguk grunted when Yoongi tugged at the button again. He was sending mixed signals, he knew it, because his hips kept bucking up on their own accord while the hands halting Yoongi’s movements firmly contradicted with his desires.

Yoongi pulled at the jeans harshly for a third time, but Jeongguk pried the hands off entirely before the button could come undone.

The jeans had stayed on for who knew how long.

But they did come off during a moment of weakness.

Yoongi had just orgasmed for the first time, and Jeongguk had nearly smiled at the relief Yoongi would surely be experiencing in any moment. But there’d been no sigh of relief. There’d been no wail of pleasure. Instead, a dreadful whine had echoed through the room, and Jeongguk’s heart jolted in its ribcage at the sound.

Why was his poor omega still suffering?

Yoongi seemed to notice instantly when sympathy crossed Jeongguk’s mind, as he promptly planted himself back into Jeongguk’s lap and proceeded to nuzzle his nose into the alpha’s scent gland. Jeongguk, too lost in the pleasure of finally having some pressure against his dick that wasn’t his own pathetic hand, allowed the omega’s hands to roam over his body freely.
He barely noticed his jeans being shimmied down his hips, and he only really took notice of his bare thighs once the pants got caught at his knees. Yoongi’s face was still pressed against his neck, but Jeongguk didn’t want to risk another moment of hysteria if he could.

So he pulled his pants off the rest of the way, and he swore Yoongi licked his scent gland then as a sign of his approval.

But then the omega’s hands were back on his hips, hooking nimble fingers behind the elastic of his boxers and pulling them down an inch before Jeongguk could stop him.

Jeongguk’s own body screamed at him to remove the hand preventing Yoongi from entirely removing the underwear from his skin. He should just get their misery over and done with. He shouldn’t keep prolonging their pain for a reward Jeongguk knew didn’t exist. He didn’t have anything to gain from not taking his omega right then and there. If he waited, they’d both continue to suffer. If he kept stopping his omega from getting what he so clearly wanted, then what kind of alpha was he?

He shouldn’t be denying his omega of anything. His omega didn’t deserve this kind of treatment.

But his omega also didn’t deserve his lack of consent to be ignored.

Jeongguk’s hands remained on the waistband of his boxers. He may respect the wishes of the omega sitting before him, but he respected the wishes of his other omega too. The one who had explicitly stated his desire for privacy.

Yoongi’s eyes watered while another whine ripped through him, but Jeongguk refused to budge. He couldn’t betray his trust. He couldn’t use his omega for his own advantage.

He would never do that again.

~

Yoongi didn’t know what time it was when he could finally focus on something other than his own aching hardness or his alpha’s absolutely potent scent of lavender.
God, he really needed to stop thinking about Jeongguk that way. He was pretty sure the younger would be scarred for life if he ever openly addressed him as ‘his alpha’.

His temperature was still ridiculously hot. He’d guess his body’s temperature was around three degrees above what is was supposed to be, but who knew? He felt a lot hotter than he thought he physically could be.

Or maybe that was because his body was lying against someone else’s. Yeah. That was probably why he was so hot. That made sense.

His eyes drooped closed. He was really, really tired and really, really hard. He honestly would have shoved his hand down his boxers if he wasn’t on the brink of fainting from exhaustion already.

Wait.

What the fuck.

Why the fuck was he lying with someone in his heat?

He bolted upright and stared at the sleeping body beside him.

Why the fuck was he lying in bed with Jeongguk during his heat?

“Jeongguk,” Yoongi whispered, frantically looking around the room for evidence. He needed to know if they did what he thought they did. He could feel dried cum rubbing against his dick. His head was clear from thoughts of shoving a knot up his ass. He was back to being Yoongi, and that only ever happened after he'd satisfied himself.

“Jeongguk!” he whispered a little louder. His hands had moved on their own accord to Jeongguk’s shoulders, and before he could stop himself he shook the younger awake.

“Get up, Jeongguk. Get up, get up, get up.”
Groggily, the maknae opened his eyes a slither. At first, he didn’t react to the sight of Yoongi kneeling over him with a frenzied look in his eyes. He even allowed his eyes to slip closed again in fatigue.

But then the image he’d just seen sprung to the forefront of his mind and his instincts screamed at him to get up.

“What? What’s wrong? What’s happening?” Jeongguk spluttered. Yoongi simply stared at him for a moment, trying to process the possibility of the Jeongguk before him doing what he thought he did. He couldn’t properly fathom it.

Yoongi’s lips were cracked and dry. He knew what he wanted to ask, knew someone had to start the conversation before one of them lost their mind again, but the idea of even accusing Jeongguk of this felt diabolical. Treasonous.

He barely managed to get the words out.

“What did we do?”

He didn’t want to start blaming Jeongguk right away. He didn’t know the extent of what he’d done earlier. He remembered bits and pieces, just like last time, but he wasn’t sure if he’d missed anything. He could have. His mind could be shielding him from a reality he didn’t want to face.

Because the last thing he remembered clearly was intensely staring at Jeongguk while he masturbated.

He could have done anything after that and he wouldn’t know it.

“Jeongguk, what did we do?!”

The younger flinched at his tone. Yoongi didn’t blame him. He sounded hysterical to his own ears.

“Did we fuck? Is that what we did? Did you give me your fucking knot and knock me up? Am I going to be a fucking mother soon?”
Yoongi felt the tears on his cheeks before registering his blurry vision. He wiped furiously at his eyes, but when he realised the waterfall wasn’t finishing anytime soon he turned his body around to hide his face. He hated this. He hated feeling this weak and vulnerable.

And of course he had to feel this way during his heat, in front of his alpha. It was always the omega within him that made him become the person he despised. It didn’t help that Jeongguk was always in control of himself, especially during his ruts and immediately after them. He acted like the hyung more often than Yoongi did at the worst of times.

“Yoongi-hyung, hyung, no—” Jeongguk started, but failed to continue. His voice didn’t so much as waver.

That just made everything unbearable to Yoongi.

He couldn’t control his breathing. He could feel the slick beginning to slip out of his hole, and the sweat on his temples was gathering rapidly. He wasn’t going to remain fully conscious for much longer, and Jeongguk was going to witness it all through his own crystal clear headspace.

It wasn’t fair.

Jeongguk’s arms wrapped around his waist, but Yoongi didn’t acknowledge them. He was having a hard enough time breathing. He couldn’t just choose to focus on the comforting warmth his alpha’s touch brought him.

“Hyung, no, we didn’t do anything.”

Yoongi barely heard the words.

“We d-didn’t have s-sex, I didn’t— I would never force myself onto you.”

His breathing was still rugged, but his chest had stopped heaving at least.
“It’s my goddamn fault we’re here, though.”

Yoongi wasn’t fully out of his panic attack yet, but he was nearly there. He didn’t know what it was about Jeongguk that always calmed him down; his scent, maybe? Or was it his delicate touch?

Either way, the beast that was anxiety had been tamed. Yoongi never knew how to thank Jeongguk every time he did this.

He waited a few more moments to ensure his panic had well and truly dissipated. During this time he allowed his focus to drift from the slick gathering in his boxers to the caring arms still wrapped around his frail frame.

It was only then that the full force of Jeongguk’s words hit him.

“Why,” Yoongi paused to lick his lips, “why is this your fault?”

He didn’t get it. He didn’t understand how they were even in the same room to begin with. Seokjin had gone out of his way to keep them separate. Seokjin had respected his wishes, after all. Yoongi admired that.

He’d even ran after Yoongi when he’d realised he’d gotten out of the car. Thankfully, there were only two ways up to their dorms; the elevator, and the stairs, so Seokjin had been able to locate him fairly easily on the winding staircase.

From there, Seokjin had managed to calm him down by drowning the place in this awful peach-flavoured air freshener. Yoongi’s own thoughts had come back to him then, albeit a bit slowly, but at least by the time he’d reached the dorm he was less of a mess than when he’d started.

He couldn’t imagine entering the dorm in the hormone-driven state he would have otherwise greeted the other members in if it wasn’t for Seokjin. It had been bad enough for Seokjin to pretty much see him at his worst, but that thought seemed better to Yoongi than the alternative of anybody else in the group seeing him that way. At least Seokjin was his hyung; it was technically his responsibility to look after him, at least through South Korea’s societal expectations. It would have been so much worse if the very people he was supposed to care for ended up caring for him because he was so monstrously weak.
It still frightened Yoongi how easily he could disregard his own thoughts for ones about an alpha. He’d fully lost his mind, searching for Jeongguk. He couldn’t believe he’d even tried to follow Jeongguk’s scent in the first place. Just how desperate was he for Jeongguk’s cock, if he was willing to do the most foolish things for it?

Something touched his cheek. Yoongi batted it away, but it came back a moment later with the softest of touches.

It was Jeongguk’s palm, Yoongi realised. It was trying to wipe his tears away.

Yoongi let him.

“I... I waited for you to come back in here.”

Jeongguk’s voice was full of regret. Yoongi could feel the weight of his words, and they were heavy; too heavy for a voice as fragile as Jeongguk’s.

“I— y-you’re going to hate me for this, h-hyung.”

Yoongi’s back was still to Jeongguk, so he could be mistaken if he thought Jeongguk was breaking down in his presence. He prayed he wasn’t; he didn’t know what he was going to do if they were both reduced to sobbing messes.

“I...” Jeongguk sniffled. “I went against Seokjin-hyung’s advice and hid in here to— t-to...”

The air stilled around them.

“I hid in here to have sex with you a-against your will!”

Yoongi stiffened.

“I’d been told you’d changed your mind, but I didn’t listen. I refused to listen because I thought that since I was ‘the alpha of the household who always knew best’ that I didn’t have to listen to a
Jeongguk heaved in a gaping breath. It sounded like he was choking on his own words, struggling to overcome the reality of his confession and what it meant for him and Yoongi.

Yoongi’s eyes swelled with even more tears.

So even Jeongguk wasn’t perfect. Even Jeongguk made mistakes; grave ones at that.

A silent waterfall cascaded down Yoongi’s cheeks.

They were tears of relief this time.

“But you didn’t do it. You didn’t do what you came here to do, even with your rut happening.”

Yoongi bit his lip as he waited for a response. It may be a sore subject for both of them to discuss, as it did happen only a matter of hours ago (he thought that time sounded about right at least), and their records with communication definitely weren’t the best.

Actually, Yoongi could admit they were downright awful.

Most of the time, this was because Yoongi hoarded too many secrets and then only revealed them when it was too late to control the pain they unleashed. But on this occasion, the secret was Jeongguk’s. Their communication was suffering this time because of Jeongguk, and Yoongi may be evil for thinking it, but he felt like a better human being; knowing that even Jeongguk wasn’t above hiding things from others.

Well, maybe not a better human being. But he did feel human.

“How did you do it?”

Yoongi’s cheeks were still soaked, but Jeongguk’s emotions mattered more to him than his own.
He swivelled his body around to face Jeongguk, and the sight that greeted him, somehow, did not surprise him.

The younger was sagging in on himself. His hands were cradling his head, and his legs were crossed over loosely. Every fibre of his being screamed shame, but Yoongi couldn’t stand it. Jeongguk didn’t deserve to feel this way about himself, when Yoongi had just been shown that he didn’t really have any reason to act this way.

He’d rectified his mistake, hadn’t he? He’d somehow rejected his instincts to respect Yoongi’s boundaries. Yoongi himself couldn’t respect his own boundaries when he was in heat, so he wanted more than anything else in the world in that moment to know how this wonderful gentleman managed to subdue his animalistic nature, against his own will, for hours.

To put it simply, Yoongi was baffled. He needed to know how Jeongguk performed this miracle.

“How did you control yourself?”

There was no doubt about it. His mouth was twisted into a somber frown, and his cheeks were coated in streams of fresh tears. The emotion Jeongguk was surely feeling was devastated; there was simply no other word that encompassed the exact extend of his own misery.

Yoongi needed to change that.

“Because that was really what Yoongi needed to know. He needed to know how Jeongguk managed to control the beast inside of him. He needed to know if it was possible for him to do the same.

Jeongguk didn’t move for a second. He remained leaning over himself, barely looking at Yoongi through his thick fringe.
He blinked at Yoongi. “I don’t know.”

“Bullshit.”

Jeongguk didn’t so much as move his gaze from Yoongi when the older gave his lightning-quick response. His body was still shrivelling in on itself, as if he believed that if he hid as much of his body from Yoongi as he could then most of his secrets would remain hidden, too.

It burned Yoongi to remember that he’d been in Jeongguk’s position numerous times before. The only difference was this time, that he was to one pressing Jeongguk to answer him.

His thoughts halted in its tracks.

He was pressurising Jeongguk to answer him.

What was he doing?

He couldn’t pressure Jeongguk into sharing anything he didn’t want to. Yoongi sure as hell hadn’t liked it when things had been pulled out of his mouth earlier, so it was practically guaranteed that Jeongguk wouldn’t like it either.

Yoongi held his tongue, even when more questions plagued his mind. He needed to treat others the way he’d like to be treated, and what better time to start than the present, right?

So Yoongi maintained the silence between them. Jeongguk now knew Yoongi wasn’t buying his bullshit, but it was ultimately up to Jeongguk to say anything.

He just hoped the younger trusted him enough to know.

Jeongguk lifted a hand to his fringe and swept it off his brow. His forehead glistened with sweat. Then, his mouth parted, but his eyes scrunched up as if it physically pained him to even think about the words. He clearly wanted to say them, even Yoongi could see that, but what Yoongi didn’t know was if he really needed to hear what Jeongguk wanted to say.
When another tear slipped down Jeongguk’s cheek, Yoongi knew then that he never should have doubted Jeongguk. Because now, the younger was suffering more than he needed to; he was choking on his own words and it was all because Yoongi couldn’t accept the fact that Jeongguk wasn’t ready to reveal something.

Yoongi was such a hypocrite, and he knew Jeongguk knew it.

However, when Jeongguk finally let out the words he’d suffocated on for so long, he didn’t acknowledge Yoongi’s hypocrisy.

Instead, he acknowledged something Yoongi never dreamed he’d hear Jeongguk say.

“I just— The only reason I was able to control myself was because I thought about how much I love you and how I needed to respect your wishes even during my rut. I-I don’t know exactly how I did it, but just thinking about how... ruined you’d be after your heat if I... i-if I t-took advantage of y-you made me able to control myself.”

Yoongi’s mouth was the one to part this time.

“I... I refused to be the reason for your suffering, hyung. I could never be the cause of your pain because if I was, I know I... I wouldn’t be able to live with myself.”

He must have heard something wrong.

Yoongi was sure of it.

His heart was beating madly, and even as he tried to calm it his mind made him listen to those few words over and over again because it just loved to torture him.

There was no way Jeongguk had just said that. He’d made a mistake, surely. Or maybe Yoongi had misinterpreted it. That had to be it, actually. Nothing else made sense.
Even Jeongguk’s quiet smile made no sense. He was crying his heart out a moment ago because of how close his mistake had come to ruining Yoongi’s trust in him, but now he was somehow smiling.

It didn’t help that the same, quiet smile was now stretching over Yoongi’s lips. He didn’t understand it. Didn’t he realise Jeongguk didn’t mean what he’d said? Why didn’t he understand that Jeongguk wasn’t being literal when he said those beautiful things?

Jeongguk’s eyes were still soaked, as were Yoongi’s, but despite that smiles were still spreading across their faces.

Yoongi wasn’t sure if he’d ever been so euphorically hopeful in his life.

“Isn’t love too strong a word?” he murmured, holding the passing silence close to his heart as he anticipated a rush of disappointment to flow over him, and consume him.

But it never came.

“No,” Jeongguk answered quickly, his smile quickly morphing into a smirk. “I think it’s very appropriate.”

And then Yoongi was crying tears of joy.

Chapter End Notes

Two fun facts about this chapter:

1-It’s the first chapter to have a Jeongguk POV in it and
2-It’s the longest chapter I’ve written to date for this story! (9438 words) I hope that and its ending sort of makes up for the really long wait (I’m so sorry about that btw plz forgive me 😞)

I hope you guys enjoyed it anyway! My question for this week is: What is your favourite K-Pop song? Mine is Move by Taemin

Be sure to have a great day/night wherever you are, and thanks again so much for waiting so long for this chapter. I love you all
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!