white lie.

by hopespiration

Summary

On the cold Friday night, in a world where the first object one’s soulmate touches would bloom into a flower, a daffodil had bloomed out of a police officer’s chest from the bullet shot by a mafia.

On that cold Friday night, Min Yoongi had shot his soulmate.

(or that AU where the first thing of yours that your soulmate touches would bloom into your birth flower. The youngest son of the city's notorious mafia gang Min Yoongi found his the night he shot police officer Jung Hoseok, a flower blooming from his heart)

Notes

"He’s your soulmate whether you both like it or not. It’s practically written in the stars.”
“The stars are bullshit then.”

i knowww i've been teasing this prompt since like september? it was a random idea that i thought of and i tweeted it here
i've been working on it on-and-off since then along side a bunch of other fics but i've finally finished the first chapter!
a lil warning that it's gonna be a lil (very) inaccurate since i got 80% of the mafia stuff from
quora and 20% from this yaoi that i read years ago but i hope that just the very image of yoongi as a (inaccurate) mafia gang member makes up for it !!
silence (the stars are bullshit)

Chapter Notes

you can now read this fic in spanish here!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Silence.

It was around midnight when it all happened.

It was quiet at first. Deadly quiet, and then there were footsteps, as faint as leather soles clicking on cement pavements can be.

Then there were whispering and murmurings from the different cardinal directions, then a command in Yoongi’s voice, stern and confident,

“Go.”

Then things escalated; there was running, crashing, windows breaking, followed by the door. Not long after that were sirens, tires screeching, and then more shouting.

“Freeze!” The sound of the gun cocking breached through the extreme senses, followed by the sound of another gun cocked, mirroring the first one.

Then a sound of thunder. It rained.

But there was more than one thunder.

A loud thud sounds from the impact of a body hitting the pavement, of a groan of pain - of a metal police badge clinking against a metal drain.

Silence.

* 

“I’d like to make it clear that the only reason I haven’t struck you across the head right in front of everyone is that Namjoon threatened to leave if I do.” The bite in his brother’s tone comes out sharp but crumbles as it reaches him.

Yoongi sits back on the couch and crosses his legs, resting his feet on the coffee table between them. The sole of his shoe pokes the ashtray with a little clink. The smirk on his face only grows more extensive at the sight of his older brother twitching, hands tightening their hold on where they rest on his knees as if forcing them to stay in place.

“The lack of shame and guilt on your face is disgusting.” His brother charges again, but it’s just noise to Yoongi’s ears.
“Tell me what I did wrong then, big guy.” He emphasizes the mockery in his tone. Seokjin’s snort, followed by Namjoon’s groan is audible from somewhere near him, but he pays no mind, too entertained by the way he’s slowly ticking his brother off.

The older man in front of him takes a deep breath as if the fact he’s about to state is so painfully apparent that he’ll do something he’d regret if he doesn’t calm down.

“To get it through your thick skull, little brother,” he takes another deep breath, “you broke the clan’s rule. Not just any clan rule, the clan rule.” The grip he has on his knees tighten, “You shot a cop, so now they’re cracking down on us. Not just us actually, the whole fucking clan!” He barks out the last sentence, hands releasing his knees to shoot up to his feet before Seokjin practically tackles him back onto the couch. A small glance from Yoongi’s side would show Namjoon whose eyes are locked onto the older man in a death glare.

Technically, Namjoon is lower in the ranks as the head chief’s advisor compared to the elder sons, but the Min clan’s business has prospered higher and further than ever, ever since the next door neighbor’s son (and Yoongi’s friend from high school) was hired. It can be said that Kim Namjoon’s wit and rational thinking has become the pioneer for the success that is the Min clan today, making him become one of the most prominent gang members. Because of this, Namjoon’s threat to leave the gang if anything were to happen to Yoongi calculates to a much higher loss than - well - not laying a finger on Yoongi and risking a damning headlock from Seokjin.

Which is why Yoongi can be as cocky as he wants, can poke anyone with his smugness without having to face any physical consequences - he’s practically invincible.

“I said tell me what I did wrong, not state the obvious. Jesus. The guy’s not dead.” Yoongi taps the ashtray with his shoe. “Yet.”

“He’s been unconscious for the past three days.” His brother shoots back, speaking faster than usual in an attempt to not snap again.

“Still, he’s not dead. Rule says we can’t kill ‘em. Technically, I didn’t do anything wrong.”

“You shot your soulmate, Yoongi.” A deeper, clearly angered voice shoots from the opening door. The weight and authority that comes with it are powerful enough for the whole room to freeze, and Yoongi’s grin tucks itself away into its corners. All other sounds - even the smallest of noises, scurry away into the cracks in the ceiling to hide from the sound of wooden sandals knocking softly against wooden floors, accompanied by a wooden cane. “We all saw the flower.”

Yoongi pushes himself up to sit properly, feet coming to rest on the floor like everyone else who start to straighten up at the presence of the Min clan’s head chief stepping into the room.

On the evening of February the 18th, the youngest son of the city’s notorious mafia gang shot a police officer.

A rare sight for many, especially for him - a young officer lying on the street’s pavement as a flower - a daffodil, blooms and glows from his chest.

On the cold Friday night, in a world where the first object one’s soulmate touches would bloom into a flower, a daffodil had bloomed out of a police officer’s chest from the bullet shot by a mafia.

On that cold Friday night, Min Yoongi had shot his soulmate.
“The true core of a mafia’s family line is based around soulmates. I’ve emphasized this many times before and mentioned it countless.” Head chief Min says as he sits himself down at the head of the table, his strong and bold posture educates many on his power despite being in his black cotton nightwear. “You couldn’t have possibly forgotten that, Yoongi.”

“No, of course not,” Yoongi mutters. He can feel a sharp pain crawl up from the base of his skull, inching closer to the top of his head. He runs his fingers through his black locks in an attempt to somehow soothe the ache. “But then there was no way I could’ve known beforehand that Jung was my soulmate. He’s a fucking cop.”

“Well, now you know!” His brother exclaims, “It was a daffodil, Yoongi, your birth flower. It was your bullet! You-” His mouth clamps shut at the small wave of his father’s hand.

“His profession has nothing to do with your judgment. It shouldn’t have.” The head chief remarks coldly. “You’ve made eye contact with him before you shot him. You knew, yet you ignored it and did it anyway.” Yoongi tries his best to appear unwavered, although it’s proving to be difficult, and the ache in his head is definitely not helping.

“If you’re talking about the soulmate contact, head chief,” Namjoon intervenes, “it’s possible that Yoongi’s migraine had masked the feeling then.”

At that, the head chief’s expression seems to soften ever so slightly, taking what his trusty assistant had said into consideration. Yoongi sighs.

The soulmate contact refers to the sudden wave of senses that hits as soon as one makes eye contact with their soulmate. Yoongi did remember looking at the officer straight in the eyes, the barrel of his gun aimed at the badge near his shoulder, but then the panging pain in his head made his mind blur, and before he knew it, the trigger was pulled, and officer Jung’s body was laid on the pavement.

Even the most clueless bystander would be able to work out what had happened. They’d look at the officer’s body, then at the wounded flower blooming from his heart, then trace the path back to Min Yoongi, whose gun is still aimed upwards but his free hand was clutching his head.

“This migraine of yours,” his father lowers his voice “have you been neglecting your medication again?”

“Doesn’t matter if I did or not. They don’t help. Never do.” Yoongi lies back on the couch, head tipping over the top, “And so what if I knew? What difference would it have made? We were raiding his house! No one expected that to happen, out of all things!” He stops abruptly when his head gives him another painful sting.

Yoongi wants to say that he’s gotten used to the pain after years of it, but it progressively gets worse every time, sometimes so much that it clouds his thoughts, and his brain can’t seem to process anything but the stinging pain, outlining the trails of his nerves. No one knows what caused it or how to treat it, and Yoongi’s given up on finding the answer to any of that after his 30th prescribed medication.

Namjoon came up with a theory, years ago when it first started happening that it was because of his mother, more so her death, that has caused it. A bit harsh, but it makes sense since the endless waves of migraines started hitting the day his mother passed away. Yoongi was still in high school then, and most weeks were spent by him having this painful strike of a headache consume him in
the middle of class and Namjoon has to carry him to the nurse who doesn’t do much except for giving him a few painkillers. Maybe it was the fact that his mother died that affected him, maybe it was the difficult concept of the chieftess of one of the most powerful mafia gang who has defeated several men was defeated by a car accident.

“Putting this bitch of a headache aside, is anyone else just baffled?” Yoongi starts, shaking the memory out of his head, “You’re getting mad because a cop was hurt. This sounds crazy, but even Donghyuk hyung makes more sense getting mad over that stock shit.” His brother looks as if he’s about to protest but then snaps his mouth shut after realizing that Yoongi is favoring his side. He looks around the room, at the other gang members, most if not all of them have their eyes glued to their laps, not daring to look up. Yoongi knows they agree, though. Any sane mafia would.

“It doesn’t matter what job he took up, Yoongi. What matters is that he’s your soulmate and you shot him.” His father coughs, and for a minute there all the faces in the room washes out into concern. “I’m not worried about the stocks because Namjoon will find a way to fix it. It’s the least of our problems.” He looks at Namjoon, and the boy gives him a reassuring nod.

“Now, however,” The old man pushes himself up with his cane before Seokjin springs up to assist him. “We’re going to the hospital. All of us.” His eyes glide around the room once, then back to focus on Yoongi. “You, you’re going to visit Jung Hoseok.”

“Dad, that’s-”

“Dismissed. Go and dress yourselves properly.” The cane knocks on the wooden floor a few times before Yoongi’s father is completely out of the room, and everyone slowly starts to migrate to their places.

Yoongi sits back fully on the couch as if hoping he’d sink into the cushions, a bitter scowl on his face. He feels the cushion on his side dip slightly as Namjoon drops himself down.

“Hey hyung,” the younger boy starts, “I think you’re making the situation out to be worse than it actually is.”

Yoongi turns his head to face Namjoon with a confused frown on his face, and so he continues “I don’t think I’m supposed to tell you this, but head chief Min has been struggling to come to accept it too, the fact that you’re tied to a police officer.”

Namjoon takes Yoongi’s gesture of sitting up properly as a notion for him to continue, “You know the head chief, he hates cops. Doesn’t want anything to do with them ever. That’s just a mafia thing.” Namjoon clears his throat, “But I think he’s come to accept it as your father and as a person. He’s your soulmate whether you both like it or not. It’s practically written in the stars.”

“The stars are bullshit then.” Yoongi spits.

“That, or the world’s just having a laugh making their modern-day Romeo and Juliet pair.” Namjoon chuckles but stops after realizing that Yoongi barely cracked a smile.

“I really believe in being your own person and making your own choices,” Namjoon murmurs, “but I can also tell that it’s something your father really wants. He’s willing to look over the tension between the mafia and the police for his son. It’s probably his dying wish for you to be with your soulmate.”

Yoongi lifts his head, his migraine dying down a little. “Dying?”

Namjoon seems to realize then the weight of his words and clears his throat, “You see, hyung,”
his tone softens “we’re not just going to the hospital so you could visit Jung Hoseok.” The younger boy looks as if he’s battling himself to say it.

“Oh, right.” Yoongi cuts him off. “Yeah, I know about that. Just didn’t think about it. Right.” He nods, feeling the minute pain building up again and he rubs his jaw. “Let me know what they say.”

“Of course.” Namjoon pushes himself off the couch. “You should get dressed. I’m gonna go see if the van is ready.”

* *

The hospital is a strange place, not only because of its sickly clean smell and the weird machinery, but the people of all sorts that visit. It could be a quiet afternoon with senior citizens coming for their usual checkups, or an injured officer rushed into ER… or a huge gang of mafias striding in like a large wolf pack, covered in black from head to toe, suits cuffed and hair slicked back, a few sunglasses and Rolexes. Two assistants accompany them at the side before the taller one steps forward to the front desk to ask for the whereabouts of officer Jung Hoseok.

“H-He’s in the patients' ward along with the others.” The nurse replies, clearly trembling.

Assistant Kim tries to offer a smile he hopes is kind enough, “Right, thank y-”

“He’s in the patients' ward?” Chief Min steps forward to Namjoon’s side.

“Yes.” Namjoon answers for the nurse who seems almost too intimidated to talk.

“Why, that’s ridiculous!” He exclaims, and the people at the receptions flinch. “Move him to a private room for god’s sake! The guy got shot!” The other men behind him start adding their own comments too.

Namjoon steps closer to the desk and the shaking receptionist, the attempted warm smile up and wider than before as an apology for the commotion. “I’m sorry, is it possible for you to transfer Officer Jung to a private room?”

The receptionist calms down a little before she answers, “The police department has only paid enough for a bed in the ward, so he’s sharing a room with the other patients.”

“If it won’t trouble you too much, would it be acceptable if we pay to transfer him to a private room, then? Mr. Min is very persistent.” Assistant Kim tries again, his tone more pragmatic than before.

Namjoon receives a pat on the back from Seokjin after returning the payment details to the receptionist. The younger boy ducks his head down to hide a dimply little smile as Seokjin leaves to escort head chief Min to his checkup. Most of the men go to follow Seokjin at his heels, leaving only Namjoon and Yoongi on the uncomfortable plastic chairs.

“Don’t be too worried about the chief,” Namjoon says suddenly.

Yoongi turns his head, considers denying that he is, then asking how Namjoon knew, then just acceptance. “I know I can’t do much to help, which sucks.”
Namjoon hums. “That Jung guy,” he starts, “it seems like he’s in critical condition. Might not make it. You should be worried about that.”

Before Yoongi could argue that a cop’s death means nothing to him, soulmate or not, Namjoon continues, “You may not care what happens to your soulmate, but your father does, hyung. I don’t think he’ll take the news very well, I mean, his son is going to end up living the rest of his life without a soulmate because he shot him.”

Yoongi sits back, trying to ignore another wave of pain in his head. “Right. Alright.” He breathes. “Is he good for us to visit yet?”

Namjoon looks back towards the reception, “They’ll probably tell us when they’re ready. He hasn’t woken up yet though.”

After about ten minutes of dozing off, nail picking, and Namjoon showing him random animal videos he saw on his Twitter feed, Seokjin slips into the waiting room and crashes onto the tiny seat next to Namjoon, head automatically coming to rest on his shoulder.

It’s comical, Yoongi notices, how the two assistants seem to switch off from their work mode whenever they have the chance to rest, and the huge switch in character that comes as a result. All of Namjoon’s words and decisions are carefully calculated, and he has impeccable adaptation skills whenever he’s an assistant, yet he enjoys looking at animals much smaller than him and making miniature houses even though he’s established that he’s terrible at them. Seokjin is incredibly stern and strong, physically and mentally when he’s working, yet he likes to whisper random dad jokes into the ears of anyone near him, (poorly) muffling a laugh after hearing the expected groan as a response.

“How’s the head chief?” Namjoon asks, one of his hand creeping up near Seokjin’s hair but retracting and coming back to clutch his tablet as if he knew better.

“It’s not looking so good,” Seokjin confesses “but it hasn’t been looking good since the chiefest passed and the flower wilted.” Yoongi gulps.

It’s inevitable; fate comes to one in the form of a thorned rose that leaves inevitable wounds. Soulmates can heal and extend life as much as it can take it away, and head chief Min’s disintegrating body is a barely living example of a singular soul that rots after losing a significant half of it when Yoongi’s mother passed away a few years ago.

The flower - a delicate little primrose that bloomed from what was initially the handkerchief of a waitress at some soju place. Now, it sits in a glass jar at the center of a room of several other glass jars of different varying flowers that bear with them different stories; a marigold from the cap of a pen, a rose molded from a scarf or even a poppy from the barrel of a gun. The difference is that all these mementos stay tinted and blooming, while the once white petals of the primrose have started to stain into an unpleasant dark brown, like an infection that has run too deep to cure.

Although, of course, just like how one can not bring a wilting flower back to its brown-less, unwilting state - lost lives stay lost - if only physically.

Wilted flowers stay wilted - lost lives stay lost.

Even stars die.

That’s just how the universe works.

“Oh, Yoongi, I was gonna tell you,” Seokjin stretches his arms back and groans as he hears his
joints popping like an elderly when Yoongi looks up from his hands, “they moved the cop into a private room. You can see him now if you want.” He yawns, “Scratch that, you have to. Go see him.”

✿

Yoongi walks past most of the gang members on his way; they're crowding outside his father’s room.

He can barely see his father’s face from where he’s standing, and he seems to be resting quite peacefully, save for the minute frown he has on, as if there’s an itch, literally and figuratively, that is still troubling him.

“I can’t believe boss.” Hyunsoo murmurs, “He’s practically dying, yet he’s still asking if that damn cop is alright.”

“Yeah, and the damn cop is not alright. Apparently.” Jaeun whispers sharply, “I heard the doc said he might not make it through tonight.”

“Shit, that’s just gonna make boss even worse than he is already! Fucking cops.” Hyunsoo hisses, “not only are they shit at their jobs, they also can’t even stay alive? Sure, Yoongi shot him, which was awesome by the way, wish that were me, but that doesn’t mean he has to die.” Yoongi rolls his eyes and shuffles past them to the room a few doors further away.

The room is quiet, save for the sound of the door being pushed open and the soles of Yoongi’s shoes hitting the glossy bleached floor. He shoves his hands into the pockets of his suit pants as he walks up to the lone hospital bed at the center of the room, illuminated by one dim lamp.

Officer Jung has several chords attached to him, leading to a machine that monitors his heart rate, and one from the back of his hand to an IV drip. Near his collarbone where the hospital gown covers him is the white corners of the bandages that plaster the cotton just above the wound on his chest that moves quite faintly from his breathing.

On the little side table is a police badge, and in the small vase, a daffodil. His daffodil. Yoongi’s gut sinks.

His eyes finally cast down onto Jung Hoseok’s face; unlike his father, it's complete peace, everything at its most relaxed state. Perhaps, he’s still oblivious to the problems he’d have to face when he wakes up, what with his apartment being destroyed and discovering that the bastard that destroyed it is his soulmate.

Yoongi realizes then, as if he hadn’t before, the mental stress his father had to go through.

Starting from when his mother had passed away, and their flowers began to wilt, emphasizing how significant a soulmate is to one’s life, followed by discovering that his son’s soulmate is their arch enemy and that even if he’s come to accept it, it would lead to nothing if he dies. Not only that, who knows what would happen to Yoongi if his soulmate dies?

Just by going through the hypothetical consequences, Yoongi almost shivers and panic at the thought. He glances down to look at Jung Hoseok again, at the way the bridge of his nose catches the orange line of the lamplight down the slope to the pointed tip, the way it highlights his high
cheekbones down to his slightly parted lips. His faint eyebrows sit above his curved eyes, drooping slightly at its corners, lined by his long lashes.

He’s attractive - handsome. Anyone can see that.

He isn’t sure if it actually works, though he’s seen his father done it before when his mother’s condition was reaching its critical state. It might not work, but there’s not much to lose in trying.

Yoongi pulls his hands out of his pockets and slips his leather glove off of his right hand before he reaches down towards his soulmate’s body, fingers creeping under the neck of his hospital gown to rest his palm entirely on where the bandages sit on his chest, right above his heart.

The healing powers of a soulmate’s touch.

Somehow, the world had decided that no medicine is as powerful as soul-bounded intimacy.

Yoongi can feel the faint beating of the heart underneath him, yet the boy shows no sign of stirring awake. Perhaps, this is not enough.

Yoongi contemplates the option for a while before he breathes, holds onto the rails of the bed for support, and bends down to brush his lips over his soulmate’s.

He closes his eyes for the length of time that he stays in that position. The other boy’s lips are cold, but then it starts to warm up until it feels alive against his.

Yoongi pulls away and straightens up, eyes catching the police badge on the side table. He reaches over to touch it with his bare hand, glancing at the way it glows and blooms a small little bud before drawing away and exiting the room, pulling his glove back on.

It was assistant Kim who witnessed it all; the sight of a mafia bending over to kiss a police officer, leaving behind a little primrose blooming from the metallic police badge.

“Shut up.” Yoongi mumbles as Namjoon swings the door open for him with a sly little grin.

The few days after being discharged from the hospital felt like absolute hell.

After a word from the doctor that he’s somehow miraculously alive and well despite being shot in the chest, things don’t get much less confusing. Even the doctors couldn’t put a name to the condition; it was like phantom pain where the pain is coming from a part of the body that wasn’t there, but he wasn’t amputated. His wound has cured completely, leaving a scar, yet he still feels a sharp pain around it every now and then, which can be quite impractical and freaks Jimin out, especially when it’s in the middle of the night.

Oh, right. After going home to see his house completely wrecked, walls torn and door knocked off its hinges, his friend and coworker Jimin was sweet enough to let him stay over until things are settled.

“Hyung.” A voice sounds from far away, but Hoseok ignores it. “Hoseokie hyung.”

After a few seconds of silence, something hits the back of his head with a soft thunk, and he jumps
back to the present. He turns back to see a piece of paper that seems to be important paperwork crumpled into a ball. He glares at Jungkook from the desk behind him, the cheeky smile on the boy’s face ticking him off slightly.

“If I can bruise your jaw with that banana I can do even worse.” He threatens, and the brat just laughed.

“Love you, hyung.” Jungkook makes a huge heart with his arms above his head, still giggling, his bunny teeth out in full view and god damn it this kid is adorable.

But he can’t lose, oh no.

Hoseok fixes his glare on Jungkook, determined to keep it on until the brat feels guilty for disturbing him, but Jungkook is also putting up a fight. He starts doing little hand motions as if he’s shooting out the hearts towards Hoseok, accompanied by little bboing bboing sound effects that Hoseok usually does.

Today is not Hoseok’s day, he thinks as he surrenders like a sore loser, muttering a little I love you too back before spinning his chair away from Jungkook’s evil victory laugh.

“Relax, hyung. This is the day shift. You can’t be sleep deprived anymore.” Taehyung says from behind him before passing down a few files onto Hoseok’s desk. “You’re lucky the captain was nice enough to transfer you from the night shift. The night shift’s terrible.” Taehyung shudders at the thought. “When I was assigned there, Hienjin hyung who uses my desk during the day shift always leaves his beard shavings on it! I come in to work every evening knowing that it’s going to be disgusting and miserable!”

“Oh trust me, I know all about the beard shavings.” Hoseok groans as he stretches his arms out, arching over the back of his chair.

“Getting assigned back to the day shift is like winning the lottery, so you better appreciate it hyung.” Taehyung remarks.

Hoseok laughs, reaching over behind him to ruffle the younger boy’s hair. His fingers brush the surface of his old badge, and he immediately sits up to position his primrose back in place.

Taehyung looks concerned. “That flower… do you remember who did it?”

“No.” Hoseok sulks. “It was already there when I woke up. I have no idea who came to visit.”

“Me Tae and Kook came to visit on the first two days.” Jimin chimes from behind Taehyung proudly, beaming when Hoseok gives him a warm little smile. “None of us touched your badge though. We only put your daffodil in a vase.”

“And then someone stole it.” Taehyung remarks.

“For the last time, it wasn’t me!” Jungkook whines. “I only said it’s pretty and it doesn’t look like a regular flower, and the root part is weird, but I didn’t take it!”

“A daffodil?” Hoseok asks.

“There was a daffodil on your side table at the hospital, so we put it in a vase for you, but then it disappeared when you got discharged,” Taehyung explains. “It looks like you got a new one though.” He smiles. “That’s your birth flower, isn’t it?”
Hoseok glances at the primrose on his desk and sighs happily, “Yeah.”

“I wonder who it is!” Jimin squeals, “Do you think we know her? Him? Them?” Hoseok laughs at that.

“Why would they leave like that though? Do you think they’ll come back?” Jungkook has now rolled his chair up to Hoseok’s desk.

Hoseok looks at the flower again and blushes, his hand coming up to brush the little petals. “I hope so.”

Jimin snorts, “Imagine if they just turn up to the station right now just declaring ‘I am Jung Hoseok’s so-”

“I am Jung Hoseok’s soulmate.” A deep, unfamiliar voice chimes from the door.

A group of officers are crowding there as if a threat has turned up, but aren’t making any moves as if they’re unsure of what to do.

The crowd slowly breaks as all the heads in the room shoots back to look at Hoseok, who’s too flustered and surprised to do anything. A man walks up to his desk in a menacing demeanor. His dark grey overcoat drapes over his black button up shirt that lines the width of his shoulders down to his large gloved hands that swing by his side. Half of his dark hair is slicked back neatly, though a pair of sunglasses conceals his eyes.

He makes a stop right in front of Hoseok’s desk, and Hoseok’s hand instinctively reaches for his gun, trying his best to ignore the stinging pain in his chest that’s slowly rising in intensity.

The man reaches up to pull his shades off and looks at Hoseok directly in the eye, but he’s too distracted by the pain in his chest that is slowly escalating.

The first thing Hoseok (shamefully) notices is that he’s handsome, but then the sharp corners of his brown eyes bear with them a reminiscence of some kind.

Then it clicks.

“Aren’t you the guy who-”

“Jung Hoseok,” The man says, and Hoseok jumps at the mention of his name. He glances at the primrose blooming from the police badge on Hoseok’s desk for a split second before looking at him again and dropping down onto one knee. The sound of Taehyung and Jimin’s simultaneous gasps audible from his left.

“Jung Hoseok,” The man repeats. “My dear soulmate, will you marry me?”

Silence.

Chapter End Notes

I’m not sure when exactly bc school hhh but i’ll try to get the next chapter up as soon
as i can !! this is the longest fic i've worked on like Ever WHEW i'm gonna run out of vocabulary halfway through but pls bear with me if u love my child! things are only gonna get spicier from here on

please let me know what you think! reading ur responses always makes my day and i sincerely mean it :((

my twitter, my curiouscat
white lie (let’s do it)

Chapter Summary

“...What are you trying to say?” Hoseok asks nervously.

“Officer Jung...What do you think of white lies?”

A pause ensues as Hoseok processes the question and its implications.

“You want me to lie?” He sputters, “Like...pretend to be with you?”

Chapter Notes

warning for very (keyword: VERY) vague mentions of a past accident, a lot of sad flashbacks near the end :( it will make more sense later

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Jung Hoseok,” The man says determinedly, reaching up to grab one of hoseok’s hand to hold between his two gloved ones, the leather cold against his palm from the weather outside. “My dear soulmate, will you marry me?”

It’s silent for a while. A long, long while, as if no one in the station even dared to breathe.

“What the fuck...,” Hoseok hears someone whisper from afar, but realizes shortly after that it’s him. “What the fuck.” He says again, his voice ringing in his own ears and the pain in his chest increasing in intensity.

The man lets go of Hoseok’s hand to pull out a folded little note from his pocket, “I actually wrote a proposal speech.”

Hoseok squeaks, “Wait! Oh my god.” He cups his own face, feeling his cheeks heat up in his palms.

The man starts reading from his note anyway. “Jung Hoseok, I have yet to love you, and our start may be the worst start to any story, but-”

“Stop!” Hoseok shrieks. He springs up from his chair, hearing it roll away until Jungkook let out a soft grunt of pain from behind him. The madman looks up from his flimsy little note, and Hoseok reaches down to pull him up by his wrists to his feet and drag him towards the supply closet, one free hand hiding his red blazed cheeks as he tries his best to ignore all the confused faces surrounding them.

He walks past Taehyung, who’s pulling at his own hair with both hands like a lunatic, mouthing a very confused ‘what the fuck.’ Hoseok can’t do anything but throw him a look that the younger
boy could hopefully decode as ‘same.’

As soon as the closet door closes with a soft thud, Hoseok actually breathes, eyes closed and back against the door. He looks back up to see his alleged soulmate fiddling with the mop, and he snatches it from his hand to set it against one of the shelves.

“Why is he playing around with a mop?” Hoseok catches himself in time. “Questions. I have a lot of questions, sir.” he breathes, running a shaky hand through his hair. “Frankly, I don’t even know where to start.”

The man is merely inches away from Hoseok, maybe the supply closet wasn’t the best idea, but it was the first “private” place in the station that Hoseok could think of, but he isn’t really sure now as to why he wanted privacy with this complete stranger.

The man laughs. Laughs, this deceitful little cackle, shoulders shaking as he leans back against the back of the closet, arms crossed in front of his chest. “Jung Hoseok,” he says in a mocking tone, “I’m your soulmate, Min Yoongi.”

“Min…?”

The cursed surname.

Min Yoongi smirks, “I see you’ve heard of the Min clan before. Good to know the police aren’t completely clueless.”

“You…” The sting in Hoseok’s chest is at its most intense, but he still manages to shout, “You’re the bastard that raided my house! You shot me!”

Yoongi seems stern, unbothered by the way Hoseok shouts at him or steps closer. His arms stay crossed as he corrects, “Bastard s. Plural.” He says, “And yes, I did shoot you.”

Hoseok’s hands are in fists by his side, the pain in his chest so overwhelming he clenches his teeth. His right hand skids to the barrel of his gun. This was a bad idea, locking yourself in a small supply closet with a member of the mafia is definitely a bad idea, and Hoseok is greatly suffering the consequences.

“What have you got there officer? A gun?” Yoongi snickers, reaching back to tug at the back of his belt, revealing a shiny wooden handle, “Me too. We have a lot in common, huh?” The remark leaves Hoseok speechless.

Smirking at his success to intimidate, Yoongi brings his arms back up to cross in front of his chest, relaxing. “We’ve already paid for the bail for all our men, the reconstruction fees, and the hospital bills.” He says. “So what do you want from me, officer?” He leans a little closer to Hoseok, their foreheads almost touching before he whispers, “An apology?”

Hoseok can’t reply to the taunt, with the pain spreading to his limbs and his head, crawling into all his nerves and he breaks. He suddenly hunches over from the pain and brings a hand up to clutch where the scar is as if it would help to soothe it, shifting himself back until he hits another shelf.

Yoongi seems surprised, almost concerned for a blink of an eye, “Oh, what’s this?”

Hoseok doesn’t reply, he collapses down onto the floor and rests his back against one of the shelves as he hisses a breath out through his teeth. The pain is so overwhelming that it’s numb, and he can’t seem to move his limbs, can’t even make any audible noise from his mouth.

“Take off your shirt,” Yoongi murmurs as he slides one of the gloves off his hand, “take off your
shirt if you don’t want to keep holding onto your breast like an idiot, Jung.” He prods frustratingly as Hoseok wills himself to shake his head.

His hands eventually give in and drop to his side, chest heaving vigorously. He hears a long sigh before he can feel his shirt unbutton as a warm hand slips under to rest on his chest where the scar is. It takes Hoseok a second to realize that the damn criminal had the audacity to touch his bare chest.

“Don’t touch me!” Hoseok barks, willing all his strength to swat weakly at Yoongi’s hand, but the mafioso’s hand stays firmly glued to his chest.

Hoseok tries again, but then the pain gradually fades before coming to a complete stop.

Coming back to his senses, Hoseok looks down at the bare hand resting on his bare chest, then up at the mafioso who’s now crouching down in front of him as he shoves one of his gloves into his pocket, a bit blurry through his fringe.

“I see you have it too. Those random bursts of pain. Bet the doctors got their heads spun trying to figure it out.” Yoongi murmurs. “Welcome to the club. Can we talk now?”

Hoseok still looks confused, both by the remark and the sudden change of tone and demeanor; he seems much softer, and for a second there, almost... kind. Yoongi sighs, “I have this migraine that randomly comes up every now and then. Hurts like a bitch.” He removes his hand from the scar, but then the pain shoots up Hoseok’s chest again like a powerful wave, making him hiss and groan and wail in pain.

“Oh for fuck’s sake.” Yoongi curses and slips his hand back on to Hoseok’s chest. “I’m gonna keep my hand here as long as you promise you’re gonna talk, alright?” Hoseok’s heart is still beating rapidly beneath his hand, mostly out of panic, if anything. But then who wouldn’t? The man who shot you is hovering over you, inches away, a hand on your chest.

Hoseok breathes before he opens his mouth to talk, “How are you doing this?”

“Like I said, soulmates,” Yoongi says as his free hand reaches into his coat pocket to pull out a flower, a daffodil. Its green stem is stained red, and the petals have an otherworldly glow to it. Its roots reach down to enclose on something small, resting in the middle of Yoongi’s palm.

“You’re my soulmate?” Hoseok can barely hear what he’s saying, can barely believe what he’s saying. The little primrose badge on his desk and his little giddy bursts of excitement comes back to his recollection, and it throws him into this wave of shock and confusion - has he been blushing and fantasizing over a criminal this whole time? “How can I not freak out!” Hoseok hisses through his teeth. “Y-You fucking shot me and fucking up my place, and n-now you’re my s-soulmate!? And that’s the bullet!? My blood!?”

“Go freak out in your own time! Don’t make me slap you across the face!” Yoongi hisses back.
“Jung, I’m giving you a chance to calm down, or I’ll bruise your fucking face.” He threatens and Hoseok chokes. Yoongi lifts his hand up as a warning before Hoseok snaps his mouth shut and swallows. “I’m here to talk to you, Jung.” Yoongi starts, lowering his hand down. “A plea, if you may.” His hand on Hoseok’s chest shifts.

Hoseok looks suspicious, “If you’re actually going to propose…”

“Is that a yes?” Yoongi looks up suddenly, almost hopeful.

“Fuck no. Why would I marry you, Min? Why are you even doing this? Do you want to marry me?” Hoseok scowls and Yoongi mirrors it.

Yoongi pauses for a second and doesn’t reply. Before Hoseok could throw another nervous and confused fit, he clears his throat, and his eyes start to shift around the room; up to the top shelves where they keep the spray bottles, to the mop he was playing with earlier for some godforsaken reason, then to the bucket it’s dipped in - anywhere except at Hoseok’s face. “It’s my father.” He finally says.

“Min Hongdo?” Hoseok lifts his head. “The head chief of the Min clan who’s responsible for three drug rings?”

Yoongi’s scowl shifts into a frown. “Give him a little credit, would you? It’s twenty-five. Fucking cops.” He murmurs the last part.

“Twenty-five!?”

“Oops.” Yoongi smirks. “Good luck trying to crack down the rest then. You’ll need it.”

If it weren’t for Yoongi helping him relieve this sting of a pain, Hoseok would’ve already sprung out of the room with a mafioso in handcuffs, that damn smirk wiped clean off of his face.

“Well, my father’s dying,” Yoongi says a little weakly, and all of Hoseok’s thoughts just disintegrated from his head.

The expression that Yoongi’s face shifts into is solemn as if he’s only realized now the true implications of his own words. It’s pinched, like every word he punches out of himself is too difficult to admit.

His word slips Hoseok into an old, dreaded memory. One that he wishes to forget as much as he would hate to forget it.

Sunny
Rain
Traffic
Clear
Oh wait

There’s no point trying to get us out, Hoseok. We’re stuck.

“My father’s dying,” Yoongi repeats, stronger this time, and Hoseok shakes awake from the hellish
trance he was unintentionally put in, “and he wants me to be with my soulmate.” He gulps. “*The head chief of the mafia wants me to be with a cop.*”

Yoongi is quiet for a while, and Hoseok doesn’t dare to speak. The hand on his chest is shaking.

“The mafia hates cops, that’s a given.” Yoongi continues, “so imagine how fucking difficult it was for my dad, the leader of the mafia, to come to accept it.” He looks up at Hoseok and meets his eyes, but there’s no wave of senses, no soulmate pull, all because of the pain that’s distracting his body. He does wonder, secretly, if he’d suddenly love Yoongi the moment he looks at him if it weren’t for the sting in his chest and the migraine in Yoongi’s head.

What would happen then, if they fall in love?

Guess they’ll never know.

“What- what do you want from me, then? I’m not going to marry you.” Hoseok tells him as sternly as he can. Still, deep down inside of him is sympathy, empathy; the feeling of losing a father is not a concept too distant for him to understand. In fact, it’s a bit too close for comfort.

*Be good when we’re gone.*

“Don’t get me wrong, Jung. I hate cops.” Yoongi says, hands clenching down on the scar. “I’d remove my hand if it weren’t for you spiraling out of control every time and making you unable to communicate.” He hisses. “But I’m doing this for my dad.”

“...What are you trying to say?” Hoseok asks nervously.

“Officer Jung,” Yoongi shifts his weight onto his knees, drawing himself closer to Hoseok and for a second the poor guy was convinced that Yoongi is trying to propose to him again. “What do you think of white lies?”

A pause ensues as Hoseok processes the question and its implications.

“You want me to lie?” He sputters, “Like...pretend to be with you?”

“Oh trust me, the feelings mutual. The thought of it makes me want to gag.” Yoongi remarks. “But if that’s what my father wants, then yes. Are you in?”

“How are we supposed to convince anyone that we’re together?” Hoseok thinks it’s a fair question. “You’re a mafioso! A criminal! I’m a-”

“A cop. I got that.” Yoongi rolls his eyes. “We’re soulmates. We’re gonna have to figure that out. You in?”

*A fake relationship between a policeman and a mafioso.* The kind of love that they would- *should* have for each other would have to be so strong in order to convince anyone that, despite all the obvious obstructions and the rivalry, they *want* to be with each other. The soulmate pull is out of the equation too because of their physical conditions. *Fuck.*

“If I do agree, it won’t be easy...What’s in it for me?” Hoseok asks.

“Well, if you’d marry me like I proposed earlier,” Yoongi leans back a little, and it feels as if he’s giving Hoseok space to breathe, “part of the money would be inherited to you. And I can tell you we make a lot.” Hoseok rolls his eyes. “But since you won’t,” Yoongi smirks, “nothing, as of now. I’m sure you’ll find something, or maybe I’ll just threaten to kill you, that works. You in or-”
“Min” Hoseok bites. “Give me time to-”

There’s a distinct voice muffled beyond the door; Jimin’s.

“Wait, sir! You can’t just go in th-”

Before the two could move from their initial position, cramped into each other at the back of the closet, the worn out door rattles before a large man breaks it open with his shoulder.

“Yoongi! Wh-”

The man freezes at the broken door. He’s suited up in black quite similarly to Yoongi. Behind his shoulders, three distinct heads of Hoseok’s younger coworkers stick up into view, eyes wide. Naturally, the sight would take anyone by surprise.

“Seokjin.” Yoongi remarks.

The four don’t know the context behind the position; they just see a mafioso groping a cop’s bare chest, faces inches apart from each other.

“Are we…” Jimin’s the first one to speak. “Are we interrupting...something?”

“I-” Hoseok fumbles, looking at the four pairs of eyes staring back at them, the blush that had faded earlier blooming back and spreading to his ears.

Taehyung, who now has a faint blush on his cheeks, is starting to tug the large man, Seokjin, back by his sleeves. It’s proving to be difficult, yet he continues to try anyway. “We’ll- we’ll come back later, hyung.”

Hoseok sputters, “I-It’s not what you think it is! Taehyung!”

He pushes Yoongi off of him and shoves himself past the four men through the broken door. Luckily, the pain doesn’t come back this time as he runs back to his desk, trying too desperately to focus on what he was doing earlier as if no one was looking at him.

A few minutes later, footsteps emerge from the back and Yoongi is strolling out with the large man from earlier; Jungkook, Taehyung, and Jimin at their heels murmuring something he can’t quite make out.

Yoongi slows down when he nears Hoseok’s desk. His large shadow casts all over the wooden surface, but his gaze is lingering on the little primrose on the desk one last time before he turns away, walking out of the station with both hands shoved into his coat pockets. The station goes quiet once again before the usual chatter and atmosphere restore itself in time.

The three boys return with a few snacks in their hands, offering Hoseok some and slowly scattering away after realizing that Hoseok has his mouth clamped shut and is determined to keep it shut no matter how much they poke and prod or whisper a little what the fuck was that into his ears. He’ll come through, they all know that. Just not now. But he will. He’ll explain everything to them the moment he actually knows what he’s going to do.

It isn’t until a few hours later that the elephant in the room grows too big to not address.

“Hoseok hyung,” Jimin calls him and Hoseok turns at the mention of his name, “The captain wants to see you in his office.”
Captain Bang Sihyuk sits at his desk in his clammy little office, the air conditioning as loud as background noise can be.

“Jung, I just came back a few minutes ago.” He starts, “Jimin told me what happened.” Hoseok freezes. “But he didn’t see much. I want to hear it from your perspective.”

And so Hoseok tells the truth, as always. He tells the captain about Yoongi, the twenty-five drug rings, and the unusual marriage proposal he had given him before he panicked and ran away. It doesn’t make any sense, Hoseok can’t make any sense of it himself, but it’s the truth.

Hoseok tells the truth, not only because he’s an honest guy, but he’s also secretly hoping for the captain to do something, take action, put him into some protection program to ensure that he’s safe from the mafia or something - anything.

Luck doesn’t seem to be on his side today.

“I think you should do it.” The captain says.

“...Excuse me, sir?”

“Hoseok, the Min clan is not only notorious for committing several crimes and going against federal laws, but also for being able to get away with several of them.” Captain Bang grumbles as he rubs his jaws. “You see, they have this complex system, money, and countless numbers of men in their hands that they can get away with anything. The money especially.”

Hoseok sits up in his chair as his superior continues, “They use their dirty money and men to get away with anything. One of their guys got arrested? Pay the bail, and they’re out in a day, easy. Things get serious and they go to court? They get a damn good defense attorney with a pile of their money, and their guy walks out a free man. We find a drug ring? They get their backup to transport their hash at lightning speed to a different obscure location. The moment we break into their hive, it’s empty. They’ve already fled.”

“That’s frustrating.” Hoseok intones.

“It is,” the captain nods, “but what’s more frustrating is that their mansion is just sitting there right in the middle of the damn city yet we can’t get an eligible search warrant to impeach their main hive.” He sighs, “They can go out on walks at the park, they can go shopping at a mall, eating at a restaurant, sitting right next to us, but we can’t arrest them because we don’t have any evidence to hold them accountable. This is what we’re faced with right now.” He looks at Hoseok, “You can change that.”

“I see,” Hoseok murmurs, “and you think I would be able to get my hands on some kind of evidence if I date one of their men?”

“Not just any of their men. Min Yoongi is the heir to the head position of the mafia.” Captain Bang remarks and Hoseok feels something drop in his stomach. “He’s going to be in power as soon as his old man dies, so he has access to all the information and stocks. You will definitely get your hands on something by winning his trust.”

“...And what if he finds out?” Hoseok inquires, feeling nerves crawl up his spine just imagining the consequences in his head.

“Well, we just have to not let that happen, then.” The captain smirks. “It’s a white lie, as long as he
doesn’t find out.”

*Another white lie.*

“I’m not so sure about this, sir…”

“By doing this, you’re a big help to the city - the country, possibly. We don’t know how widespread the Min clan is.”

Hoseok looks up, “...You want me to take down the whole Min clan?”

“Not just you, exclusively, but you’ll play one of the biggest parts in the operation,” The captain remarks, “It’d be a good redemption.”

Hoseok cocks his head to the side, "Redemption for what, sir?"

"For your family."

At the captain’s words, Hoseok spirals back into that empty dry land once more, though perhaps he had never managed to escape in the first place. The barricade of the hospital bed and the high blue curtains; the stinging smell of bleach and sterilized walls; the beeping monitors; the salty taste of his tears.

The thought bears with it pride, aspirations, memories.

The thought bears with it loss, wound, *memories.*

*Sunny*

*Rain*

*Traffic*

*Clear*

*Oh wait*

Hoseok shakes the memory from his head as he wraps his arms around himself for warmth, his breath fogging up into white clouds, like little souls slipping out of him. Every sound of his shoes clicking on the pavements is enunciated in the quiet, counting his steps as he makes his way to the front gate, a shaky hand coming up to press the doorbell.

“Who’s this?” A deep voice buzzes from the intercom.
“Jung.” He says shakily, “Jung Hoseok.”

The line goes quiet for a minute before he hears someone curse and groan. There are distinct murmuring in the background, like complaints that he can’t exactly make sense of. The voice comes on again, more distant this time “Hey, Yoongi! The fucking cop is at the door!”

There are more indistinct shouting in the background before the smaller gate door opens to reveal Min Yoongi on the other side, shades off and coat gone, leaving only his black silk button up shirt and belted jeans.

The familiar smirk curves up his lips again, “Bold of you to come to the enemy’s house with your uniform on.”

“I’m here to accept your offer… or the lack of it,” Hoseok states matter-of-factly. Yoongi’s eyebrows cock up in interest,

“Let’s do it,” Hoseok says. “This white lie of yours.”

The white fogs of his breath escape his lips to hover in front of Yoongi.

The bad man smirks as he sucks the little white souls in, leaning in close enough to brush his still warm lips against Hoseok’s.

Hoseok freezes then, suddenly immobile for as long as the kiss lasts.

The smirk is still plastered on Yoongi’s face as he pulls away, and he steps to the side. A group of men are behind him, distinguishable only by their scarred faces, their black wardrobe blending into the black of the night. “Welcome in then, beloved.”

Hoseok steps into the enemy’s den.

Chapter End Notes

no, i don't sleep well at night, like at all.
also trust me this is a slow burn (i say as i just made them kiss) this is a slow burn
this is the enemies part but wait until the to lovers part kick in oh boy we're in for a Ride (i say we bc i'm also going through it as well we're in this together)

my twitter, my curiouscat
“So no kissing on the lips...other casual ones are fine, you can play with my hair, and when one of our pain thing kicks in, we do it in private. Sounds fair?”

“Try kissing me on the cheek, Jung...Hoseok.”

Like any other teenager, Hoseok didn’t know right away that he wanted to be a police officer, but his outgoing personality meant that he could get along with all sorts of people, from the best to the worst - a personality trait a cop should have, meeting several different types of people everyday.

Starting from a young age, and pertaining to his adult years as no more than a subconscious however, is the concept of “the bad man” that his mind has created as an accumulation of things that he deem wrong.

The bad man never had a face, name, or an identity whatsoever. If he were to have one, all Hoseok could force to visualize is some warped, caricature of some kind that does not represent an actual being that walks on the street amongst people. Perhaps it is because Hoseok never actually figured out who it is that he should protect others from, the one that tips the moral scale.

Perhaps he’s no one.

Perhaps Hoseok is sitting right next to him.

Yoongi is shifting around on the too soft leather sofa, laying back and draping an arm across the back of the cushion behind him. Their thighs are brushing from how close they’re sitting, and Hoseok can’t really shift away because there’s nowhere to shift to, with the whole couch and all the seats in the room being littered with the members of the Min mafia clan. Some of them are dressed casually as if they had not expected a visitor - definitely not a cop such as himself in his uniform.

Their facial expressions are difficult to read, as if the feeling of conflict had spread through all of them like a disease, uncertain as to how they should feel about the whole situation; the usual hostility towards cops can not be with a long bloodline of soulmates throughout their history, yet it’s just so difficult to gloss over that fact when the man is sitting there with that damned badge on
his chest.

So Hoseok sits there in his uniform amongst the black hues of the mafia, all packed into one room.

“Jung Hoseok,” It takes him a while to respond, to look up to the man sitting across from him. His own name has never sounded so foreign when said by another person - the leader of the mafia, nevertheless. “Don’t worry about your gun, you’ll get it back when you leave. It’s a strict rule here, no guns in the house.”

“I respect that. Sorry for turning up unannounced at this time of the night, sir. I hope I haven’t interrupted anything important. I just finished my shift.” Hoseok forces himself to say. He isn’t scared, surprisingly, but he can feel the nerves and tension crawling up his spine like a minor ache.

“That’s alright, we were just lazing around. It’s been rather uneventful today, hasn’t it, Yoongi?” The head chief says, eyes gliding from Hoseok’s to the man next to him, Yoongi nods. “Little did we know that it’s just about to get quite interesting.”

“Have you had dinner yet, Hoseok?” A voice from beyond Yoongi addresses him, and he sits up a little higher to see Namjoon, a tall man, the couch too low for his lanky legs, looking at him through his gold rimmed glasses. He looks kind, at least, kinder than most of the faces here. Although maybe it’s because they knew each other before, were friends, friends who shared the memory of two nervous boys entering the doors of the police academy for the first time.

It’s been years, but the recognition on both of their faces at the same time when their eyes met is probably the only good thing about coming here so far.

When Hoseok first stepped into the main building, a man came to stand beside Yoongi and when he looks up, his eyes crinkle up slightly into these little crescents as he offers a warm, almost out-of-character smile considering his status and the situation. It doesn’t take long for something to light up from the back of Hoseok’s mind, though.

“Namjoon? Dude!” Hoseok laughs excitedly, hands naturally coming up to grasp Namjoon’s as he steps closer, the tense situation suddenly behind him. “It’s been so long!”

Yoongi raises an eyebrow as he looks between the two, clearly confused, “What’s this?”

“We were partners at the police academy, hyung. As soon as I heard the name I just knew.” Namjoon explains as he turns to Hoseok again, “I had to admit I was really worried when we visited you at the hospital. I’m glad to see that you’re doing well for yourself.”

“Thanks,” Hoseok smiles, effortlessly, “and you…” he trails off as Namjoon’s warm little smile fades and he ducks his head down, clearing his throat.

It seems to be a difficult topic, how one of the police academy’s best students left to work for the mafia, and his old friend doesn’t seem to want to talk about it right now.

“The universe works in funny ways, huh?” Is all Namjoon says, and Hoseok isn’t sure if he’s referring to him becoming an assistant for the mafia, or Hoseok and Yoongi being tied together as soulmates.

Namjoon is still looking at him from next to Yoongi, coming into focus amongst the other black souls behind him. “Ah yeah, I ate before I came here.” Hoseok answers. He’s basically holding on to his old friend like a lifeline right now as he avoids eye contact with every other person in the room. “Have you all? Should I come back another time?”
“No need to worry,” Yoongi murmurs, “most of us feed on pretty cops.” He smirks when he sees the way Hoseok’s face twist.

“Yoongi,” His father warns, “let’s not make a bad impression on our guest.”

“What? I’m just flirting,” Yoongi replies nonchalantly, “can’t I flirt with my fianc-”

“Boyfriend, god,” Hoseok whispers the last part, “boyfriend.”

He said it. Hoseok said it.

This is the white lie, disguised in a pretty bow for all to see.

And it’s working.

Every single pair (or even singular) of eyes in the room visibly widen at Hoseok’s words and suddenly there are murmurings amongst the rows of black that fills the room.

All voices dissolve into silence though, at the sound of Chief Min’s cane on the hardwood floor, loud enough to jolt Hoseok and consume all the aural senses of everyone there that for a split second, the only sense detected was the powerful landing of the foot of the cane.

“Boyfriend?” Chief Min asks as he turns to Yoongi, “didn’t you propose to him today?”

“I did.”

“And you said no?” Someone a few people away suddenly asks, “I thought I saw you guys ki-”

“Don’t remind me.” Someone else from the other side of the room threatens, harmonized by a few gagging noises. “Seokjin told everyone what he saw today at that rat hole and that was already too much.”

“That we did.” Yoongi smirks and Hoseok hopes to god that his blush isn’t obvious. “He’s my fianc-”

“Boyfriend.” Hoseok interrupts again. “I uh… I said no because I wanted us to…to take things slow and stuff?” there are a few confused faces surrounding him. Hoseok is terrible at lying. “You know, it’s like we just met and all that so I-”

“Basically.” Yoongi takes over and Hoseok suddenly relaxes. Here’s another white lie. “I asked him to marry me and he said no but he’s open to trying out a relationship with me.”

Yoongi’s father cocks his head to the side, “Well what’s the difference between you two just getting married? You two are soulmates, you’re going to end up together anyway, so why not make it official now?”

“We destroyed his apartment to shit, Dad. He has every reason to not trust us completely,” Hoseok can feel Yoongi’s fingers graze his shoulder. “Also I really don’t care either way. He’s just nice enough to give us a chance.”

Hoseok turns to look at Yoongi, his eyes determinant and sincere as they direct themselves to his father as if they aren’t making up a whole scenario where they don’t hate each other or Yoongi didn’t threaten to slap Hoseok if he doesn’t stop whimpering. What Yoongi said was uncharacteristically kind, trying to justify something his father doesn’t agree with or understand for him.
“Seokjin, you’re taking care of the apartment situation, right?” His father turns to the large man sitting next to him who Hoseok recognizes from this morning. Events of earlier resurface and he can feel the tips of his ears heating up at the memory.

“Yes sir.” Seokjin responds, “We did quite a lot of damage, so it might not be ready for another few months.”

Hoseok frowns, “I was going to bring this up earlier,” he speaks up and all the eyes direct themselves to where he’s sitting. Yoongi also turns to face him. “Why was my apartment targeted?”

At the corner of his eye, Namjoon pulls a face and the room suddenly grows dead silent, even the faint, barely there murmurings that were so much just background noise comes to a shush. No one speaks for far too long that the air becomes awkward, each one of the men that Hoseok musters up the courage to face don’t seem to know what to do with their hands.

Yoongi breaks the silence when he sits up, shifting the arm behind Hoseok to rest his elbow on the backrest and rubbing the back of his neck almost sheepishly. “We pick our targets from a background search, and yours just happened to be ideal.”

“How so?” Hoseok cocks his head to the side in question.

“Yoongi,” One of the men warns. When Hoseok follows the hoarse voice to its owner, he recognizes a few similarities between the man’s facial features and Yoongi’s; the sharp, glaring eyes. He is much larger though, with a broader nose and jaw, most likely Yoongi’s older brother.

“If he’s going to be a part of this family then he needs to know that we can be trusted.” Yoongi replies sternly. His father stays quiet. “You live alone, no family, in a quiet area, and your work shift ends late. Of course, there are a lot of others that fit the profile, but I guess you got a bit unlucky.”

“We took care of all the payments, of course.” Namjoon adds, a bit panicked as if he’s worried that Hoseok will get mad. “There’s nothing to worry about.”

“You can stay here for the time being.” Chief Min adds and Hoseok looks up, even Yoongi’s eyes grow wide at the remark, followed by many other pairs, sparking several other conversations in the room that quickly escalate into an uproar.

“A cop? Living here!?” Yoongi’s brother cries, “that’s ridiculous!” a few shouts of agreement follows.

Hoseok murmurs something but his words seem to dissipate into the air from the loud outrage in the room. Yoongi seems to notice though when he shouts, “Shut the fuck up!”

A few people stop talking at Yoongi’s command but a few more are still going off in this passionate rage that had overcome them.

It doesn’t take long until the now familiar sound of the head chief’s cane hits the wooden floor again, warding off all the complaints and groaning.

“You don’t have to do that,” Hoseok repeats himself, “I’m crashing at a friend’s place right now until my apartment is fixed.” He turns to face all the glaring eyes across the room, “I think that’s what everyone would like best.”

“I give the commands in this house, it doesn’t matter what the others think,” Chief Min says
sternly, “let me do this for you to make up for it. Anyone who disagrees can go stay elsewhere, Officer Jung will be staying here."

Hoseok panics, “Ah...I really don’t…”

“He doesn’t trust us,” Yoongi states flatly, “he doesn’t want to live in a house full of criminals.”

The head chief lifts his eyebrow at the statement but makes no move to protest or say otherwise.

Does this mean Hoseok is free to go? But what about the insider’s information?

Hoseok curses to himself inside his head when he interjects, “I think we can make a compromise?”

“A compromise? How so?” Chief Min turns to him.

“While I don’t want to trouble you all, I would be open to try staying here with Mi- Yoongi … for maybe a few days a week?”

The name feels foreign in his tongue - Yoongi. That’s what he has to call him.

The head chief rubs his jaw as he ponders before looking up and nodding, “I don’t see a problem with that. Do you, Yoongi?”

Yoongi closes his eyes and shakes his head, “Nope.”

“That’s fine with me then. Feel free to drop by as you wish, officer.” He says to Hoseok, “Hoseok-ssi. We hope you can learn to trust us as much as we will learn to trust you.”

Yoongi’s brother pulls a face at the name but when he catches Hoseok looking, he tugs the corner of his mouth wider. Is he...is he smiling?

Hoseok gives him a crooked little smile in return before the man scowls and looks away.

“Then can I…” Hoseok starts, trying his best to ignore all the eyes that cast on him, “I don’t need money or anything, but can I ask for something?”

“Go on,” The head chief responds.

“I want an apology.” Hoseok says aptly.

The whole room goes quiet, as if under a spell.

“Excuse me?” The head chief raises an eyebrow.

“I want an apology for all that has happened, sir, for the property damage, the shock you gave my neighbours, and the uh- the shooting.” He turns to Yoongi at the last part.

Very faintly, someone snorts and then the room rumbles from the laughter that follows and Hoseok forces himself to block out everything else as he looks directly at the head chief sitting opposite to him.

“We’ve given you our sincerest apologies by covering for all the damage that we have done.” He states flatly.

“I want a verbal one.” Hoseok fights back, suddenly surprised at the courage that he has somehow mustered up. Perhaps it’s the air in here that gives him the urge to be bold.
The room goes to a complete silence. Hoseok keeps his gaze fixed on the older man sitting opposite to him, but it doesn’t look like he will budge.

“Well, meeting’s over.” Yoongi springs up from the couch, stretching, completely ignoring what Hoseok had requested earlier. “I’m gonna go wash up.”

“I haven’t dismissed anyone yet.” Yoongi’s father interjects.

“You wanna keep up the staring contest? For another hour? This mess might as well be waved out like a bad fart.” Hoseok turns to see Namjoon burying his face in his hands.

Wordlessly, Yoongi’s father offers Hoseok a nod before he’s being helped up by Seokjin and escorted out of the room. The others start to follow suit as they gather themselves and shuffle out in a messy but single file.

“See you in a bit then, boyfriend.” Yoongi offers him a smirk before he leaves too.

So Hoseok is left there on a sinking couch in the bad man’s house.

He feels a warm hand on his shoulder and he turns to see Namjoon who’s shifted over to sit next to him, “Hi,” he says, “How are you feeling?”

Hoseok scrubs his eyes, “Pretty confused I guess, a bit nervous. It’s a lot.”

“Yeah, it is. Can’t imagine how crazy it is to go through this.” Namjoon smiles softly as a mean of consolation, “You’re willing to give it a shot, though?”

“Yeah,” He lies. That’s something he has to get used to doing.

Namjoon sighs, “I know that our reputation is bad, but I can assure you that hyung is a really caring person.”

Hoseok’s brows furrow, “He is?”

His old friend laughs at that, “I know it’s kinda hard believe, but once he opens up he can be really sweet.”

For a moment, the very recent memory of Yoongi taking over for him and trying to get him out of situations he would be uncomfortable with very briefly resurfaces, but then he brushes it off. It’s probably just a tactic to avoid getting caught lying. Yoongi can probably tell that he’s a bad liar.

“I’ll take your word for it, I guess.”

Namjoon smiles, “Are you planning to stay over tonight?”

Hoseok shrugs, “Sure.”

“I’ll take you to his room.”

Hoseok nods and follows Namjoon up the stairs deeper into the bad man’s den.
“Let me know if you need anything.” Namjoon gives him a reassuring pat as they stand in front of a closed wooden door.

“Do you live here too?” Hoseok asks,

“Me? No. I’m part of the clan, but I’m not part of the bloodline.” Namjoon answers, “I’ll see you tomorrow. Call me if you need anything.”

And then Hoseok is left alone again in the strange quiet of the mansion.

He takes a deep breath. *It will be okay.* He enters the bad man’s room.

He enters the bad man’s room and-

And there’s a toy poodle at the door.

A brown little toy poodle stares up at Hoseok with its button black eyes, head slightly turned and tail wagging as it makes its little way to Hoseok’s feet, sniffing curiously.

“Oh my god,” Hoseok whispers.

He reaches down, testing the waters, and the small thing rises up on its two feet to rest its front paws on Hoseok’s hand.

“Oh my god,” Hoseok is close to tears.

He reaches down, testing the waters, and the small thing rises up on its two feet to rest its front paws on Hoseok’s hand.

“He’s got my number?”

There’s another door in the room that probably leads to the bathroom with the sound of the showers coming through muffled. Hoseok can’t seem to bring himself to care though as he crouches down to coo and dote on the little thing.

The sweet baby leans in to sniff at his hands and Hoseok just *shatters,* absolutely devastated at the sight. He lets his temptations get the better of him and fishes out his phone to snap a few pictures, practically crying as the subject tilts its tiny little head as if posing.

He texts the photos to Jimin

As soon as the message indicates the ‘read’ signal, Hoseok’s phone suddenly rings in his hands, Jimin’s three chins appear along with his caller ID flashing on the screen.

Hoseok settles down on the floor and picks the little poodle up on to his lap as he answers, “Hiya Jiminnie.”
“You’re at Min Yoongi’s house!?" The younger boy gets straight to the point.

“Yes…?” The guilt pertains for as long as he holds out that ‘s’, though he’s not quite sure why.

“Hyung! Wh- why would you do that?” Jimin sounds exasperated.

Hoseok is suddenly stuck on a decision he didn’t even realize he had to make.

Does he have to lie to Jimin too?

Can he lie to Jimin?

Is this white lie really going to affect his relationship with everyone? He didn’t even consider that when he agreed to this. He just thought of Yoongi, and the thought of Yoongi losing his father, and that was all it took for him to agree.

To what extent does he have to lie?

“Hyung?” Jimin’s voice snaps him out of his moral dilemma that he has yet to solve.

“I came to ask about my apartment and stuff. They’re paying for the damages. I’m fine, don’t worry.” Hoseok finally answers.

It’s the truth, partly. He did came with the intention to ask about the payment and all, even though it wasn’t the only reason, or the main reason he came, it’s the truth, or at least a part of it.

“I see,” Jimin hums, “are you staying over tonight? I’ll leave the kitchen light on for you if you are.”

“Ah, well,” Hoseok panics again, trying to distract his fidgeting hand by running it through the dog’s curly fur. “I don’t think I’ll be staying over at your place tonight.”

“Oh,” Jimin sounds worried, “If you say so. Please stay safe, hyung.”

“I will,” Hoseok smiles even though Jimin can’t see him. “Goodnight, Jimin-ah.”

“Night, hyung.”

Hoseok gets comfortable on the carpeted floor as he rolls around, playing with the little poodle, making little pouncing motions as the little thing chases and pounces back at his hands.

Perhaps he has been too distracted by the softness of the whole situation and the tiny little miniature barks that has him absolutely ruined that he doesn’t hear the bathroom door click open.

“I see you’ve met Holly.” A voice sounds and Hoseok looks up at its owner.

The man is still scrubbing his hair with a towel, letting his long damp fringe sit on his face. He’s wearing a loose black shirt paired with a long patterned pair of sleep pants featuring a character that Hoseok works out to be...kumamon?

Hoseok doesn’t remember seeing anyone like this when they were all gathered at the living room, he doesn’t remember seeing a man with such soft appearances and features sitting anywhere.

He seems to pause when he notices that Hoseok is very obviously staring at him, “His name is Holly.” He tilts his head towards the dog that’s nuzzling Hoseok’s hand. Hoseok is still staring though, and the man seems even more confused.
“What?” The man scowls, and the similar expression hits Hoseok hard like whiplash.

“...Min?”

“What?” Yoongi repeats himself.

“Oh, nothing,” Hoseok clears his throat and turns away, “you just look different, that’s all. Couldn’t recognize you.”

Yoongi lifts an eyebrow at that but doesn’t comment as he sits down on the foot of his bed near Hoseok, legs crossed. Despite the change of appearance, the way he carries himself remains unchanged, as contradictory as it may appear with his stern body language compared to his wardrobe.

“I like your pajama pants,” Hoseok teases, expecting a scowl or profanity of some kind, but then “Thank you.” Is all Yoongi says as he reaches down to pick Holly up to his lap, leaving Hoseok on the floor staring up, shocked if anything.

Hoseok needs a moment to process everything; the sudden change of Yoongi’s image from the pungent-faced, condescending mafioso metamorphosed into a doting, soft man after ten minutes in the shower is a lot to process.

Yoongi pats the space next to him, “We have a lot to discuss.”

Hoseok awkwardly shifts himself on to the soft mattress.

“You called me Yoongi,” Yoongi murmurs as he scratches the back of Holly’s ears.

“Well yeah, it wouldn’t seem real if I’d just call you by your last name, would it?”

Yoongi rubs his jaw, mirroring the same gesture his father did earlier, before he answers, “I guess you have a point. But that’s a bit bratty, don’t you think?”

“What?”

“Hyung. Call me hyung,” Yoongi grumbles, “I’m older than you.”

“Oh,” Hoseok didn’t expect that, “sure.”

“You can’t just call me Jung too.” Hoseok adds, “You have to call me by my first name.”

Yoongi looks up to meet his eyes, “Hoseok-ah.”

Hoseok feel something warm tug at his chest ever so slightly at the motion, but he tries to brush it off as that soulmate contact thing. Because it is.

“...Hyung,” he whispers, “Yoongi hyung.”

Yoongi sighs. “We gotta get used to that. Gotta get used to other things too.”

“Like what?”

Yoongi leans in closer until their noses brush before Hoseok catches on and squeaks as he pushes at his shoulders.
“Yeah, about that,” Hoseok huffs out an awkward laugh, “I think we need some rules. First one is no kissing.”

Yoongi squints through his long black fringe, “And that’s gonna fool who exactly?”

Hoseok does some weird gesture with his hands, “I mean we don’t have to kiss in front of people to convince them that we’re together, you know? Some couples are shy.”

Yoongi frowns, “What’s so bad about kissing me?”

Hoseok jumps, holding his palms up, “Nothing! You’re fine, I mean—” he sputters, “I just think it’s a bit too intimate considering that we’re...you know...faking it?” Yoongi doesn’t seem to follow, “don’t you feel a bit uncomfortable kissing me?”

Yoongi shrugs, “Not really.”

“...Well I do, so no kissing!” Hoseok protests.

Yoongi sighs, “How about somewhere else then? On the cheek? Those are quick.”

Hoseok takes a moment to consider that; the gesture is quick, and it’s not intimate. He kisses the younger boys all the time. “Sure.”

There is an awkward pause before Yoongi leans in to brush his lips against Hoseok’s cheek and the younger boy flinches before he forces himself to stay still, eyes squeezing shut.

“Yeah, you’re gonna have to get used to that.” Yoongi comments, chuckling, his warm breath fanning over Hoseok’s cheek and it’s weird.

“I can’t help it!” Hoseok whines as he shifts away, “it feels weird when it’s coming from you,” Yoongi looks almost offended.

“There’s gotta something you’d be comfortable with,” Yoongi grumbles, “what do you like?”

Hoseok hums as he ponders, what helps him relax?

Oh,

“My hair,” Hoseok says, “maybe you can play with my hair?” Hoseok elaborates when Yoongi raises an eyebrow at the remark, “I like when people play with my hair, it helps me sleep,”

“I see,” Yoongi replies nonchalantly yet shakily, putting Holly down on the floor before sinking into his hands. His arms are trembling.

“Wait, are you okay?” Hoseok asks, suddenly concerned.

“Migraine.” Yoongi murmurs as he hisses out a pained breath.

“Should- should I call someone?” Hoseok turns around frantically but the elder waves him off with a hand.

Something drops low in Hoseok’s gut as his brain goes into a panic. He doesn’t know what to do.

But then he remembers what Yoongi did to him at the station.

Gingerly, he cards his fingers through the now dry black strands of Yoongi’s hair and the
trembling subsides almost dramatically.

Yoongi’s long finger curls around Hoseok’s thin wrist to pull his hand off of his hair as he sits up. Holly is sniffing at his toes.

“I think we can help each other out with this.” Yoongi suggests and Hoseok nods in agreement.

“Only in private though,” Hoseok warns, “that did not translate well in front of the people at the station.”

“That’s true,” Yoongi laughs at the memory as if it’s nothing embarrassing.

“So no kissing on the lips,” Hoseok outlines the rules, “other casual ones are fine, you can play with my hair, and when one of our pain thing kicks in, we do it in private. Sounds fair?”

“Sounds good to me,” Yoongi says, “should we shake on it?” He offers his hand.

Hoseok reluctantly takes it with a firm grip before getting up to go wash up. Yoongi’s hold is still tight though.

“Try kissing me on the cheek, Jung.” Yoongi directs before he corrects himself, “Hoseok.”

Hoseok pulls a face, “Do I have to?”

“Get the first time over with so you won’t be awkward when you actually have to do it for real.” Yoongi says and damn it, he has a point.

“Fine,” Hoseok huffs as he leans closer, trying to ignore Yoongi’s eyes that are following him. He fails, and bumps his nose against the elder’s cheek and groans in pain as he pulls away, cupping it with his hands. He frowns when he hears Yoongi’s cackle.

“God, you’re like a dumb virgin,” Yoongi breathes out between laughs, “first time kissing?”

“Shut up! I’m not a dumb virgin,” Hoseok frowns, embarrassed, “the fact that I’m kissing you makes it hard.”

“Is that supposed to hurt my feelings?” Yoongi fake pouts. He angles the side of his face towards Hoseok, even going as far as tilting it up a little, “Try again.”

Hoseok takes a long deep breath before he leans in. He knows he’s being ridiculous about a kiss, he kisses practically everyone. Something about kissing Yoongi, someone he has no affection for, loathes even, but is stuck in this situation where they have to pretend none of that exists, is weird.

His lips brush Yoongi’s cheeks and they’re surprisingly warm, soft. The faint smell of shampoo brushes past his nose and then,

And then the door clicks open.

“Hey pipsqueak! Pops wanted to let you know that the meeting on- oh.” Yoongi’s brother pauses at the door. He’s now in his sleepwear too.

Yoongi brings an arm up to drape across Hoseok in a surprisingly vice grip to keep him close as if he knew he’d jump away.

“I understand that our unconventional lifestyle is different from normal people, but you not knowing how to knock is more of a learning deficit.” Yoongi remarks.
His brother scowls in response, “And you don’t know how to keep your hands off each other.” Hoseok ducks his head down to somehow hide his red cheeks.

“The meeting on Wednesday, what about it?” Yoongi asks nonchalantly, pressing against Hoseok’s side.

His brother eyes the arm on Hoseok and the overall close contact, he definitely saw him kissing his cheek earlier. He clears his throat, “Dad said he wants your boyfriend to come too.” Hoseok chokes, “Me?”

The older man nods in reply and turns away, “Don’t get too eager, this house is full of people.” He warns before he slams the door shut.

Yoongi’s arm immediately drops back to his side, “That was my older brother, Donghyuk.”

“He’s… quite a character.” Hoseok says and Yoongi hums in agreement.

“Go take a shower, you stink.”

Hoseok jumps and ducks down to poke his nose into the collar of his shirt, “I do not! I didn’t even sweat today!”

“You have a cop smell. It stinks.” Yoongi makes a show of pinching his nose. “Go shower. You can borrow my clothes or something. I don’t care.”

Hoseok is close, really close to debating how cops don’t have a ‘smell’ and if they do it can’t be any worse than the pungent stench of criminals but he breathes. He’s a guest. He breathes and turns on his heels towards the bathroom.

Hoseok notices a few message notifications on his phone as he strips out of his clothes.

[00:10:06] jiminnie (ˊ˘̑.mode) : stay safe, hyung!
[00:43:46] hoseokie (☼˘ scientest) : i will! i’m alright!

[00:06:34] taetae (●מה●)@ : jimin said ur at the mafia mansion ???
[00:06:40] taetae (●מה●)@ : love u im very worried but i trust u hyung stay safe !!
[00:45:49] hoseokie (☼˘ scientest) : i’m alright tae! see u tomorrow!

[00:14:43] kookoo U(Óindows)U : u left food on ur desk i ate it
[00:46:29] hoseokie (☼˘ scientest) : ...ok

He sighs and locks his phone as he steps under the spray. The Min’s bathroom is quite fancy, but then anything would look prestigious compared to Hoseok’s dingy little bathroom in his apartment.

His little bathroom which is now…broken ceramic and enamel dust.
There’s no point crying over spilt milk or broken bathrooms. Hoseok stares down at the unbroken tiles beneath his feet, up to the unbroken walls and unbroken ceilings. All these unbroken things that belong to the people who has broken everything of his.

The water is warm but Hoseok’s eyes are hot.

Yoongi’s pajamas don’t fit him that well, unsurprisingly. His gut makes a swooping motion the moment he exits the bathroom to see the culprit and he feels sick.

“I’ll sleep on the floor.” Hoseok says as Yoongi looks up at him.

“Glad we could agree on something.”

Wordlessly as Yoongi slips under the comfort of his own bed, Hoseok drops down on to the carpeted floor near it. He can hear the soft padded footsteps of Holly walking around before he settles somewhere at his feet.

A night in a house full of criminals.

Hoseok doesn’t sleep well at all.


Hoseok dreams of a room full of people, their faces clear yet indistinct to him. They’re standing way too close, so close that it feels claustrophobic.

No one says anything for a while, they just stare.

“Sunny,” A voice sounds, he doesn’t recognize it.

“Rain,” A different voice sounds from the opposite end of the room and he turns abruptly, yet he can’t seem to find its owner.

“Traffic,”

“Clear,”

It goes silent, but not for long.

“Oh wait,”

It goes silent for a long time. Hoseok suddenly feels like he can’t breathe.
“Jung,” A new voice startles him, though it’s barely a whisper.

“Jung,” It repeats again, more firmly this time, yet still quiet.

“Jung!” It’s shouting now, but it’s still too low for him to process.

And then a pillow hits him in the face.

“Hoseok!” Yoongi hisses, his voice as loud as a whisper can be. “Get the fuck up here!”

“Wh-” Hoseok tries to push himself up, realizes that his right arm is still asleep and slips. “What?” He scrubs and hand across his eyes.

“Get up here and pretend that we’ve been cuddling.”

Hoseok’s wide awake now, “Ex fucking scuse me?”

Yoongi is still buried somewhere under the thick comforter but an arm pops out from underneath it and pulls Hoseok in by the wrist.

Hoseok collapses onto the bed with a wheeze and before he could even make sense of the here and now, Yoongi’s hands slip around to rest on his back and his nose is brushing against something warm and black.

It takes him another long moment before sleep completely dissipates from him and his senses to come back that he realizes he’s being held against Yoongi’s chest. Hoseok is going to lose it.

“What are you-”

There’s a soft knock on the door behind him, seconds before it clicks open.

“Are you awake?” Namjoon’s voice is quiet, hesitant.

“Yeah,” He looks up to see Yoongi, who is looking over him towards his assistant.

“You two seem cozy.” Namjoon teases and Yoongi smiles, smiles, before he tilts his head down to brush his lips over the top of Hoseok’s head. He’s lucky Hoseok’s brain manages to hold himself back from acting upon his reflex in time, before he panics and pushes him away.

It’s an act. As soon as there are people they’re putting up an act.

And so Hoseok acts, arms coming up to wrap around Yoongi to pull him closer, tangling their legs. Yoongi is warm at least, and this is much more comfortable than the cold floor.

He can hear Namjoon’s soft sigh before he continues, “Mr. Min wants to know if you want breakfast.”

“Can you bring it up here?” Yoongi asks, his words a soft murmur, “I’m not sure how things are gonna go down if Hoseok eats with everyone else after last night.” His hands work their way up to Hoseok’s hair and he starts to play around, carding them and pushing strands off of Hoseok’s forehead.

Hoseok tries to relax into it, tries to enjoy it. It’s not as difficult as he imagined, he just has to pretend that the hand isn’t Yoongi’s, and warmth and the faint murmurs and soft sheets are just another reality where he’s in a loving domestic relationship.
“Right, of course. I’ll have someone bring them up here.” Namjoon replies, followed by a soft click of the door closing.

The illusion shatters immediately as soon as the door closes. Yoongi rolls away and sits up. He doesn’t look very amused when Hoseok sits up to face him.

“That was close,” Yoongi grumbles, “are you always this hard to wake up?”

Hoseok shrugs, “I’m just tired.”

“We could’ve gotten caught,” Yoongi curses, “what if someone walks in on you sleeping on the floor? How would we explain that?”

“Shouldn’t have made me sleep on the floor then.” Hoseok says flatly.

“Don’t blame me now, you suggested the idea.” Yoongi fights back.

“You agreed!” Hoseok retorts.

“Are you seriously trying to-”

And once again, the door clicks open.

Yoongi snaps his mouth shut and settles himself down, pressing against Hoseok’s side as he accepts the tray of food from the maid, murmuring a thank you under his breath.

He picks up as soon as the door closes and the footsteps fade, “Are you seriously trying to make this my fault? Is that what cops do?”

Hoseok groans, “Is that all you can pick on? That I’m a cop?”

Yoongi picks at his food, “You’re the one who signed up to be a slave to a so-called justice system flawed with favoritism, prejudice, and discrimination, so go figure.”

Hoseok doesn’t know what to say to that. He just stares at Yoongi in disbelief for probably longer than he’d imagine. The elder turns to him and snickers, bringing up a hand to Hoseok’s chin and push his gaping mouth closed.

“What time does your shift at that rat hole start?” Yoongi changes the subject, sort of.

“My shift at the police station starts at eight.” Hoseok pulls a muscle trying to put emphasis on his workplace.

“You better run then,” Yoongi hums, “it’s almost ten.”

*

Min Yoongi.

Min fucking Yoongi.

Hoseok wants to say that the name makes him want to do something wild like take drugs, that the
name kills cute innocent puppies.

But *god damn it* it’s objectively too pretty of a name for it to stand for anything scornful.

How did that asshole of a person even get such a nice name?

“Glossy *fucker.*” Hoseok bites into his bread a little too aggressively and the crumbs land on his desk. He curses and tries his best to swipe them off without getting any on his keyboards.

“Rough day? It’s only eleven.” Jimin leans on his desk, concern building up on his face.

“How did that asshole of a person even get such a nice name?“ Hoseok turns to see Taehyung from the desk near him, chin resting on his hands.

“Everyone has their own reasons.” Jungkook pipes in as he takes another large bite from his sandwich.

“Did you wake up late too, Kook?” Hoseok asks through his last bite.

Jungkook shakes his head, “I have six meals a day.”

Jimin pulls a face, borderlining between disgust and fascination. Taehyung rolls his chair up to Hoseok’s desk.

“Was it because of last night though, hyung? Did something happen?” Taehyung asks, clearly concerned now that he’s up close.

Hoseok gives him a dry smile as he wipes the crumbs off of his chin. He turns to see the little primrose badge on his desk. It has grown a little more, but it doesn’t hold the same charm as it used to when it was a small bud, which is odd considering how flowers are considered the prettiest when at bloom.

Perhaps the meaning that comes with it now is unpleasant and scornful. It was a little ray of hope and something to giggle over every day, just from the pure excitement of the fact that his soulmate had come to visit him at the hospital. It was the source of his little daydreams of what he’d be like with someone else, loving and loved.

But now, however - now he sees that condescending smirk and the selfish, jerky attitude when he looks at the white petals and the yellow stem. It’s such an ugly white, such an ugly yellow. He reaches for it, holding it for a second in his palm before shoving it into his desk drawer and pushing it shut.

“Min Yoongi,” Hoseok answers the younger boy, “Min Yoongi happened.”

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**Chapter End Notes**

i hope you're doing well with whatever you have right now. if not then know that i'll be using my pure willpower for things to go your way somehow.

have a good day/night!

my [twitter](https://twitter.com),
my curiouscat
dress up (deception is a poisonous snake)

Chapter Summary

“Well as soon as you woke up and accepted your fate, you joined the mafia.” Yoongi asserts. “Cool backstory.”

“...You want me to lie?”

“My dear Hoseokie,” Yoongi shakes his head, “this whole thing is just one big fat lie. You’re a big fat liar.”

Chapter Notes

warnings for anxiety (poor hoseok :) and one terrible dad joke

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Captain Bang’s office isn’t the cleanest, everyone knows that.

There are cleaners around the precinct but it’s as if the captain has made them steer clear from his desk.

Hoseok knows he has no power or say in how he wants someone else’s environment to be,

But good lord it absolutely stinks.

“Now that you’re allowed to enter their premises, I think it’s time we get some insider’s information.” Captain Bang leans up from his chair. From this angle, his greasy forehead catches the ceiling lights above and Hoseok feels like he has to squint to be able to see him.

Hoseok shifts around on the uncomfortable cushioned seat, trying to not think about its smell,

“What do you want me to do, sir?”

“I was thinking you could wear a wire when you go see them, just so we can have records of what they’ve said. It would be evidence and we can definitely use it against them.” The captain answers.

“Would there be someone listening to it as it happens or will it be recorded?” Hoseok asks.

“Both. I’ll probably be listening to it. I’ll have backup ready if something sounds fishy.”

“Right,” Hoseok clears his throat, “will that be all?”

“You seem eager to leave,” the captain raises an eyebrow, “but yes. You can go get your wire from the front desk.”
Hoseok feels almost guilty for coming off as rude at the end, but it all dissipates when he breathes in air that isn’t sour breaths and sweat.

He’s not so sure if it’s possible for the stench to have latched onto him after five minutes in the office, but he *swears* that the people at the front desk gave him a look when they handed him the wire.

He walks past Taehyung, who’s lifting up his upside down keyboard with one hand as he pats the top of it with the other, pulling a face at the nail clippings that trickle on to his desk.

“Hienjin hyung…” he curses under his breath. “I’m gonna kill myself. I’m gonna take my own life. I’m gonna do it.”

“*Poor you, you ungrateful clown.*” Hoseok mutters sarcastically. “At least you breathe *unstinky air*.” That’s definitely not a real word but he’s rolling with it. Some things in life really do need to be appreciated more.

He walks up to Jungkook’s desk, the boy’s back hunched over something. He reaches towards him and just before he could even brush his fingers against Jungkook’s shoulder, the younger boy spins around at death’s speed and sprays him with something he can’t even detect before the overpowering scent of artificial lavender surges into his throat and he coughs.

“I can detect that captain stench from a mile away,” Jungkook remarks, “bold of you to even approach me when you- wait hyung are you okay?”

Hoseok is still coughing uncomfortably hard and it seems to pull on a nerve as his chest pain starts to act up again and he hunches over Jungkook’s desk for support as he helplessly clutches onto the aching spot. He squeezes his eyes shut.

Poor Jungkook can’t really do much other than rub his back and plead out desperate apologies as Jimin runs up to them and smack Jungkook lightly for taking a joke too far.

He doesn’t know how long it takes until he feels something light hit the surface of the desk. He isn’t suspicious of it until someone speaks,

“Here, someone dropped a whole wad of cash just outside the station.”

Hoseok forces himself up to look at Yoongi who has made himself comfortable on Jungkook’s desk. The other boys don’t really know what to do or say.

“Mi- Yoongi hyung, is that just your money?” Hoseok forces out between painful hisses of breath. Heads start to turn at the way he calls him.

“And if it is?” Yoongi cocks an eyebrow up.

“You can’t just falsely report something.” Hoseok deathtones despite the flaring pain in his chest.

“Well I needed an excuse to see my boyfriend.” The elder winks. “Are you okay, by the way? Should’ve asked that first.”

Jungkook’s hand on Hoseok’s back pauses in its motions and Jimin’s eyes go wide. Hoseok can hear Taehyung’s keyboard drop from the desk behind him.

“Chest pain.” Hoseok hisses out, ignoring the audience Yoongi has built up from a word.
“Oh,” Yoongi whispers. He reaches out to clasp his fingers around Jungkook’s hand and gently removes it from Hoseok’s back, “excuse us for a moment.” He says to the younger boy as he pulls Hoseok up from Jungkook’s desk and away by his hands.

“Ah wait, sir you’re not allowed to go in there!” Taehyung shouts after him.

“But Hoseok is.” Yoongi calls back.

The supply closet door shuts behind them and Hoseok can feel warm hands unbuttoning his shirt and slip under to rest on his heart. The pain subsides all too dramatically and Hoseok sighs.

He breathes for a little longer before he opens his eyes a silver to see Yoongi who’s shoving his leather gloves into his coat pocket.

Yoongi seems to be wearing a cologne of some kind. The smell is quite unique but it’s nice, and he can feel as it engulfs any remnants of the sweaty stench of the captain’s office.

“I just noticed, but why don’t you have your undershirt on?” Yoongi murmurs.

“I don’t wear them. They’re uncomfortable.” Hoseok whispers.

“So you just wear your uniform and the moment a button comes undone it’s just your bare chest?”

“...Yes? Is that a problem?” Hoseok asks.

Yoongi’s eyes is casted on his hand on Hoseok’s chest for a while before he mumbles, “No, I guess not.”

“So why are you faking a police report to see me?” Hoseok asks after he’s adjusted his breathing.

“I just wanted to see you. Is that so bad?” Yoongi pouts, frowning.

“Hyung,” Hoseok deadpans, “it’s just us here.”

“I’m practicing.” Yoongi drops the character, “it’s three days before Wednesday.”

“Before I meet whoever I’m supposed to be meeting.” Hoseok mutters, “Who am I even meeting? You never told me anything.”

“And that’s why I’m here, darling.” Yoongi grins and Hoseok visibly gags at the pet name.

“I’m heir to head chief position, so I have to go meet associates of the Min clan to get their approval.” The elder continues anyway. “News spread far apparently. They heard that I’ve found my soulmate so they want to meet you too.”


Yoongi leans in close enough that his lips grazes the shell of Hoseok’s ear and the younger boy flinches away, “drug rings.” He whispers.

“Oh,” is all Hoseok says in response before he adds on, “that’s gonna be a problem.”

“Are you gonna arrest me?” Yoongi smirks, “Too bad, nothing illegal is gonna be there and all we’re gonna talk about is business.”

“Illegal business.” Hoseok corrects. “And you invited a whole police officer to come witness.”
“Oh, but you’re not a police officer.”

“What do you mean?” Hoseok falters, “Surely, they know I’m a cop.”

“Well as soon as you woke up and accepted your fate, you joined the mafia.” Yoongi asserts. “Cool backstory.”

“...You want me to lie?”

“My dear Hoseokie,” Yoongi shakes his head, “this whole thing is just one big fat lie. You’re a big fat liar.” He glances down at Hoseok’s torso, patting his chest, “figuratively. You’re pretty thin.”

Hoseok pushes Yoongi’s hand off of his chest. It still aches a little but he ignores it.

“See you on Wednesday, officer.” Yoongi turns to the door, “And dress up, will you? I can’t guarantee that you’ll make it out alive if you wear your single-layered blue uniform.”

Hoseok stands there for a while even after the door has shut. He can hear Yoongi bid the younger boys farewell, followed by Jungkook’s hesitant little ... bye? seconds later.

Three pairs of eyes turn to Hoseok as soon as he exits the storage room.

“I have a lot of questions,” Jungkook starts, “He fingergunned me when I said bye.” He demonstrates the motion with his two hands, his index fingers pointing at Hoseok.

“He called you his boyfriend, hyung,” Jimin adds, “are you like…”

Hoseok starts to panic, “I- I can explain-”

“You guys need to stop pestering Hoseokie hyung about this,” Taehyung warms, sweeping the nail clippings into his small garbage bin with a piece of paper. “As curious as we are, it’s none of our business.”

Hoseok breathes, “Thank you Tae, I-”

“You might not like the idea right now, but love is love.”

“Wait,”

“We can’t control who hyung chooses to date, but if he thinks this is the best decision for him and it’ll make him happy, then we’ll have to support him, alright? We’ll get used to the idea and come to accept it eventually.” Taehyung lectures the two boys who are surprisingly giving him their undying attention.

Taehyung turns to Hoseok who can only stammer out inaudible sentences, “We don’t care if you’re dating Min Yoongi, hyung.” He rests a reassuring hand on his shoulder, “We’ll go along with what you think is right.”

Hoseok returns a shaky little smile in response to Taehyung’s wide sweet one but his stomach feels so sick with guilt.

The lie is just writing itself now, he’s not even the one telling it anymore. He’s just going to have to keep on lying and lying and lying until his moral scale tips and he breaks.

And then everything else will follow, crashing down along with him.
That afternoon, Hoseok walks a little further ahead of Jimin on their way to the boy’s house, too sick and ashamed to face him right now.

Hoseok almost cries, almost, and only because he feels so sick from the guilt of deception; something he never wills himself to do intentionally or even thinks he physically could do.

Technically, he didn’t lie to them, no. He didn’t say anything, but Taehyung came to the conclusion himself, which led everyone to come to the same false conclusion.

Deception is a poisonous snake that he’s been using to strike against everyone in the Min clan, so much that it has developed a mind of its own and is capable of making its own decisions. Hoseok saw it with his own eyes when it crept up behind Taehyung, when it sank its vile fangs into the crook of his neck. He continues to look as he sees poison - black venomous streams seeping under his skin and sprouting to his mind, encapsulating him into believing. And too easily, he watches as it engulfs his other two, gullible friends.

It feels like shit, but the only reason Hoseok doesn’t cry about it is because this is what his own gullible little soul signed itself up for, and it’s probably best if things are the way they are now. It’s too hard, too complicated for them to comprehend that Hoseok is pretending to be in love with someone who he wants to completely steer away from because of his own sad dead parents sob story of a past that makes his empathic little heart naïvely agree to help.

All of this compared to a simple “I’m dating a mafia gang member because he’s my soulmate.” statement, the latter is probably for the best.

Yoongi doesn’t visit the station the next day or the day after that, and Hoseok doesn’t bring the topic up, which leads to no one daring to even ask about it.

But it’s Wednesday, though.

He notifies Captain Bang of the meeting taking place this evening despite what Yoongi had told him. By the afternoon, he’s wired and ready.

Although, because everything of his got ruined and the usual police salary is just too tight for an acceptable “mafia” attire, he turns to the only person he knows who would only be visible from his neck up at night with how he dresses.


Hoseok fumbles, “Well you see, I’m- uh,”

“Hyung has a date with his boyfriend and apparently he’s meeting his family and all that too, so he wants to fit in.” Jimin explains for him. “This could also be a chance for you to apologize for spraying febreze at him a few days ago.”

“Right, that’s it.” Hoseok forces himself to affirm, “Thanks, Jimin-ah.”

The boy’s tiny hand pats his back lightly, “Thank you for telling me hyung. I’m glad you could trust us.”
Hoseok ignores the way his insides seem to burn at that.

Taehyung is already digging through Jungkook’s closet, which just looks like he’s being swallowed into the depths of the black abyss from afar.

“This is a must.” Taehyung pulls out a pair of pants and Hoseok groans when he sees all the ripped holes.

“Those are barely pants.” Hoseok accuses, “They’re dissipating! I don’t think they’d be appropriate for the occasion.” He responds to Jungkook’s offended gasp.

“You can dig all you want but you’re not gonna find the perfect, hole-less pants, hyung. Those knees are coming out whether you like it or not.” The younger boy sips from his soda. “I’m sure Yoongi hyung won’t mind. He seems like a chill dude.”

Jimin chokes on his drink, “You’re calling him hyung?”

“We’re probably gonna see a lot more of him if Hoseokie hyung is dating him, and I just know he’s gonna love me so I might as well.”

Taehyung snorts, “You sound confident.”

“I’m gonna be his favorite dongsaeng.” Jungkook sings.

Hoseok rolls his eyes. He can’t even complain about Yoongi to his friends because they’re supposed to be an item.

“I think I’ve found the pants with the smallest knee holes.” Taehyung pulls it up.

Hoseok sighs, “Guess I’ll have to go with that. What should I do for the shirt?”

“I found a button up shirt!” Jimin springs up from a pile of black, holding the shirt triumphantly. He turns to Jungkook, “When did you even wear this?”

“Never.” Jungkook replies aptly.

“I just realized Jungkook’s whole wardrobe is just mafia fashion.” Taehyung giggles, “That’s ironic coming from a cop.”

“Kook once told me he only became a cop to run the redlights.” Hoseok shares.

“And I wasn’t lying.” Jungkook raises his bottle of soda in Hoseok’s direction.

❀

It feels weird to be wearing black from head to toe (he wore his work shoes) when Hoseok is so used to his usual colorful wardrobe. He brushes his fringe out of his eyes when the Min’s front gate opens to see Yoongi’s blank expression.

The real mafioso pauses for a while before he starts, “You’ve made an effort, but that’s not enough.”
Hoseok feels like he could black out from the process of it all. One second that Seokjin guy is giving him a full body scan with his eyes and tuts as he shakes his head disapprovingly, and the next minute Namjoon is dragging him into Donghyuk’s closet, fully ignoring the owner’s angered protests.

He was really worried at first when he thought Namjoon is going to make him change infront of him to see if the whole ensemble fits since he’s wearing the listening wire, but after half a minute of browsing and picking out a few things, Hoseok is handed a heap of clothes and left to his own accord as the closet door shuts.

That was close, he sighs.

Hoseok doesn’t get access to a mirror until one of the men (Hyunsoo? He didn’t really catch his name) had finished styling his hair with gel, part of his forehead gracing the cold air.

He jumps when he sees his own black reflection. The black leather gloves just reveals part of his palms and his wrists, a silver buckled belt rests at his hips, black polished Oxford shoes on his feet, a black satin tie paired with a black classic dress shirt and a long (you guessed it, black) unbuttoned trench coat. His hair is partly set up at the front and swept back at the sides with styling gel. He also felt someone spray some kind of expensive cologne on him when he was making his way around the mansion.

He doesn’t look like him, can hardly recognize himself from the way his shoes heighten him and his whole look shifts his stance into this odd, surreptitious one.

It’s almost like the snake’s venom has coated his eyes.

Another lie.

This probably wouldn’t be his last lie, either. More things will happen that will require him to lie, and lie, and lie, until that’s all he can spill from his lying mouth - black gunk and mucusy deception.

All because he lets his emotion decide for him, because he didn’t even consider how much he has to lie.

Hoseok suddenly aches from how fucking stupid he is.

The once proposed white lie is now congested with jet black fabrication and scratches of dishonesty, becoming this abysmal black hole that’s swallowing him alive like the infection of an outfit that has already taken over his whole body, leaving his panicking, cowardly face.

These layers of clothes sit heavily on him like the layers of lies he must continue to spoon feed to people. He’s not only lying to his friends and the Min clan and now their associates, but he’s also lying to Yoongi about the spying he has to do for Captain Bang.

In a house full of criminals, Hoseok feels like the most disgusting person here.

What is he doing?

“Not bad,” Yoongi’s voice sounds from next to him, amused. He’s wearing a similar outfit (unsurprisingly) but there seems to be more patterns on his tie and collar. “Now just keep that mouth of yours shut and they’ll never suspect that you’re still a cop.”

“I don’t-” Hoseok feels like he can’t breathe, “I don’t think I can do this.”
Yoongi doesn’t seem to catch on, “Yeah you can, you just have to sit there all handsome for like an hour. And yes, I called you handsome as much as I despise you I gotta give you that.”

Hoseok inhales a shaky breath, he can feel himself trembling now, “I can’t do this.”

That’s when Yoongi pauses his banter and actually look at Hoseok. “You okay?”

Hoseok nods at first, but then he shakes his head. He buries his face into his hands and tries to breathe, but his hands are gloved and cold and his paranoid brain is still setting alarms and activating his instincts to just run or cave in on himself.

“So we need to talk about this,” Yoongi falters, curling his bare fingers around Hoseok’s wrists before gently moving them away from his face. He rests a firm hand on the back of Hoseok’s neck before his fingers start to massage the base of his skull. “Do we need to talk about this?”

Hoseok is aware of how loud he’s wheezing and how disgusting he is as of now and he can’t seem to control it. He tries to answer Yoongi’s question, tries to explain that it’s all hitting him how much this whole thing is going to take over his life but he physically can not bring himself to say anything.

“We need to talk about this, you need to calm down,” Yoongi whispers, “come with me.”

The walk is considerably short for a huge mansion and Hoseok is too far into his own head to pay attention to where he is until he feels the wooden floors shift and soften beneath his shoe.

He looks down to see grass, and up to see Yoongi, and around to see a garden.

There’s a distinct smell in the air that soothes his lungs and the colors may seem a bit mute and blue in the evening light but it has such a unique charm to it.

The garden is enclosed by the building in all directions, but the ceiling is a large glass window sitting high up from where they’re standing.

“This is the family garden,” Yoongi murmurs after a while, “it looks better in the morning.”

Hoseok blinks away his tears and takes his glove off to wipe a bare hand across his cheeks just so he could feel something warm.

“I’m pretty sure outsiders aren’t allowed here though, so if I get in trouble it’s your fault.” Yoongi jokes. He nudges Hoseok with his elbow when the younger boy doesn’t respond. “So what’s gotten into you, brave cop?”

Slipping his glove back on, Hoseok isn’t really sure if he wants to talk to Yoongi about this. He decides to just cut out all the details, “Anxiety.”

To his surprise, Yoongi just nods, “That’s understandable. It’ll be fine though, I’m pretty sure. I gotta keep you alive anyway.”

There’s a different air surrounding Yoongi when Hoseok looks at him, as if the evening’s light just smoothes over his pale skin and softens his features overall. It’s the surroundings, probably.

Yoongi leaves him to walk around the night garden, giving Hoseok time to adjust his breathing and calm down. He circles back after a while, “Feel better?”

Hoseok nods, “Yeah, I’m alright.”
“Good,” Yoongi pats him on the shoulder, “need me to kiss you or something?”

“Why would I want that?” Hoseok scrunches his nose.

“Encouragement,” Yoongi grins, but then he adds, “oh but you have to kiss me now, I think someone’s coming this way and you’re probably not allowed here.” He looks past Hoseok’s shoulder, “Pretend that I sneaked you out here just so we could make out or something.”

“We’re not making out,” Hoseok corrects, but he shifts closer to kiss Yoongi’s cheek at lightning speed before he pulls away. He still smells like that cologne from earlier today.

Yoongi smiles before he returns the favor on Hoseok’s left cheek, the younger boy trying his best not to scrunch his nose or scowl when he lingers there for a while.

Someone clears his throat.

“We’re leaving in a few minutes,” Namjoon is standing just a step away from the grass ground in his own less flashy black attire, “If you two are out here, then I’m guessing Hoseok is ready?”

“I think so?” Hoseok hesitates.

“He’s ready,” Yoongi grins, pulling him close by his tie, “he’s hot like this, isn’t he?”

Namjoon smiles, “You look like one of us.”

Hoseok doesn’t know how he feels about that remark.


A few black vans are already parked at the front when they step out of the building.

Yoongi makes a beeline towards the first van, slides the door open halfway, pokes his head in and groans as he pulls the door open all the way.

“Seok, you’re going in this one.” He turns to Hoseok before he heads toward the other vans.

“Wait, I’m not sitting with you?” Hoseok sputters, taken aback by both the nickname and the demand.

“Oh don’t worry, it’s a short trip. Don’t miss me too much.” Yoongi leaves him with a grin.

Hoseok sighs. What could Yoongi have possibly seen that would make him refuse to board this vehicle?

He steps into the dark van and,

“Hello there, I’m Seokjin.” Seokjin waves at him from his seat.

After Hoseok had returned the greeting and sat down beside him, both of them are quiet before Seokjin breaks the silent again.

“Why did the coffee file a police report?”
The driver groans.

✿

Hoseok is practically crying by the time they arrive at the meeting place. Seokjin’s jokes are terrible, they’re downright awful. He really tried to pretend to be repulsed by them and hold back his laughter, but he eventually breaks and just cackles as Seokjin cracks up at his own deliveries.

“Now I know why Yoongi hyung changed vans so fast when he saw you,” Hoseok forces out between his fits of laughter and scrubs a hand across his eyes, “I hate this.”

“Oh please, he loves me,” Seokjin asserts as he calms down from his own fit, “he rants to me about things a lot when he was younger. He used to always come to me when he’s stressed about something.” He smiles fondly at the memory.

And Hoseok supposes that that’s nice regardless of what he thinks of Yoongi. It’s nice for him to have someone to go to.

“Ah, Jin hyung, I was gonna ask,” Hoseok starts as all the giggles had escaped from him. The older man turns to him with a hum, “shouldn’t you be sitting with the head chief? Why are you here alone?”

“Why do you think?” Seokjin smirks, “You see when I first joined the mafia, I knitted scarfs for them.”

“Oh?” Hoseok nods his head, encouraging the elder to continue his interestingly odd backstory.

“Yeah,” Seokjin’s shoulders start to shake, “they called me scarf ace.”

Hoseok is blank for a moment before it clicks and he bellows.

“Oh my god,” he folds over from another laughing tantrum, resting his shaking hand on Seokjin’s shaking knee, “this is why they make you sit alone!? Because of your jokes? Oh my god.”

Seokjin’s laughter hitches into that odd, rapid high-pitched burst and it’s so fucking weird Hoseok’s own laughter dissipates to nothing more than silent gasps of air as he straightens back up and wipes his tears from his cheek.

The driver pulls the door open and they shakily make their way down to the cold pavement. He feels someone press up against his side.

“How’s the ride?,” Yoongi asks nonchalantly, eyes casting around the street’s night view.


“I knew you’d be the dumb type to laugh at those jokes.” Yoongi snickers, “At least you’re not gonna panic again when we go in.”

The remark sparks something in Hoseok’s mind, a crack of possibility, a smaller room for doubt that Min Yoongi is some obnoxious, vile creature. For a second, Hoseok considered the possibility that Yoongi made him sit with Seokjin so he would cheer up from his panic earlier. Hoseok considered the possibility that Yoongi cares.
It quickly goes away though, as fast as thoughts can fly away with the cold wind that blows at his numb face. Yoongi groaned when he saw Seokjin, he made Hoseok sit there instead of him so he doesn’t have to listen to endless crude jokes that he probably won’t laugh at; Hoseok is just his quick scapegoat.

“Where are we meeting them anyway?” Hoseok tries to change the subject, “I don’t see any fancy tall buildings around here.”

Seokjin sneers from beside him as he shakes his head, “Oh you’ve got it all wrong.”

Hoseok feels his cheeks redden, “What?”

“We’re going in there,” Seokjin points, and Hoseok follows the tip of his crooked finger to, To a small clothes shop. A few of the members are crowding at the door as Namjoon talks on the phone.

“We’re going shopping?”

“Oh dear.” Yoongi sighs. Hoseok feels a sudden urge to punch him in the side. So he does, very lightly.

“I’m new to all of this and I’m doing you a damn big favor, don’t make fun of me!” He can feel himself pout. Yoongi doesn’t comment.

“Okay super big mafia secret here that you need to promise to not tell anyone about.” Seokjin shifts closer to him, “Secret sketchy meeting places are often at places people wouldn’t enter, like this ugly overpriced clothes store.”

Hoseok looks at the display window and lifts an eyebrow, “These aren’t ugly though? I’d buy that little pouch there.”

“That’s an eight hundred thousand won yellow triangle.” Yoongi deadpans.

“I mean I could save up for it.” Hoseok shrugs.

“You really should shut up before you say something stupid again.” The elder advises, “You’re gonna be the type of guy who would accidentally uncover a secret mafia hiding place because you’re weird.”

“I am not.” Hoseok protests, “How can you call me weird when you know Jin hyung?”

Seokjin chokes, “What do I have to do with this!”?

“We can go in now.” Namjoon walks towards them as he slips his phone back into his pocket. “They’re already inside.”

It doesn’t get a lot warmer when they enter the reasonable (Hoseok’s biased) clothes store, but Hoseok can feel the temperature rise the as everyone starts to shift around. All the curtains are drawn and the light is only bright enough for Hoseok to barely make out the features of the men sitting opposite to them.

Everything passed by like a blur. Hoseok does as he's told and sits quietly next to Yoongi, looking at nothing in particular as they talk about “stocks” and agreements for the next few months.
Everything seems to be going well until,

“Now, about your partner.” The man says in a gravelly voice.

“This is Jung Hoseok. He's pretty much part of the family now.” Yoongi answers nonchalantly.

“That's fast, hasn't it only been a few weeks?” The man counters.

“Well he joined the mafia pretty quick.” There doesn't seem to be a trace of panic in Yoongi's tone.

“He was a cop, wasn't he?” Hoseok gulps, “I don't trust him.”

Hoseok glances to see Namjoon at the corner of his eyes and he looks a little panicked, fumbling and looking at his watch. The meeting probably should've ended already. This was not part of the plan.

“Well I do, and so does my father.” Yoongi says aptly, tilting his head towards where Chief Min is sitting, “That's all the validation he needs.”

“Oh Yoongi,” the man tuts, “I thought we'd agree that you'd marry my daughter. Business would prosper if we join forces.”

“We've never made such deals, and Hoseok here is my soulmate.” Yoongi scowls.

“That's just the old folks’ thinking.” The man intones, “You couldn't have possibly chosen a cop over my daughter just because he gave you a flower.”

“Hoseok is no longer an officer, I've already told you this.” The mafioso raises his voice slightly but it made Hoseok flinch.

“Sure he's not a cop now, but his mind is still that of one. I don't want him here.” Hoseok tries his best to not respond to anything or look anywhere.

“Even if I were to choose your daughter instead, I can't just let him go. He knows too much to just go striding out.” Yoongi reasons.

“That's true, so kill him.”

That's when everyone including Hoseok freezes. He suddenly feels cold and numb and something rushes to his ears.

“That's what you want me to do? Kill my soulmate?” The tone of Yoongi's voice is deadpanned.

The man rests his fists on the table before he unclenches them. He repeats himself,

“Kill him right here.”

Hoseok doesn't breathe when Yoongi sighs and stands up. His whole body is paralyzed as the elder pulls out his gun.

He closes his eyes when he feels the cold tip of the barrel against the side of his head.

Namjoon is fully panicking, even the head chief's eyes are wide. No one says a word.

He's in deep shit, and he doesn't know how to get out of it this time. The poison of his lies are now consuming him to his very last breath.
ITS SOPE DAY !!! happy 8 years to my dads! (24/12/18)
i was actually introduced to bts by a friend who would just show me hour long taekook compilations but sope were the first pairing that really caught my eyes and i've never left them since uwu
ALSO the dad joke isn't from dadjokecentral.org god i wish i could've made that joke hhh i got it from /r/dadjokes and choked on my hot chocolate from how absolutely disgusting yet perfect it is.
if you're confused for some reason why the coffee file a police report it's because it got mugged badum tss i ate 5 milkyways good morning

my twitter, my curiouscat
Chapter Summary

“Hyung...how long do we have to do this for?”

Chapter Notes

this chapter is a bit shorter than usual hhh i hope you don't mind :(  

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hoseok likes to think he has self-control when the situation asks for it. A damn good one at that.

He had self-control when his girlfriend broke up with him in high school, explicitly stating that she prefers his friend.

He had self-control when his sister got delivered way earlier than expected.

He didn’t have self-control when their car got into an accident.

He had self-control when he had to move in with his aunt and her daughter.

He had self-control when a guy asked him out during his freshman year.

He had self-control when he broke up with his boyfriend months before graduation because their goals are too different and they both can’t commit.

He still had self-control when he came home to his house being raided by the mafia, and managed to keep himself together when a gun is pointed at him.

And he definitely has to have self-control now that said gun is held to his head by the very same guy who didn’t hesitate to shoot him then.

It’s definitely fleeting but fuck he has to keep it together. He whispers little reassurances to himself in his head when the cold tip of the gun barrel rests at the side of his head. He tries to take deep breaths, discrete from the layers of clothes he’s wearing. His chest brushes against the wire taped to his skin.

Back up, there’s back up. Hoseok suddenly remembers, and a long breath leaves him.

Captain Bang is probably in a police van somewhere, perhaps a few blocks away, and is ordering his men to surround the place.

He’s okay. He’ll be okay.

The sound of the gun cocking rings in his head.
He won’t die, he’ll make it out alive.

“Go on,” The man urges Yoongi.

There are so many reasons why he’d make it out alive. Other than the place being surrounded and the wire he’s wearing, Yoongi said it himself that he needs Hoseok alive.

But what if he changes his mind? From what they were discussing, these stocks seem all too vital to throw away just to save a police officer.

So Hoseok might not make it out of here alive.

He can feel his gloved hands tremble, but he clutches onto his lap to make it less obvious.

Hoseok closes his eyes, drawing in another deep breath. As an officer, he plays the same gamble almost every day when he leaves for work; he’s always at risk when he’s off to catch armed perpetrators. This shouldn’t be any different.

The backup should be breaking in at any minute. He can practically hear the front door and windows being broken down. He tries to breathe again.

But then his hair shifts, and then the gun barrel is away from his head.

He can hear someone, multiple people, gasp - an indistinct noise made in unison like a sudden, unexpected gush of wind.

Hoseok opens his eyes to see Min Yoongi standing with his gun aimed at the man in front of him.

The lamp overhead casts a long solemn shadow beneath the man’s eyes, dragging them down to make him look hollowed out and ghostly as if Yoongi had already fired his shot.

“Behave,” the man whispers, lifting a hand as if to lower Yoongi’s gun but retracting it when the mafioso’s gesture doesn’t seem to falter.

“Behave? You’re one to talk,” Yoongi snickers, “you’ve been plastering the blame of your little failed drug traffickings on all your gay subordinates, and you don’t even bother to bail them when they go to jail for your fuck ups.” He raises his voice, “You think I haven’t noticed?”

Hoseok takes a quick look around the room; no one looks like they know what to expect from all this. Even the man with the gun aimed at him is now silent. “Looks like someone plays too much and doesn’t bother to clean up after themselves. If anything, you should learn to behave,” Yoongi finishes, “child.”

“What we do outside of our contract is none of your business.” The man scowls.

“It fascinates me how you can say that with your whole chest when you just made me marry your daughter and kill my current partner. That is definitely not part of the contract,” Yoongi deadpans, “if Hoseok here is a girl, she could still be a police officer and I’m sure you wouldn’t even bat an eye.”

“The female mind is easier to alter.” The answer makes Hoseok want to gag.

Yoongi groans, “God I really hope you’re just really fucking stupid and forgot that the one who suggested this prominent contract with you was the chieftess.”

The other doesn’t reply, as if choked up by the realization.
“Homophobic and misogynistic. You could be a cop with that skill set.” Yoongi jokes but Hoseok clears his throat harsher than he intended.

The elder doesn’t seem to care, “If you’re gonna have the same shitty mindset as cops, then what makes you think you’re so much better than them?”

“Don’t forget who the bad guy is, Yoongi.” He warns.

“That’s Mr. Min for you,” Donghyuk speaks up from behind him. “Don’t forget who the bad guy is? You’re gonna say that in a room full of criminals? If that’s the case, then Jung Hoseok here is the only innocent person in this room.”

“This scum that thinks he’s all high and mighty because he has a shiny badge on him? He’d roll around and give you his hand for a treat from anyone. He’s probably more obedient than a dog.”

“Shin Doyoon.” Yoongi raises his voice. He straightens his arm out as if reminding the other that there’s a gun pointed right at him.

Yoongi’s free hand moves to brush Hoseok’s shoulder before dropping back to his side. For a second then, it was warm, and it tingles oddly as if Yoongi had left his fleeting remnants on his shoulder.

“Insult cops all you want, that also happens to be my hobby,” Yoongi shrugs coolly, “you could’ve insulted any cop and I won’t even care, would even agree. Jung Hoseok however, is my lover before anything.” Hoseok’s eyes widen at the statement “I expect a certain amount of respect when you address my lover.”

“I think we’ve gone way off topic,” one of the men opposite to them speaks up, “you’ve already signed the contract, Min.”

“Ah right,” Yoongi glances at the sheet of paper on the table. He lowers his gun as he picks the piece of paper up and holds it at arm’s length in front of the fake store window where the clothes are on display.

It’s unpredictable to know what Yoongi is planning to do next. Hoseok’s eyes go on a hunt around the room for an unsurprised face, a knowing glance, but it comes to no avail. Yoongi is like a rainstorm in the sense that there are hints of his expecting feat in the form of gray clouds and darker skies, but one simply cannot predict if the water that seeps from above would be small, light drops or an unforgiving storm.

It’s a thunder this time.

The sudden loud shot of the gun startles everyone and Hoseok jumps. Yoongi looks through the burnt hole on the paper where his signature was initially etched on. The dark burnt rim frames the now shattered window in front of him, the bullet crashing through and creating web-like patterns before shards break off into crisp bits on the pavement. The cold wind sweeps in like a consequence that everyone has to suffer through Yoongi’s doing.

Donghyuk curses from somewhere behind them as Yoongi sets the piece of paper back on the table, “That should fix it.”

“What the fuck do you think you’re doing!?” Shin Doyoon barks, exasperated and in disbelief.

“Cancelling the contract,” Yoongi states matter-of-factly. “Over half of your goods are still with us, so good luck getting those back now that you’ve shown us how disgusting you are,” he sneers,
“and this is coming from a Min.”

He tugs Hoseok up from his chair and motions for him to start making his way out. Hoseok is a bit hesitant about his movements until Namjoon and Seokjin shifts up from behind him and leads him outside.

Most of their men are out but Yoongi is still inside.

Namjoon sighs, rubbing at the chilling back of his neck, exposed to the cold wind, “This wasn’t how we planned out tonight to be.”

“I’d apologize for the broken mirror, but I’m sure you can sort it out yourself.” Yoongi’s voice is now audible from beyond the remnants of the store window. “Tell the authorities a gay guy broke your mirror,” he pauses, “and your one ceiling lamp.”

“Don’t do it,” Seokjin mutters to himself, pleading. He groans and pinches at his temple when another gunshot sounds and the small building goes pitch black.

“More work for me I guess.” Namjoon murmurs, making a note on his tablet.

Seokjin brings up a hand to rub at the younger boy’s shoulder as a silent encouragement. “You should ask for a raise or something. Maybe head chief would even adopt you.”

Hoseok can hear the scolding beyond the closed doors of the van as he shifts around in his seat. Yoongi’s figure appears briefly when Seokjin slides open the door, his shoulders coming up into the usual shrug before the black door closes.

A warm hand moves to rest on his shoulder.

“Are you okay?” Seokjin asks, worry evident in his tone.

Hoseok gives him a small smile as he rests his head back on the car seat, he’s suddenly exhausted from the whole ordeal. “I mean I was kinda freaking out, but who wouldn’t?”

Seokjin mirrors the smile, “I know Yoongi wouldn’t shoot you, but I freaked out and I wasn't even the one being held at gunpoint.”

Hoseok nods warily at that, “The contract...is it important?”

“Sort of,” Seokjin confesses, “but it doesn’t matter how beneficial it’d be for us after what the bastard told Yoongi to do.”

“Oh,” is all Hoseok says before he clears his throat, “I’m sorry that I ruined it for you all.”

Seokjin quickly shakes his head at that, “The mafia are too prideful to apologize, but we should be sorry for dragging you into this. Not to be a dick, but it’s what you should get used to if you’re going to marry Yoongi.”

Hoseok chokes at the last sentence before he mutters, “Right.”

He tries to ignore that statement as the van starts moving. Hoseok glances out the window at the passing streets, the lights nothing more than quick drags of orange and yellow in his unfocused eyes. He looks at street after street, corner after dead ends, but they are all empty, not a police van or even a car in sight. They probably returned hastily as to not get caught as soon as they’ve discovered that the situation has been diffused. Hoseok hopes, anyway.
Seokjin cracks a few jokes during their way back and his mood lifts a little, thankful that it at least distracts from the sinking feeling in his gut that he feels would be too much to focus on after all that has happened today; he deserves a break.

Hoseok doesn’t see Yoongi when they return to the Min’s mansion. Seokjin suggests that he should take a shower to wash off any ‘Donghyuk smell’ from his body and gestures him to Yoongi’s bathroom. Donghyuk shouts at him from afar but Seokjin brushes it off like a usual occurrence.

He almost forgot about Holly when the dog greets him excitedly at the door when he enters Yoongi’s room. All the impending stress from today just melts at the sight of the little thing yapping around at his feet. He gives him a quick tummy rub accompanied by his high-pitched cooing before he gets up to venture into the bathroom, stripping off and turning on the warm shower spray. He quickly steps out when he realizes the wire is still taped to his chest and gently sets it on top of his pile of Jungkook’s clothes.

He takes a few minutes to relax despite where he is or what had just happened. He tries to focus on work and the cases he has to digitalize tomorrow as well as make up some white lies to tell the nosy kids of how his little “date” went and how sweet Yoongi was to him.

Hoseok doesn’t want the younger boys to worry, to prod in deeper because they’re suspicious of Yoongi. They said that they’d respect his decision, but he knows them better than they do, and he knows that they’ll get suspicious. He needs to convince them that he’s happy and the relationship is going well.

God, he has to gush about Yoongi, doesn’t he?

Hoseok closes his eyes and lets his mind wander and weave its fabrication. He learns now that he isn’t the best at making up completely new scenarios and pretending that it actually happened, so he recounts the day’s events like flipping back a few pages in a book.

It started with Yoongi meeting him at the front gate; he supposes he can just leave out the part where he had to change as to hypothetically not hurt Jungkook and his emo wardrobe’s feelings.

He met a few of Yoongi’s “work friends” and Yoongi defended him when they crossed a line… what the fuck was that for?

While he appreciates that Yoongi came to his defense when the whole thing went down, he contemplated all his life choices while trying to suppress his anxious paranoia, uncertain if his soulmate was going to shoot him. Thinking about it now with a clear head, Yoongi could have easily just refused and left without causing a ruckus. If it weren’t for his dumb stunt, Hoseok might have accepted that he’s fallen for him-

Hoseok knocks his head against the shower wall lightly. His mind is apparently not clear enough. He takes a deep, damp breath.

Min Yoongi is an inconsiderate asshole. That’s better. He made Hoseok panic for nothing and Namjoon has to take care of the damages because of how he played with his gun. Hoseok doesn’t like him.

Speak of the devil; he can hear the door to the bedroom open, followed by a hum that gets progressively louder until the person is full-on singing not too badly, Hoseok supposes. The song is a modern one, but the way it’s sung makes it sound like an old, traditional folk song. He can hear Holly’s excited barks and the person’s little coos as he plays around with the dog. It’s not until the
man starts speaking in a little singsong voice that Hoseok realizes that Yoongi is singing to his dog.

“Does Min Holly miss daddy~” The out-of-character mafioso sings in the tune of a familiar song and Hoseok fails to stifle a snort that escapes him, his anger from earlier subsiding a bit. “Food~ let’s get Min Holly his food~” He sings again and Hoseok crouches down for a moment to muffle his giggles into his arms. *This is too good.*

He stands back up after a while to shampoo his hair to get rid of the styling gel before the doorknob rattles. He pauses in confusion but continues to rinse his hair under the spray.

But then the door swings open.

Hoseok jumps, barely saves himself from slipping and grabs for his towel, grateful that he didn’t fall on his ass, “Sh- what the fuck,” he wraps his towel around his waist at death speed and scowls at Yoongi, feeling the tips of his ears heat up, spreading to his cheeks, “Hyung, what the *fuck!!*”

Yoongi ignores the younger’s curses as he stuffs his keys back into his pocket and steps toward the police wire to shut it off. He looks up at Hoseok with a frown, “You weren’t slick with this thing. There was a police van a few blocks away from the building, none of you cops are slick.”

“Okay that’s observative of you and all that but can’t you just, I don’t know… fucking wait until I finish showering?” Hoseok is still clutching onto the towel as he turns off the warm spray.

“How can I trust you to not have a wire on when you’re clothed?” Yoongi quirks up an eyebrow. His eyes flicker down for a moment before it returns to meet Hoseok’s with a smirk, “Not bad, by the way.”

Hoseok sputters as he helplessly covers his bare torso with his free hand, “Hey!”

“I’ll be taking this,” Yoongi murmurs as he grabs the wire, “my dad wants to talk to you. Are you staying the night?”

Hoseok is shivering at this point, “Sure,” he says shakily, “I’ll be down there as soon as you close the door and let me finish my shower.”

Yoongi waves the police wire in his hand, “Don’t take too long.”

Hoseok turns the shower spray back on as soon as the door closes and he sighs. This night doesn’t seem to want to end so easily.

❄️

“You took too long, so the head chief already went to sleep.” At Seokjin’s words, Hoseok hunches his back and dumbly makes his way back up to Yoongi’s room.

Yoongi sings in the shower too, apparently. Hoseok doesn’t recognize the song but unconsciously smiles as Yoongi tries his best to silently belt out a high note.

He silently watches Holly chew on his fancy dog food (“filet mignon” it says on the can. *Ridiculous*). He almost turns the sound of Yoongi’s humming when he steps into the bedroom, but
then realizes that he’s done far too many shitty things today that Hoseok refuses to let go.

“Why are you mad?” The elder skips the pleasantries as he disposes of the empty can. Hoseok isn’t sure how Yoongi knew instantly, but he ignores it.

“You’re the type of person who spends more money on your dog than yourself.” He says instead.

“Which is what Min Holly deserves,” Yoongi shrugs, but then he repeats his question, “why are you mad?”

“Why is he named Holly when he’s a boy?” Hoseok asks, still ignoring Yoongi’s blatant question.

Yoongi answers anyway, “Lost a bet with Donghyuk hyung so he got to name him. Names also shouldn’t be gender-oriented, that’s an old way of thinking.” He looks at Hoseok, “You ignoring my question means you’re mad, why are you mad?”

“How long have you had him for?”

“That’s it,” Yoongi picks up his dog from his food bowl, “you don’t get the pleasure of seeing Holly enjoy his meal until you stop ignoring my question.”

“Have a guess, hyung,” Hoseok glares at him, “but since you keep pestering me about it I guess I’ll have to lay it out for you.”

He clears his throat, “First, you held a gun against my head when you’ve actually shot me. Like, the doctor said I was very lucky I survived, and you were gonna put me through all that again.”

“I wasn’t going to shoot you.” Yoongi says nonchalantly, “I wanted to surprise them.”

“Secondly,” Hoseok ignores Yoongi’s justification, “you caused a scene and Namjoon has to clean up after you. The poor guy looked so tired.”

“That’s his job.” Yoongi counters.

“And you barged into me showering out of nowhere! That was fucking rude!” Hoseok can feel his tone raise and he tries to calm it, but not too much. Yoongi deserves it.

“Like I said, I can’t trust you to not wear a wire when you’re clothed since you’re apparently a mole for the cops.” The elder’s voice cuts back.

Hoseok groans, “It was also for backup in case I get into dangerous situations like having a gun aimed at my head, which happened, and why? Just so you look cool!” He crosses his arms and huffs out a breath, “Fuck my panic attacks right? Nothing matters as long as people get the message that you’re cool. God.”

Yoongi is quiet for a while. He puts Holly back on the floor, still mute as he looks at the waddling locks of brown fur make its way back to the food bowl, oblivious to the tension building up in the room.

Hoseok focuses on Holly, forcing himself to breathe and for his unshed tears to remain unshed, he can’t cry. Not in front of Yoongi. He can’t let him see his weakness and use it to feed his own ego. He did it before and he’s learned now that he’s not going to do it again.

He can hear Yoongi sigh and shuffle out of the corner of his eye, but he doesn’t turn to follow his movements. Instead, he reaches out a hand to pet Holly who is still diligently trying to finish his
obnoxious “filet mignon.”

Something hits the small of his back and it takes him half a second to turn and glare at Yoongi from where he sits. The elder motions to the object he threw at him and Hoseok turns to see the familiar yellow pouch he saw from earlier today.

“Here’s your stupid triangle.” Yoongi grumbles, “Don’t be mad.”

The pouch looks nice up close, it’s a good size and the leather feels cool to the touch. He frowns though, “I don’t want it.”

“You’re clutching it to your chest.” Yoongi deadpans.

Hoseok jolts and quickly puts it down, “I don’t want it.” He repeats himself.

“Either you take it or I’m throwing it out.” Yoongi sits down on the foot of his bed.

“Fine! I’ll keep it.” Hoseok takes it again, “Only because you were going to throw out eight hundred thousand won. I’m still mad at you.”

Yoongi frowns, “Stop being mad at me.”

“I’ll stop when you apologize.”

“Never.”

“Then expect me to be mad at you every second we’re together up until the very end-” Hoseok pauses — *The very end.*

“Hyung,” He changes his tone, “how long do we have to do this for?”

Yoongi keeps his lips in a tight line as his eyes focus on nothing before he answers, a little choked back, “Until my father passes away.”

Hoseok’s stomach churns at that, “Oh.”

“If you want a date then it’s probably around December or early next year,” Yoongi adds bluntly. He’s turned away from Hoseok when he looks up. Hoseok can tell that he’s trying to lighten the mood, “Looks like you’re gonna have to be mad at me for a year or something.”

Hoseok scoffs, “That just made it much easier.”

The mafioso arches an eyebrow. “Did you know that holding grudges makes you fat?”

“Wow this will be easy.”

“I’m just being considerate of your physique.” Yoongi shrugs.

There’s a bang on the door and Hoseok jolts, instinctively pushing up from the floor to press himself against Yoongi’s side on the bed.

Another knock sounds, followed by Donghyuk’s muffled sleep-addled voice, “Shut the fuck up and go to sleep. You’re gonna wake Dad up.” Footsteps shuffle away until silence takes over.

“I thought he was going to come in again.” Hoseok sighs. He turns to his side and Yoongi is already looking at him, eyes focused on a specific feature of Hoseok’s face that he can’t quite work
Hoseok’s usual reflex would be to jump and shift away as far as he can and curse a word or two. It doesn’t seem to be activated tonight, though.

His eyes lock with Yoongi’s and he sees a story in those ponds of dark brown, one he’s still unfamiliar with and can’t quite understand, yet he yearns to learn more and to dive in deeper until every word makes sense to him and every interpretation is correct. He takes in the shape of his eyes; the sharp pointed angles and the curved slope that meets another piercing corner. He takes in the way his lashes fan above his cheeks, the way the loose stray lash urges Hoseok to blow it out gently. Yoongi is,

Yoongi is nothing. He shouldn’t be anything.

Hoseok breaks from the trance and looks down at his hands. “I’m gonna go sleep.” He mutters before he stands up from the bed to make his way to his spot on the floor. Yoongi’s fingers enclose his wrist before he can though, and he looks back with an expression he hopes can be read as confused, ignoring the way warmth spreads from Yoongi’s fingers to his skin and up to his pounding chest.

“You should sleep on the bed,” Yoongi whispers, “we almost got caught last time.”

Hoseok doesn’t breathe, forgets to, doesn’t know how to. He isn’t sure if his mind would be able to settle down if he sleeps on the bed. He’s not ready to face the chaos in his mind or the sparks in his body let alone accept it. He’s just not ready.

But,

“If you don’t mind.”

“Doesn’t matter if I do.” Yoongi chuckles before he lets go of Hoseok’s wrist. His warmth still lingers even after the absence of the touch. Everything about Yoongi seems to linger, and he doesn’t know how he feels about it, yet.

The bed is more comfortable than the floor, at the very least. Hoseok turns to look at the curtained windows through the comforter. The city barely comes into view, faintly illuminated by the street lights and windows that lead to rooms with the lights still turned on. The stars are nowhere to be found in the sky, like the yellow and white blobs of lights seem to have stolen them all and hug them in the atmosphere of the land, letting them linger there.

Lingering,

Perhaps that’s what Yoongi has in common with the city stars.

Stupid.

Hoseok is supposed to be mad at Yoongi. The guy refused to apologize and even thought that he could resolve this with a gift.

Yoongi is an arm’s reach away, but he doesn’t dare to turn around.

The night makes people stupid, Hoseok thinks.

The night makes him connect a mafioso to the stars.
He should sleep, or at least try.

He sleeps, but not very well.

Sunny
Rain
Traffic
Clear

Hoseok wakes up before the sequence could continue. He pushes himself up, hugs his knees to his chest and breathes.

He goes back to sleep.

Sunny
Rain
Traffic

Hoseok wakes up again, repeats the process, fluffs up his pillow.

Sunny

“For fuck’s sake,” Hoseok whispers harshly to himself, fingers curled into his hair. He starts to shiver a little from the cold, the comforter pooled at his feet.

“I knew it,” A sleepy grumble sounds from behind him, “cops aren’t human. They never sleep. They just pretend to close their eyes.”

“If you hadn’t said that I would’ve apologized for waking you up.” Hoseok deadpans.

“You didn’t wake me up.” Yoongi says, clearing his throat as he shifts his head around on his pillow, “I couldn’t sleep. Headache.”

“Oh,” Hoseok whispers before he reaches out a tentative hand, fingers skimming at the edge of the pillow, coming up to card through Yoongi’s hair as he rests his palm there after the elder makes no motion to shift away.

“I think my mind is still too alert after today,” Hoseok murmurs, “I can’t seem to relax.”

Yoongi looks up from under Hoseok’s hand, eyes half open but focused, “C’mere then.”
“What?”

“You said people playing with your hair helps you sleep, so come here.” Yoongi’s voice is muffled by the comforter but it’s determined, his eyes unmoving.

Hoseok breathes again, deep and long, because now is not the time to process the way his chest tightens and clenches as he slips back under the comforter, one of his hands still nestled in Yoongi’s hair.

He sees Yoongi’s eyes again, and the stories he doesn’t quite understand resurface. A hand appears from underneath the comforter and it soon reaches his hair. Hoseok’s eyes flutter close as fingers comb and brush through his hair, from the roots up to the thin strands.

He likes it, but he feels like he shouldn’t.

He’ll deal with that later;

For now, he just sleeps.

The dreaded set of words are now hushed, void from his dreams, and Hoseok doesn’t wake up until morning.

Hoseok’s date was quite simple. He was a bit nervous at first.

Yoongi greeted him at the front gate and sneaked him into his family’s secret garden to kiss him before they got caught.

He met a few of Yoongi’s work friends but they soon learned that that was a mistake. Yoongi got mad at them for his sake and they left quite abruptly. Yoongi bought him this pouch Hoseok thought looked nice even though Yoongi himself didn’t like it.

Yoongi sings in the shower and serenades his cute dog and invests in obnoxiously expensive fancy dog food because it’s “what Min Holly deserves.”

They talk late into the night until Yoongi’s brother told them to shut up and go to sleep.

Yoongi played with Hoseok’s hair until he fell asleep and they woke up tangled in each other.

Yoongi kissed him on the cheek before he left for work.

Jimin squeals into his hands and Jungkook smacks his right arm, yelling out a loud obnoxious get some!

Taehyung rests his chin on his propped up hand and just smiles all too fondly. Hoseok smiles back and finds that it’s not too difficult.

It’s the truth with the edges trimmed off.

None of it was a lie.

Not even the last part.

Chapter End Notes
this chapter is a bit short but Oh Look this fic is gonna have more chapters WOOOO more gay stuff !!!
i keep getting more ideas for this fic from everywhere hhh and i'm just incapable of turning down my ideas so we're just gonna stuff this fic up! it'll probably be the longest fic i've written so far hhh let's go sope nation
a quick shoutout to sham (hi sham) for being the #1 hypewoman for this fic jfhddh your reactions to an update always makes my day thank you♡
i always really appreciate all the comments i get on here and i often find myself rereading so many of them and enjoying the way it makes me smile and itch to write more. i don't usually reply to comments on here mostly because i don't know what to say JFSDHJH sometimes i'm not sure if you expect a reply hhh i love answering messages on curiouscat though! i really appreciate all the lovely responses to this fic and they make my heart light so thank you♡♡♡

my twitter,
my curiouscat
suspicions (a silent thank you)

Chapter Summary

“Officer...are you asking for my number?”

Chapter Notes

ok a few things to address before we start:
- i changed the ratings to mature because the fic deals with violence that i don't think are very hello fellow teenagers friendly (i'm not sure about this though pls let me know if it's not the appropriate rating hhh)
- the chapter number went up again here we go am i gonna finish this
- there's a new pairing in the tag take a peek uwu !!!

p.s. i'm a day late but i hope you're happy sham

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jimin has a few suspicions.

He feels kind of bad for being suspicious, but he thinks it’s fair considering that Hoseok looks...tired.

The date sounded really cute, but there are a few holes in it.

First of all, Hoseok had dinner at Jimin’s place before he left to see Min Yoongi, with proof being the remnants of an empty cup of instant noodles in the trash can. Hoseok also never mentioned a dinner of any sorts with Min Yoongi.

Why didn’t they go out to eat on their date?

Hoseok was also munching on the street corner’s sandwich when he arrived at the station this morning which is presumably his breakfast, and that’s also odd; he stayed the night at his boyfriend’s, but he wasn’t treated to any kind of breakfast before leaving? And his boyfriend was willing to just let him leave to work on an empty stomach?

Even the last time Min Yoongi came to visit at the station was suspicious; he seemed so detached from the fact that Hoseok was having his tormenting chest pain right in front of him that he kept talking to him like nothing’s wrong.

It’s all just so... weird.

Questions lead to more questions, yet none of them are answered.

The only reason Jimin doesn’t just grab Hoseok and interrogate him right then and there is because his precious hyung who hardly ever discusses his private life trusted him enough to share about his little boyfriend, and he’d rather the walls close in on him than making Hoseok regret ever telling
Jimin anything about his life.

He glares at the back of Hoseok’s head from where he’s sitting as if after a few attempts he’d be able to burn a hole into it and figure everything out from reading his mind.

Actually, that’s a better option than directly asking him.

So Jimin leans forward over his desk, hands bracing him on either side and squints, furrowing his brows for maximum effect and just when he thinks he starts to see smoke from Hoseok’s head he, Something - or rather - someone, made his eyes grow wide and his eyebrows reach up to his forehead, and at that moment, Jimin just gapes.

Tall is the first thing that registers into Jimin’s bedazzled brain. This presence that just graced the old precinct is so tall Jimin has to lift his head and drag his eyes from his legs, wrapped by a pair of snug black jeans, up to his beautifully crafted torso hidden under a simple white button up that looks all but simple on him, to his face.

And oh, what a sight that is.

Sharp, focused eyes, peer through round, thin gold-rimmed glasses that sit on a small nose bridge, edging over to reach that button of a nose. His hair is bleached grey and styled so that it’s lifted from his face and pushed back in layered waves. His lips - his lips are full, plump, and almost round from its volume. Every feature of his face sits so well as if it has been beautifully orchestrated together to destroy Jimin by poking at all of his weaknesses.

Jimin traces the shape of those lips, capturing everything to memory, until they stretch out thinly as he smiles wide, his cheeks scrunching up his eyes into little crescents as if delivering a final blow.

Then he speaks.

“Hoseok,” He says, “are you busy?”

It takes Jimin a stupidly long time to realize that this demigod of a man - no - a Man, knows Hoseok, and he’s at his desk.

Hoseok has a boyfriend, so they’re most likely just good friends from the bloom of his face when he sees him. Jimin swears that a ray of light just streamed through the old windows - a glimmer of hope in the form of Hoseok.

“Joon!” Hoseok exclaims excitedly but quietly, mindful of his surroundings, “What are you doing here?”

Joon.

The gears in Jimin’s head starts to turn as he speculates, generating all the possibilities.

Seojoon? Hyunjoon? Minjoon? Oh my god, that could be their ship name.

No, now’s not the time for this, he needs to focus. Jimin claps his hands to his cheeks a little too hard and he winces at the sting and the volume it created, but at least he’s snapped out of it.

Hajoon? Or maybe it’s a weird nickname since it’s Hoseok, Jihoon maybe? He has nice eyes. Oh no, why is he looking this way. Hoseok is looking this way.

“Jimin, are you okay?” Hoseok turns in his chair, concern worrying his face. “That was a really
loud slap.”

Jimin shoots up from his draping position and straightens his back, trying to ignore his now red cheeks as he chokes out, “I’m fine.”

The wingless angel is looking at him with an unreadable expression. Confused, maybe. That’s a cute look on him. But then the smile from before returns, wider, and it’s directed at Jimin and he could die, he swears he could just drop dead. The precinct itself is going to become a crime scene.

“You must be Hoseok’s friend,” he smiles, “I’m Namjoon.”


Jimin has lost the ability to speak. Hoseok seems to notice as he intercepts.

“This is Jimin,” He says before turning back to face him, “Namjoon and I were actually partners at the police academy!”

“Oh, really?” Jimin breathes. A man who believes in justice and righteousness. To serve and protect. This can’t get any better.

“Yeah! Joon was actually top of the class! I can never compete with him.” It just got better.

Namjoon ducks his head to hide a shy smile and his cheeks form these dimples. Dimples, so wide and deep that they’re practically begging Jimin to poke them, or even crawl inside and just live in them.

“It’s always a close call. Everyone is incredibly smart and talented.” He brushes off the compliment.

“Humble…” the words dreamily slip out of Jimin’s lips before he could even stop them. Oh no. He clears his throat in a foolish attempt to cover that up. It’s too late though.

Namjoon chuckles lightly and shakes his head, “It’s true. Nice to meet you, Jimin-ssi.”

“Oh just-” Jimin stumbles over his words, “Just Jimin is fine.”

The Man’s eyes widen a little at the remark, but they return to that scrunched little crescents as he smiles again, “Alright then.”

“So what are you here for?” Hoseok turns back to Joon. Namjoon.

“The head chief wanted to speak to you. When is your break?” His voice is so pretty.

“Ah,” Hoseok turns to his wristwatch and pouts, “In twenty minutes. Do you want to come back later?”

“Oh, that’s fine,” Namjoon shakes his head, “I’ll just wait here if that’s alright with you. The office here seems interesting.”

“Sure,” Hoseok affirms as he starts to look around, “there should be a spare chair somewhere.”

Jimin’s eyes dart to the empty chair situated near his desk, “Here!”

Namjoon turns his head to Jimin’s call and gingerly makes his way towards him.
If Jimin thought he was beautiful from afar, then he’s absolutely ethereal up close. He has to look up in order to face the Man as the ceiling lights he’s covering because of his gigantic build creates a soft halo around him.

“Are you sure you don’t mind?” Namjoon asks cautiously. Jimin can’t seem to breathe so he just shakes his head in response, eyes never leaving his.

He seems to be stuck in that trance for too long as the next moment he snaps out of it, Namjoon had already moved the chair and sat down next to Hoseok’s desk. Not exactly as he planned but it’s fine.

*That’s alright*, Jimin thinks. Positive thinking is good, Taehyung said. *I’ll get you later*. He turns back to his pile of case files.

❤️

It’s weird, yet so right, to see Namjoon in a police precinct. He seems a bit fidgety, but he looks like he belongs here rather than anywhere else.

“You’re not wearing all black from head to toe today.” Hoseok comments.

“Ah, yeah,” The other man smiles sheepishly at that, “I heard a lot of men in black caused a scene here, so I changed before I came.”

Hoseok laughs. *Yoongi*. “Smart choice.” He shuts the case file in front of him and leaves it in a basket before reaching for the top one from the thankfully shrinking pile. He can feel Namjoon hovering over his shoulder as he opens it up.

“These are cold cases. I’m just registering them into the database so it’s easier to bring them back up if we ever need them.” He explains, and Namjoon straightens up as if he’s been caught in the act. “It’s fine to be curious.” He laughs.

“Cold cases are unsolved cases that you’re putting away for now right? My mind’s a bit rusty.” Namjoon asks.

“Yup. Still the model student I see.” Hoseok teases, and the other boy rubs the back of his neck meekly at that.

“This one is a break and enter in an apartment complex from a few months back,” Hoseok sets the open file down between him and Namjoon so he can see better. “There were no signs of forced entry at the door but the windows were smashed, so we checked in with the room next door since the guy is an ex-gymnast. You’ll never guess what happened when we broke into his place.” Hoseok laughs at the memory.

Namjoon makes a curious noise, “Did he run away?”

“Worst,” Hoseok snorts. He pulls out a picture that was attached to the file, “The guy was in a wheelchair.”

His friend chuckles lightly at the photograph, “Oh dear.”
“It was so embarrassing,” Hoseok rubs his eyes, “you were there too, weren’t you, Jimin?”

“You looked like you were going to cry, hyung.” The younger boy replies from behind him, giggling at the memory.

“His shoes are really dirty for someone on a wheelchair.” Namjoon comments, and Hoseok turns back to his friend.

“Look,” He points at the man’s shoes in the photograph, “they look like they got shoved into soil or something.”

“Wait,” Hoseok breathes, “wait.”

“Did you check his medical records?”

“No I-,” Hoseok chokes, “I don’t think we did. Jimin!” The boy’s head lifts up at the call of his name.

Hoseok passes the file to him, “He’s the guy! He faked his disability!”

Jimin shoots up and makes a round to Hoseok’s desk, “He what?”

“The victim had flower pots at their window and they were broken, remember?” Hoseok flips to photos taken at the scene, “The guy’s shoes were dirty!”

“Oh sh-,” the younger boy’s curse almost leaves from his lips before his eyes catch Namjoon’s and coughs. He takes the file from Hoseok’s hands, “I can go knock on his door like right now.”

“See you next time.”

“I’ll go with you!” Taehyung, who Hoseok didn’t know had been listening, springs up from his chair and follows Jimin to the parking lot.

Hoseok turns to gape at a very confused Namjoon.

“What?”

“You just solved a case,” Hoseok squeals, “you just solved a cold case!” He pats the other boy on the back a little too hard, but he’s sure it’s justified with how excited he is. “You’re good at this. I bet you could still join this field if you wanted to.”

The words left Hoseok’s mouth before he could even carefully reconsider its implications. Namjoon has this almost sad smile on his face as he looks down at his lap.

Before Hoseok could even say anything to dismiss what he just said, a door slams open and a pungent, coffee-fused smell slithers into his nose and he manages to not let go and puke. Namjoon visibly scrunches his nose when the stench registers.

“Good work today,” Captain Bang speaks up, “it’s lunch break. Enjoy the hour.” He promptly turns on his heels back to his office.

As soon as the door clicks shut, and without looking up from his screen, Jungkook raises his familiar bottle of febreze spray into the air like a gun announcing the start of a shoot-off and pulls the trigger, fighting off the unwanted stench with a slightly more tolerable lavender smell that Hoseok remembers choking on.

“Well, it’s break. Sorry for making you wait for so long. Should we go now?” Hoseok pushes
himself up from his chair and stretches. He looks down at his friend when he didn’t receive a response of any kind, “Joon? You okay?”

Namjoon is eyeing the captain’s office suspiciously before he snaps out of it and clears his throat. “Yeah, I’m fine. Let’s go.”

Hoseok decides to ignore whatever that was, although the way his friend’s whole demeanor changes for that few seconds is one of the greatest shifts he had seen from him. His eyebrows were furrowed in suspicion and his pupils pierced all too sharply through his spectacles as if trying to penetrate the walls beyond.

For a few seconds then - his kind, righteous friend looked like a mafia gang member.

* 

Namjoon pulls on the collar of his own shirt as soon as the van door closes, “Do you mind if I change here? The head chief doesn’t know I changed to come see you and he’s a bit particular with attire.”

Hoseok sits back on his car seat, “Right, all black. I don’t mind, it’s your van.”

“Well, it’s not actually mine but,” Namjoon’s murmur dies in his throat as he unbuttons his shirt, probably realizing that there’s really no reason to be explaining that. Hoseok busies himself on his phone as he scrolls through his photo gallery to sort images into separate albums. He realizes then that he doesn’t have any photos of Yoongi on his phone and a red light of possible dangerous situations flash in his mind.

What if Jimin asks for pictures of the date? Or anyone for pictures of Yoongi in general? How would he explain why he doesn’t have a single photo of Yoongi in his phone? Hell, he doesn’t even have his phone number. They should’ve thought about this the first night they agreed to this mess.

“Can you pass me my bag?” Namjoon asks from somewhere beyond his peripheral vision and Hoseok looks away from his phone to see a duffel bag next to him. An idea sparks in Hoseok’s paranoid mind - he can just ask Namjoon for photos. Surely, he has some.

He passes the duffel bag to the man in front of him before he looks up, “Hey Joon, do you have any photos-”

The rest of Hoseok’s sentence dissipates from his throat into a gasp when his eye catches a long trail of black ink along Namjoon’s left forearm, reaching up to his shoulder and down to his chest, hidden beneath his black undershirt.

Namjoon asks, confused, for the second time that day, “What?”

“Dude,” Hoseok breathes as his eyes explicitly trail up and down the intricate tattoo. Upon closer inspection that has Namjoon leaning back, they seem to be a branch of flowers, different kinds, blooming from the same branch. “You didn’t have this when we were in the academy!”

“Oh,” his friend finally catches on as he looks down at his arm, “it’s like the Min clan’s trademark. Your family’s birth flowers.”
Namjoon points at the narcissus entwining with a marigold that sits just under his wrist, “These are my parents’ birth flowers, and then my siblings,” he trails his finger up past a few blooms before Hoseok interrupts him.

“Wait,” He says, reaching out to grab Namjoon’s bicep with no prior warning, “flex that.”

His friend confusedly complies. He then starts giggling, probably at the way Hoseok’s expression shifts into this dramatic disbelief. “What?”

“What have they done to you,” Hoseok whispers and squeezes the flexed bicep, “oh my god what have they done to you?” He groans as he falls back into his car seat, “you can break someone’s neck with that! Did they force feed you protein shakes or something? What happened to Namjangmyeon? Namjjampong? Noodle boy?”

His friend is downright cackling at this point, head thrown back as he clutches at his stomach with those beastly arms at the mention of his old nicknames.

“Hotteok-ssi,” He manages through his fit in a fake weeping tone, “they beat me into a pulp and I solidified, but my heart is still so soft.”

“Stop, I’m actually kind of pissed,” Hoseok cries as laughter starts to bubble in his own chest, “does justice make you puny? Is that it?”

Namjoon hugs himself, “I don’t know what to say to that.”

Hoseok tries to gather himself, “We were talking about tattoos. Continue.”

After breathing in for a few seconds to calm himself down, Namjoon hooks his index finger under the front of his shirt and pulls it down slightly to reveal the end of the path where a flower bud sits just above his heart.

“This is me.” He says.

“Why are you a flower bud?” Hoseok squints.

“People who have found their soulmates would have a fully bloomed flower here,” Namjoon answers as he reaches inside the duffel bag to pull out a black collared shirt, “I haven’t found mine yet.” He finishes with a small, almost sad, little smile.

Hoseok just stares for a moment before he frowns, “You mean you have to get another tattoo when you’ve found your soulmate?”

“Something like that,” Namjoon nods as he slips into his usual shirt, “you have to get one of your soulmate’s birth flower too.”

Hoseok winces squeamishly, “Ow! My whole body just shuddered in fear thinking of that.”

The other boy laughs, “It’s not that bad.”

“It still hurts! It’s needles!” Hoseok balls his hands into little fists and curls into his body from the imagery he gave himself.

“Good thing you don’t have to get it then.” Namjoon smiles as he finishes with the top button.

“Does this,” Hoseok starts, “does this mean Yoongi has one too?” Namjoon nods. “And he got a new one because of me?” Namjoon shakes his head.
“It’s part of the wedding ceremony, actually.” His friend answers.

“Oh.”

Before the silence makes an awkward turn, Namjoon changes the subject, “Is that the pouch Yoongi hyung got you?” He points at the yellow triangle pouch sitting next to Hoseok.

“Ah, yeah.” Hoseok lifts it up, “It’s cute, don’t you think?”

“It’s definitely different,” Is all Namjoon says to that. “I don’t think hyung was supposed to do it, but I saw him swipe it from the store window he broke yesterday.”

Hoseok’s eyes widen at that. Of course he stole it.

Namjoon catches the shift in his expression, “Don’t worry, I doubt that Shin Doyoon would care about a stolen bag after what happened last night. The head chief doesn’t know about it and I have my lips sealed tight.” He smiles.

The rest of the journey was quite short, and it was spent with Namjoon asking Hoseok a few questions about being in the task force and then Jimin, surprisingly.

“We’re here.” Namjoon murmurs as he slides the door open and closes it after Hoseok has stepped out. He looks up at the tall building sitting in front of him, reflecting flashes of light as the shiny black van drives past behind them. The street is quiet; they’re most likely in a richer area.

Before Hoseok could step closer to the building, Namjoon tugs him by the arm, “It’s this way.”

They walk past the entrance of the large structure to an old, run-down telephone booth a few feet away from the building. Namjoon steps in and gestures for Hoseok to do the same.

Namjoon reaches for the black wired telephone and rests it on the side of his face as if to make a call and punches a few numbers in.

“This is Kim Namjoon,” Namjoon speaks into the telephone, “I’m here with Jung Hoseok as requested.” He puts the telephone back to into its place after a few seconds.

“...What was that?” Hoseok asks, hesitant.

“Give it a second.” Is all his friend says as he taps his feet on the old tin platform.

The platform starts to move and before Hoseok could even process it all, they’re descending. The ground rises higher above their heads as darkness encloses them. Hoseok squeaks and blindly grabs for his friend’s arm, groaning at how his hands can barely fit over it, “Oh I hate you.” Namjoon’s silhouette ducks its head down into a chuckle.

The phone booth finally reaches a stop in front of a closed steel door similar to that of an elevator’s (Hoseok supposes that that’s what it is) as it slides open to reveal a large hallway, lit surprisingly bright for an underground place.

Namjoon leads the way, taking a few turns here and there. A few people walk past them; some that Hoseok recognizes, some that he doesn’t. Namjoon greets all of them and they greet him back before looking past his shoulders to see Hoseok and pulling a face when they look at his uniform. He doesn’t blame them; it’s a cop in the mafia’s headquarters. They walk for a while more until Namjoon comes to a stop, pulling out his phone to check his messages.
“Huh, I guess we ran a bit late. Jin hyung said the head chief is meeting someone right now.” He stuffs his phone back into his pocket, “We have like ten minutes. Do you want to go see Yoongi hyung? You’ve never seen his office, right?”

The idea didn’t seem to have come across Hoseok’s mind, “Ah, no.”

Namjoon smiles, “He’ll be glad to see you. It’s a nice surprise.”

Hoseok didn’t even consider saying no.

✿

One of the clan members slips out of the door to Yoongi’s office just as they’ve arrived. He looks quite happy, the smile on his face one that can’t help but bloom.

“Oh, Hoseok-ssi!” The guy greets him with a friendly grin that takes Hoseok by surprise. He recognizes him from the few times he has visited the Min’s mansion; more precisely, the scowl he always has on when he faces Hoseok, uniformed with the many others inhibiting the building whenever he’s there.

“Sungmin-ssi.” Hoseok smiles back at him.

“Here to see Yoongi right? He’s all yours.” Sungmin winks - *winks* - before he strides away with a cheerful hop beneath the soles of his feet.

Namjoon smiles at the confused look Hoseok has on, “I guess hyung said some nice things.”

“Hyung? You mean Yoongi hyung?” Hoseok scoffs.

“Yeah, he’s really caring towards the clan members,” Namjoon arches a brow in question, “what’s the matter?”

At the realization that he’s almost caught in the act of forgetting that he’s supposed to see all the good in Yoongi, Hoseok clears his throat, “Nothing! I knew that.”

His friend tilts his head in question but ignores it as he opens the door to stick his head into Yoongi’s office, “Hyung, there’s a special visitor here for you. You’re gonna love it.”

“You’re not going in with me?” Hoseok asks when Namjoon sticks his head back out and pats Hoseok on the back.

“Don’t you guys want a little privacy?” Namjoon questions.

“Oh right,” Hoseok swallows, “yeah. Thanks.”

The door closes behind him with a soft click. The first thing that hits him is the waft of soft smell in the room that is faint yet prominent enough. It’s similar to the cologne Yoongi puts on when he's suited for work and Hoseok admits that it’s much better than the stinkhole that is his captain’s office. This smell feels much more welcoming. Hoseok looks at the clean, spacious interior of the office before his eyes cast on the man behind the desk who’s looking up at him.

“Hoseok-ah,” Yoongi says in a neutral tone, “what brings you here today?”
Hoseok waves awkwardly at the acknowledgement as he steps closer to the desk, “Your dad wanted to see me but he’s busy right now, so Namjoon suggested I drop by to see you.”

Yoongi rubs his jaw as he arches a brow, sitting back in his seat, “I see, is that all?”

“What do you mean?”

“Well,” The mafioso rises from his chair, making his way around to step into Hoseok’s space, leaning down towards his chest, “Aren’t you here for some *digging*?”

Hoseok steps away, “No, I’m not. Why are you talking to my chest?”

When Yoongi exhales, his breath brushes Hoseok’s neck. “Isn’t this where you cops keep your wires? Should I say hi to your friends?” He leans towards Hoseok’s chest again, “Hello.”

Hoseok groans as he reaches up to loosen his tie, undoing the few top buttons to reveal himself in a Superman pose, “No wires.” He says.

“Fine,” Yoongi huffs, “I’ll believe you.” He brings his hands up to redo the buttons, “You really should consider wearing an undershirt.”

Hoseok yelps as he pushes Yoongi’s hands away, “I can do that myself. And no, it’s too hot for that.”

“You’ve never complained about it when I undo them.” Yoongi shrugs, “And it’s winter.”

“Whatever! I don’t like wearing one!” Hoseok carps, “And I- wait, I let you?” Yoongi wordlessly finishes the top button and tightens his tie before Hoseok can protest.

“I’m always the one who has to unbutton your uniform for you when you get your pain thing because you’re busy hissing and groaning.”

“I was in pain!” Hoseok can feel a blush creeping up his neck and he fights every will to let it rise to his cheeks.

“I know, I’m not complaining.” Yoongi moves to sit back down on his chair, gesturing for Hoseok to take a seat in front of him.

Hoseok takes a chance to let his eyes cast around on the contents of Yoongi’s desk. There are a few framed pictures on his desk of his father, a family photo, a few women and- he can’t quite believe what he’s seeing.

“Is that...is that my ID photo?”

“Yes,” Yoongi turns to look at the small framed photo near his computer, “I had someone find it from the database.”

Hoseok chokes, “I- *why*?”

Yoongi arches a brow at that, “You think I’m not gonna keep a photo of my lover on my desk? As fake as it is, it adds to the realism.” He looks up at Hoseok, “Don’t you have a photo of me at your workplace?”

“No,” Hoseok gapes, “No, I don’t. I didn’t even think of that.”

“Are you actually trying to make this seem real? I’ve been doubting it.” Yoongi frowns.
“I am! I clenched my teeth and lied to all my friends, it’s terrible!” Hoseok mirrors the frown. “Besides, it’s not like I can keep a photo of you even if I had thought of it. Workplace policy.”

“What kind of workplace policy is that?”

“It’s really weird! I can’t even have a picture of my parents on my desk,” Hoseok whines, “the captain literally banned it and just said ‘If you truly love your loved ones, you’d know what they look like’” He deepens his voice into a dramatically lower, grumbly tone to imitate his superior.

Yoongi snorts, “No way.”

“Yes way!” Hoseok retorts, “do you remember seeing any framed photos on anyone’s desk when you came to the station?”

The other man furrows his brows as he tries to recall, “Huh, you’re right. What a guy.” He starts to laugh this silent, hiccupy laugh and Hoseok can’t help but stare.

This is the first time he’s seen Yoongi laugh and smile this wide. His top lip curls up to reveal his neat row of teeth and a fair amount of gum. His cheeks push up to crinkle his crescent eyes, forming a few laugh marks at the corners. The older man clutches his stomach as he throws his head back before he calms down, making a show of wiping his tears. Hoseok snorts at that.

“Away,” He steers the topic back to the very unflattering photo of him, “I look really bad in that photo, and it’s weird to have someone’s ID photo framed on your desk.”

“I think you look fine,” Yoongi shrugs, “and I had to convince people somehow that I think of you when I work.”

Hoseok ignores the way his chest interprets the remark and clears his throat, “No one looks good in their ID photos. Which is why I’m gonna send you a few photos of me where I actually look good that you can use instead, and it’ll be much more convincing.”

“If you insist,” Yoongi grumbles as he reaches for a name card, “here’s my email.”

“Ah, well,” Hoseok stops him, “I can text a few photos to you.”

“Officer,” Yoongi leans in closer from across his desk, “are you asking for my number?”

Hoseok feels his cheeks heat up at the question and he sputters “Well we have to text, right? What if someone finds out that I don’t even have your number? How am I gonna explain that?”

Yoongi takes the notion into consideration and nods, “You have a point.” He fishes out his phone from his pocket.


“What do you have my name saved as?” Yoongi looks over Hoseok’s phone screen and tuts, “and how are you going to explain that to people?”

Hoseok groans, “Fine.”


He crinkles his nose, “That was a mistake.”

“There,” Hoseok huffs, “happy?”

Yoongi shrugs, “I guess it’ll have to do.”

“I’ll send you a few pictures. What do you have my name saved as?” Hoseok tries to take a peek but Yoongi locks his screen and sets the phone down on the table.

“It doesn’t matter,” Yoongi murmurs, “No one ever looks at my phone anyway. Those who did never lived to tell the tale.”

“That’s not fair,” Hoseok can feel himself pout, “you saw mine.”

“Because I know you’re not careful,” Yoongi crosses his arms as he leans back in his chair, “one of your little friends is gonna see it because you’re not careful and you can’t make up a good lie on the spot.”

Hoseok opens his mouth to retaliate but nothing comes out. He hates that Yoongi’s right.

“So what do you do here?” Hoseok asks instead.

Yoongi smirks, “Getting nosy, are we?”

Hoseok scowls, “I’m just curious.”

“A lot of things.” Yoongi answers aptly, “We have shares to even the most mundane things; sports, waste management, construction, cigarette and gasoline taxes, sweets, paintings. You name it.” He smirks, “I don’t sit on my ass all day doing nothing.”

There’s a knock on the door before it’s pushed open. Hoseok turns, expecting Namjoon on the other end, but it’s Seokjin who pops his head in, “The head chief is ready to see you.”

“Time for you to go then,” Yoongi smiles menacingly at him, “hopefully you’ll make it out alive.”

“Wait, you’re not coming with me?”

Yoongi coos, “Are you scared?”

Hoseok frowns at that, “I was just asking. Why does he want to see me alone?”

The other man shrugs, “Time to find out.”

Hoseok sighs and rises from his chair before he turns. A large hand comes up to cover his on the table, halting him. Seokjin is still waiting at the door a few feet away.

“Hoseok-ah,” Yoongi stands up from his seat and makes his way around his desk until he’s in front of Hoseok. He brings his free hand up to point at his cheek, tapping it.

Hoseok scrunches his nose, “Seriously?” He silently mouths.

“You didn’t give me one this morning,” Yoongi grins, “also,” he gestures towards Seokjin with his head.

Hoseok curses under his breath but leans in to press a kiss on Yoongi’s cheek, trying his best to ignore the warm softness that brushes his lips and the way Yoongi’s familiar scent welcomes him.

Yoongi smiles when he pulls away and pats him on the back, “Break a leg. Not my father’s
though.” He says loudly and Seokjin snorts from where he’s standing.

“Hiya hyung,” Hoseok greets Seokjin when he reaches the door. The older man nods in response. He wordlessly leads Hoseok to a different hallway, past a few doors when they come to a stop in front of a prominently large one.

“Jung Hoseok is here,” Seokjin says as he swings the door open, moving aside to let Hoseok enter first before he follows him in.

The head chief looks up from his documents and...smiles?

“Hoseok-ssi. I hope it didn’t trouble you to come all the way here. Have a seat.” He gestures toward the chair in front of him. “I would visit you at your workplace but, well, I don’t think I should be anywhere near a police station.” Seokjin moves to stand a few feet away from the head chief’s desk.

“I understand,” Hoseok nods. “You wanted to see me, sir?”

“Why, yes,” The head chief starts, “The mafia aren’t exactly verbal with how we express our feelings, as you know.”

“Yes.” Hoseok thinks back to the first night he entered the Min’s mansion, how everyone went silent when he demanded a verbal apology.

“Instead, we express our gratitude through other means. You left before I could see you this morning, which is why I’ve called you in.”

“I’m sorry, I don’t seem to follow. What is this for?” Hoseok furrows his brows in question.

“I’ve had my doubts about you, Jung Hoseok.” The older man starts, “I confess that it took me a while to come to accept the circumstances as they are, and stay true to the Min bloodline’s beliefs of soulmates.” He looks up at Hoseok, “You were willing to risk your life for my son last night. I must admit that I myself wasn’t sure of the results when he held a gun against your head. Yoongi is unpredictable, you have to expect the unexpected most of the time. I’m sure you know that.”

“I do.” Hoseok answers.

“Yet you didn’t even budge or protest despite having been shot by that very same gun before.” The head chief’s tone lightens, “You were ready to die for him to save his business.”

Hoseok doesn’t say anything to that. He knew he wasn’t going to die since he had a wire on and promises of backup so he managed to keep calm. Although, if the head chief truly believes this then that means Yoongi hadn’t told him about the wire yet, so he stays quiet.

“What you demonstrated last night was the pure act of bravery and faith, which I must say is quite rare for a police officer based on the ones I’ve encountered.” The head chief straightens up and leans in closer, “As the leader of the mafia, I’d like to express our gratitude by assuring you that the Min clan will be there for you whenever you need help. We may do a lot of questionable things, but we are pridelful and loyal.” He smiles again, “I’m sure we can move much faster than your little uniform friends.”

Hoseok appreciates the silent thank you, as silent as it is, but then scrunches his nose at the last sentence, “Like this uniform?” He gestures to himself.

“Well, the blue looks much more tolerable on you.” The head chief smirks, “That is all. I’ve taken
enough of your time.”

“I’ll see you off,” Seokjin says from behind his boss and starts making his way towards the door. The head chief gives Hoseok a final nod before he turns back to his work.

“We need to talk.” The elder says as soon as he closes the door behind him.

“I- me?” Hoseok points at himself in question. Seokjin nods and leads him into an empty room. There are a few waxed couches around the corners, but he doesn’t sit down. “My lunch break is almost over, hyung. I need to head back soon.”

“Have you two been faking it this whole time?” Seokjin ignores him and crosses his arms. A frown clear on his face.

Hoseok freezes and he feels cold sweat forming at the side of his head.

“I came to get you, but I could hear you and Yoongi talking about being convincing ,” The older man furrows his brows, “Have you been lying this whole time?”

Seokjin no longer has that happy, giddy little feat to his demeanor when he scowls at Hoseok. Hoseok doesn’t blame him though.

They’ve been caught.

Chapter End Notes

happy new year !!!

i had a blast writing about jimin gushing over namjoon i literally just visualized namjoon in my head and my hands just started typing on its own as i astral projected through a hundred different realities.

a lil note in case anyone's curious: namjoon's nicknames namjangmyeon and namjjampong are just his name fused with korean noodle dishes jajangmyeon and jjampong (i'm terrible at this i know) and basically it's implying that namjoon used to be mr noodle arms when he was at the academy HDHDH hoseok's nickname hotteok is a type of korean pancake (WHICH NAMJOON ACTUALLY CALLED HIM THAT IRL ONCE in a run episode i lost it) because cheeks uwu

ALSO not that anyone asked but i like to think that in this universe where soulmates are identified by their birth flowers, everyone is very familiar with identifying and naming different birth flowers uwu

take care of yourself! ♡♡♡

my twitter,

my curiouscat
trust pt. 1 (and kim namjoon works for the mafia)

Chapter Summary

"I trust you not to hurt Yoongi."

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hoseok hardly lies ever, and most of the time when he did lie, he’d get caught all too easily.

One of the lies Hoseok told and got caught for was when he told his mom that the reason he’s been coming home late everyday for the past few weeks was because he helped tutor a friend when he actually visited and tried to befriend a stray dog that lived in a bush a street away. It was the longest time he had kept a secret from someone before they found out.

The biggest lie he has ever told was when he told his parents that he had a good day at school.

It may not sound serious or vital initially, though the biggest lies are often the ones that you get away with.

Hoseok got away with it, he guessed.

He wished he never did, though.

He got away with it because he never got the chance to actually confess to lying, and his parents passed onto the afterlife, oblivious to Hoseok’s little white lie that afterwards only became an infection that kept growing and growing that Hoseok hardly ever dared to lie again.

But then Yoongi came around.

Yoongi came around and turned him against what he swore to himself to never do, and never on this scale, yet he gave in.

He gave in because of the way Yoongi’s tone shifted when he mentioned it.

“My father’s dying.”

He gave in because of the tremble in his voice, so minute yet so prominent, like the way puddles, rivers, and calm oceans alike create a slight ripple, the smallest tremble, hinting at an upcoming storm - its arrival certain enough, yet one can never work out the exact countdown to it.

He gave in because of the fear, unusual coming from someone like Yoongi.

- He gave in because standing before him then was not a mafioso nor a heir, but a son who is dreading another loss and strained himself in order to accept the reality of it all.

Although, Hoseok giving in did not mean that he threw away all his pre-existing morals. Guilt still haunts him in its many forms, like the aching in his chest and the discomfort in his sleep very late at night.
“Have you been lying this whole time?” Seokjin crosses his arms, a scowl now planted on his face.

Hoseok tries to breathe. He breathes. They’ve been caught, but unusually, the tides have yet to turn on him and the sea is still at rest instead of the impending storm of guilt that he practically braced himself for.

He lost that chance to confess long ago, to squeeze out the venom from his chest - the sting of it still coursing through his veins. Being presented with another chance once again, to break and confess; it seems more like a chance to at least rise slightly than to fall deeper.

And so - though only very slightly - Hoseok rises.

“Yoongi hyung came to ask me for help since it’s the head chief’s dying wish.”

It’s out there now, the words foreign on his tongue but the relief that washes overwhelming.

Seokjin is quiet for a moment as the confession registers, taking a while for everything to absorb, and then he sighs, bringing up a hand to rub at his temple.

“Of course he did. I’ve been suspicious of this from the beginning and it makes sense now.” The elder man groans.

Hoseok cringes and lifts an almost offended brow at the reaction, “Were we that obvious?”

“Not to other people, I don’t think,” Seokjin shakes his head. “But I know Yoongi, and it’s suspicious that he suddenly got so comfortable with a stranger. It’s like he’s changed, but it’s not so obvious that people can point it out.”

“What do you mean?” Hoseok feels himself ask.

“Affection.” Seokjin states flatly. “It’s not something he shows easily, and definitely not to a stranger.”

_Affection._ Hoseok thinks back to the way Yoongi touches him, when he’s soothing Hoseok’s chest pain or when he runs his fingers through Hoseok’s hair; even the way he’d carefully fix Hoseok’s uniform or take note of what Hoseok likes and doesn’t like. He can feel the tips of his ears heat up at that and he clears his throat.

“Do you have any malicious intent?” Seokjin asks after realizing that the younger man doesn’t have anything to say to that. “Are you a mole?”

Hoseok freezes at that. Yoongi knows, but he can’t even begin to imagine what would follow if Seokjin, the mafia boss’ right hand man, knows.

His silence became enough of an answer though. Seokjin scowls, the expression unusual on a face like his, “Seriously? And just after the head chief gave you his trust.”

“I haven’t gotten anything useful so far, if it’s any consolation.” Hoseok manages out. He doesn’t like that he has to put up the same demeanor he uses when interrogating suspects to talk to Seokjin.

“Oh I know you haven’t. Yoongi can be stupid sometimes but he isn’t gullible.” Seokjin snaps back. “I really don’t know where he’s going with this, but I trust him.”

Hoseok’s eyes widen at the implication, “You mean… you mean you’re okay with this?”
The older man shrugs, “The head chief trusts you, and I don’t think he’ll handle it well if he knows about this. You and Yoongi should be the least of his problems.” He sighs, “And now that I know, you better keep your spying business at a low or you’d just be straining yourself getting nothing.”

Seokjin groans and finally answers, “So yes, I’ll let it slide, and I won’t tell anyone about it.”

At the answer, Hoseok lets out a long, drawn out sigh as tension dissipates from him as if his soul had left his body, “Thank you.”

“This doesn’t mean you’re off the hook though,” Seokjin’s voice pulls his attention back, “there will also be consequences if you hurt Yoongi. I’m one of them. I owe Yoongi my life.”

“You…?” Hoseok’s lunch break is over by now, but he notices the way Seokjin’s tone is softening, if only by a little. He put their relationship at risk when he was caught lying, and this may be his only chance to mend it back to a somewhat friendship, perhaps unlike the one they had before, with laughing at each other’s jokes until they both tear up. And that’s alright, Hoseok thinks. That’s just the sacrifice that he had to make.

“Most of the people you’ve seen here are people who were given a second chance from Yoongi.” Seokjin starts, “I’m no exception.”

The elder makes himself comfortable on one of the couches, crossing his legs as he gestures for Hoseok to take the seat opposite to him.

“I scammed a bunch of people when I was younger. Me and my mother barely had enough to live by day-to-day. She started to lose her sight and I just panicked.” Seokjin confesses, “I’d go knock on doors and ask people to donate to this charity funding hosted by the Min clan to build a school for the blind. I just used their names because I knew they were a powerful clan and it’d be more believable. No one would disobey a mafia’s request.”

“I got a few bills here and there, but someone caught on of course.” Seokjin sighs, “They told the head chief about it and he was furious I think.” He breathes before he continues, “I was convinced then that I was going to die, and my mother would just sit there in our old, one-room apartment wondering when I’m gonna come home from school.” Hoseok’s chest aches at the thought.

The sentence rings a memory, old and painful. He remembers the confusion of waking up and straining himself to deny the reality that is in front of him, and no one stopped him. It wasn’t his fault he didn’t want to accept it, or that his brain just refused to. It wasn’t his fault that he found it hard to believe that a daily presence was gone, and what was once whole was then broken by one single strike of impact. Death swept in so quickly, without a trace of warning beforehand, no rumble or even a single ripple on the water surface. The pain in his chest throbs and pushes; he can’t even fathom continuing to live, oblivious from the wind of sorrow that brushes by, not realizing that the goodbyes were left unsaid.

This isn’t about him right now though - dooms and sorrows hits everyone like blaring hot sunlight, covering each and every area of the land, leaving out no one. To focus back on what Seokjin has to say, to escape his own head and the way his chest wants to tear itself open, he asks “And then Yoongi hyung did something?”

“He did something.” Seokjin smiles and nods. “Everyone I scammed got a letter from the Min clan thanking them for their donations to the Min’s school for the blind which has then gone under construction.” He chuckles, “And three months later, there it was. My lies turned into truth right before my eyes. I visited the place every now and then and they took care of my mother until she eventually passed away.” A sad smile plays across Seokjin’s lips and Hoseok reaches out to touch
his hand like a gesture of apology and understanding. Relief washes over him when the elder doesn’t pull away.

“It was inevitable,” Seokjin rubs his thumb across the back of Hoseok’s hand affectionately, a silent thank you and forgiveness, hopefully. “After that, I got invited to join the clan, which was really weird. Apparently they used a few rooms in the building to store their narcotics stocks and it’s been pretty discrete. Yoongi gave me credit for the idea.” He smiles at the memory, “They also found out that I was an athlete and I guess they needed more manpower or something.”

Hoseok gapes, “So hyung convinced them to actually build the school and told them you thought of the idea?”

“Pretty much, yeah.” Seokjin smiles, “They even later named the school after my late mother.”

“That’s... really cool.” The younger boy breathes.

“Yeah, it is,” Seokjin chuckles. He gives Hoseok’s hand a tight squeeze before he lets go.

It’s quiet for a minute before Hoseok breaks the silence, “So they didn’t name you scarf ace?”

Seokjin is confused for a moment before he bursts out laughing, slapping his own knee as he cackles. Hoseok can feel himself cracking up too.

One glance at his watch makes him rise frantically, “I’m late for my shift.”

“I’ll drive you back,” Seokjin reaches for him, “help me up first. This couch is too soft it’s engulfing me.”

Seokjin and Hoseok’s friendship formed so naturally over a car ride of terrible dad jokes and annoying the poor driver, but it crumbled just as easily as soon as the question leaves Seokjin’s lips and what was once known by only Hoseok and Yoongi is now broken.

Now, however, with Seokjin offering the same smile the first time they saw each other as Hoseok follows him to his car, maybe the crumbled pieces can pick itself back up just as fast.

❀

Hoseok sighs as soon as he’s back at the precinct. The car ride with Seokjin wasn’t awkward, but there was a new underlying pressure for him to keep the lie up for as long as head chief Min will live, which is such a depressing thought to have. The pain in his chest got more intense as he sat in the car but slowly dissipated then disappeared completely when they reach the station.

He isn’t surprised when he got called into the captain’s office as soon as he stepped into the precinct.

That doesn’t mean the stench is any less bearable though.

“I think I was nice enough when I gave you a few days off before coming back to work after the incident, Hoseok.” The captain grumbles, “But I can’t always be nice when your punctuality is also lacking.”

“This is the first time I’ve ever been late, sir.” Hoseok defends himself. “I was at the Min’s
headquarters.”

Captain Bang raises an eyebrow, “Oh? Found anything?”

_The narcotics stocks in the school for the blind._

_The mafia’s involvement in several businesses._

“I trust you not to hurt Yoongi.”

“Nothing in-depth, but they have ties with a few businesses. They didn’t specify which though.” Hoseok settles.

The captain frowns at his answer, “I already know that. If you would have found something that would be of use to us, then maybe I’d consider not giving you extra hours.”

Hoseok’s eyes widen, “...You’re making me work extra hours?”

“Hienjin is currently on a stakeout, so you can fill in his shift for a few hours.” Captain Bang sits back in his chair.

“You’re making me work extra hours on the night shift?” Hoseok can barely comprehend the notion.

“Do I have to repeat myself?” The captain glares, “While you’re at it, you can make up for all the hours you missed when you were in the hospital.”

“Sir, I was in the hospital.”

“Dismissed.”

After getting (gently) sprayed down with lavender febreze by Jungkook when he exits the office, Hoseok slumps down in his chair, eyeing the pile of case files that seems to have multiplied in its size when he was gone.

“Hyung, you’re back!” Taehyung’s voice chimes from behind him, “We got the guy- are you okay? Oh no, is it your chest?” The boy’s voice drops as he lightly clutches on Hoseok’s arm, willing him to sit up.

“I’m fine,” Hoseok murmurs, “Tell Jimin I’ll be coming back a bit late. I gotta work the night shift too.”

“You what!?” Taehyung whispers harshly, mindful of his surroundings, “why?” Although the question itself doesn’t need an answer for him to know. “You can’t let him boss you around like that hyung.”

Hoseok arches a brow, “He’s my boss.”

Taehyung pauses, “Good point, but you can say no, especially to that.”

Hoseok doesn’t answer and turns back to his work. Taehyung sighs, he knows the older boy can’t actually refuse an order from his superior. They’re chained to a system, a scheduled way of living
that repeats itself again and again, like schools of gold fishes swimming in a small glass bowl, the world outside merely an illusion to the eye.

Although that doesn’t necessarily mean that they have to suffer while doing so.

“Are you sure you don’t want me to stay?” Taehyung asks again, concerned.

Hoseok pushes a smile onto his lips, “It’s fine, Taehyung-ah. See you tomorrow?”

The younger boy can’t help but smile back before he repositions the handle of his bag on his shoulder and wave as he gingerly makes his way towards the door.

A hand slaps the back of his chair suddenly and Hoseok yelps as he looks up to find the cheeky perpetrator smiling down at him. Jungkook takes the chance to push Hoseok’s fringe from his forehead and leans down to leave an obnoxiously loud kiss. He pulls away to wave at him with a cocky grin as he leaves a trail of laughter behind him. Hoseok can’t help but laugh to himself for a while before he settles down and back to work.

A few minutes later, the door swings open to let in a tall man whose arms are fastened behind him in handcuffs.

“This way please,” A voice chimes and Jimin’s small figure appears from behind the man to lead him to the temporary holding cell.

“Working late?” Hoseok calls to the younger boy as he returns to the office.

Jimin sighs as he pulls a chair to sit himself down near Hoseok’s desk, taking off his hat and spinning it around before resting it somewhere away from the pile of case files.

“I’ve been working so slowly today, hyung.” Jimin complains.

Hoseok hums in understanding as he opens up another file from the pile, “Is something on your mind?”

“More like some one.” Jimin snorts as he taps his fingers lightly on the desk before he shoots up and slams his hand on the surface, “Hyung!”

Hoseok yelps and barely holds onto the file before dropping it, “Yes?”

“Hyung!” Jimin repeats, “do you love me?”

“Of course I do.” Hoseok frowns, confused.

“Really? I doubt it sometimes.” The younger boy pouts, “I love you, hyung. I let you crash on my nice spare mattress and wake you up so we can go to work and sing to you so you don’t get scared of that weird house when we walk past, like I do so much for you!”

“And I’d do the same.” Hoseok crosses his arms.

“Bullshit,” Jimin’s pout deepens, “you don’t love me.” He starts to fake sob into his arms and Hoseok just sighs as he runs a hand through the younger boy’s dry hair.

“If you love me,” Jimin looks up, peeking from under Hoseok’s hand, “If you love me you would have told me about the tasteful, statuesque, fallen angel you call your friend.”

The younger boy groans when he sees Hoseok’s eyebrows arch, clueless. “Namjoonie hyung! The
At that, Hoseok’s lips form a little o shape in realization and he laughs, “Sorry Jimin-ah, maybe I should’ve told you. I’ll do that next time.”

“Well next time is now.” Jimin props his elbows up and cups his cheeks in his palms, “Tell me everything. What’s his surname?”

“Kim.”

“Beautiful. Kim Namjoon. Kim Namjoon.” The boy tests the name out and seems to like it as he smiles to himself. “What does he do for a living?”

“Oh, that,” Hoseok falters and Jimin seems to notice as he lifts his head from his hands, “he works for Mi- Yoongi hyung. My boyfriend.” He catches himself in time. “He’s like his assistant and advisor of some sorts.”

“...Kim Namjoon works for the mafia?”

Hoseok doesn’t like the way Jimin’s eager smile drops from his face, or the way the excited sparks in his eyes flicker off as soon as his words register.

“Kim Namjoon works for the mafia.” He repeats solemnly.

“But I thought-” Jimin stammers, “didn’t he attend the academy with you?” The desperation and confusion in his tone makes Hoseok’s gut sinks.

“He did,” He nods, “I don’t know what happened either. He left just after we finished all our exams. He was already qualified to be an officer. It wouldn’t have taken him long at all to become sergeant, or even captain.”

It has just hit Hoseok how much potential is wasted. Namjoon’s decision seemed so...impulsive that it’s unlike him. He breathes as he hears Jimin’s downhearted sigh; he has a history with being unrequited, unreciprocated, unloved.

Maybe not the latter, actually. Jimin is loved, though he sometimes seem to forget that. He has Hoseok, even if the love he offers is not one he's craving for.

“Jimin-ah,” He runs his hand through the younger boy’s hair, the same way he usually does to himself, “How about we go eat something nice for lunch tomorrow as a change? Bibimbap maybe? It’s my treat.”

Jimin smiles, though small, “Sounds better than sandwiches. Sure hyung.”

“...Do you want to know anything else?” Hoseok asks, hesitant.

The other boy shakes his head as he rises from his chair, “That’s alright. Thank you. I’ll leave the lights on for you.” He waves with a sad little smile, “Take breaks.”

Hoseok sighs, “I will. See you later, Jimin.”

After a few more cold cases registered into the system, Hoseok stands up to stretch and greet the other officers who are coming in for the night shift. He fishes out his phone from his pocket and notices a few notifications.
Thankfully, the night isn’t as cold as it usually is and Hoseok takes a walk around the front of the building. He checks the time, 23:21, just a few hours before his shift ends.

He stares blurrily at the only light source around the street corner, the bright yet flickering light from a broken lamp post. The dial tone goes on for a while with no signs of being picked up.

Just before Hoseok gives up and head back inside, Yoongi’s deep grumbly voice comes on, “Hello?”

For some reasons, Hoseok’s breath catches in his throat. “Hi hyung, you wanted to talk?”

“How was your day, darling?” Yoongi starts.

“Spontaneity is key in a relationship.” Yoongi murmurs. “We also need to be more convincing.”

“Your shift is over right? I can come pick you up.” Yoongi can hear rustling on the other end as Yoongi makes his way out of the room.

“Aah- no,” Hoseok intercepts, and the movements on the other end comes to a halt, “I have to work the night shift too, so I won’t be out until two in the morning.”

He feels hands clap onto his shoulder and he yelps as he jumps away. He turns to pout at Seojoon, one of the officers who work the night shift.

“Hoseok-ah!” The older man greets, “Who’re you talking to? Your boyfriend?”

“What- yes! Yes I am.” Hoseok catches himself in time.

Seojoon whistles, “Don’t mind me, I just came out here to smoke.”

Hoseok nods and shifts his focus back to the phone call, “Sorry, someone just came to say hi.”

Yoongi hums, “Co-worker?”

“Yeah.” Hoseok breathes. He has to be more careful about what he says now that he has company. “Back to the point, I got back to work a bit late after seeing you, so the captain made me cover for someone in the night shift to make up for it.”

“That’s a bit much. My men arrive late all the time but I don’t do that.” Yoongi grumbles. “Is any of your little friends there with you?”

Hoseok chuckles at the thought of his three younger brothers, they are little. “No, they already went home.”
“Need some company?”

Hoseok pauses.

*Why would you want to come here? We don’t have to find every chance to lie.*

*I always have to lie when I’m with you.*

*I don’t want to lie.*

Different responses run through his head, but he knows he can’t say it, not with someone witnessing this.

“Well…you don’t have to, hyung. It’s fine.” He says instead.

“Are you sure?” Yoongi prods.

“Yes, I’m sure. I appreciate the offer though.” Hoseok chuckles, “I’ll see you later?”

“And when will that be?”

“Oh well-” His thoughts come to a halt. Hoseok’s busy with his day shift in the morning so he usually sees Yoongi in the evening, but now his night shift leaves him occupied until the very early hours. “I’m not sure. Maybe on my day off?”

“I’ll see you then.” There’s rustling that can be heard from Yoongi’s end of the call, “Say bye to your boyfriend, Hoseok-ah.”

Hoseok’s cheeks redden and he’s suddenly reminded that Seojoon is still there, standing a few feet away. Deception comes into play once again and Hoseok has to play his part, as much as he hates it. Pretending that he’s hanging up a call from his dear boyfriend, he gulps, “See you, babe.”

He can hear Yoongi’s distinct snicker before he hangs up. Seojoon is grinning wide between his cigarette when Hoseok turns and he ducks his head to hide his reddening face as he makes his way back inside.

The next time Hoseok peels his eyes away from the bright screen, he notices how empty his desk seems. He reaches down to open his drawer and picks up the familiar memento. Setting it on the desk again, he’s reminded of the excitement he felt when he found it, then the disappointment and painful pang in his chest.

Now, however - now it doesn’t look so bad. It’s an alright yellow, an alright white. He wonders why he hated looking at it so much that he had to put it away then.

Hoseok glances at the growing primrose on his old badge one last time before turning back to his work with a smile on his face.

❤️

Jimin isn’t the type to get attached easily, especially to a complete stranger. He’s really not, but that greatly contradicts him lying in bed with his eyes wide open, staring up at the empty ceiling.
He doesn’t get hung up on someone for so long, shouldn’t be after hearing that.

*Kim Namjoon works for the mafia.*

It doesn’t seem to make sense at all. It doesn’t sound like the same guy who gets flustered at everything and a was top student of a damn police academy. He’s seen a mafioso before, Min Yoongi’s appearance is quite a memorable one.

Jimin scrubs at his eyes. He can’t imagine someone like Kim Namjoon associating himself with any of that.

He doesn’t dress like them, nor does he walk like them. He doesn’t think like them or talk like them. If any assumptions were to be made about Kim Namjoon, it would be that he’s not a bad person.

A wolf in sheep’s clothing, perhaps. Maybe that would explain why he seems so soft for a man of such large build.

But why is Jimin speculating about this at midnight? Why does he care?

It’s just another crush gone bad. Another failed judgement on his end. Then he laughs at himself because of how much he gushed over a man he saw for no more than twenty minutes, how he wanted to see him for twenty minutes more.

“He’s not the right person,” He feels himself say even though he’s alone. “Shame, but let’s move on.”

Moving on can be difficult, but Jimin has done it so many times that it’s pretty much second nature. It’s like ingesting tiny drops of poison; it only gets less painful each time, and then you’re immune.

He took a few drops in high school, a bit more in college, a drop from Jungkook, then Taehyung, who was then no more than a tiny sting. It’s not that he feels any less as he progresses; rejection or the variations of it just no longer affects him as much. He’s grown quite a thick skin over the years that anything hardly pierces through.

Jimin just has to move on like he always does.

But,

and this is odd because there’s usually not a but,

Jimin is still thinking of Namjoon.

He’s still thinking of those lean shoulders and the warm smile, the humility and modesty that are somehow overpowering the fact that the man is a criminal in Jimin’s mind.

Kim Namjoon still appears so untainted and clean despite the dirt thrown at him.

The boy groans as he rubs his eyes, snuggling further into his comforter as a means to escape his outlandish thoughts.

“It’ll blow over in a few days.” He mumbles before he drifts off to sleep.

That night, Jimin dreams of that warm, warm smile as he mirrors the expression in his sleep.
hello this chapter was going to be Really long but it'll take a long while until the full thing is posted so I broke them into two parts which is why the chapter number went up again hhh
the full chapter was supposed to end on a pretty dramatic cliffhanger (you know how i roll *finger guns*) but my exams are coming up and i wasn't able to finish the whole thing in time and if i wait after my exams to finish the full chapter then it would take me until february so here's jfkdh part one! i hope you liked it :(  

my twitter,
my curiouscat
trust pt. 2 (tension)

Chapter Summary

Yoongi tightens his hold and leans in to peck Hoseok’s cheek, trailing up to his ear.

Hoseok gasps, gripping onto Yoongi’s shoulder before flinching away. “Hyung.”

“What? This isn’t against the rules, is it?”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“If you can just sit right here,” Jungkook guides the old lady to Hoseok’s desk, “Officer Jung here will ask you a few questions and you’ll just have to tell him what you saw. Is that alright?”

The lady nods and the boy smiles. “Hyung, will you be done by lunch break? Or will you run a little late?”

“It depends on how much Mrs. Choi saw at the incident, but I think I’ll finish on time.” Hoseok answers, “Why?”

“Oh good,” Jungkook hums, “I didn’t have breakfast today, so the sooner I get to that bibimbap, the better.”

Hoseok groans at that, “Did Jimin tell you?”

“He told Taehyungie hyung too.” Jungkook has a cocky grin on his face when Hoseok looks up at him, “Don’t tell me you were thinking of treating only Jimin hyung to lunch? That’s not fair.”

Hoseok wants to counter that Jimin has a reason, but he knows Jungkook will get curious and he doesn’t want to say anything that isn’t his place to say.

“I guess I have no choice,” Hoseok grumbles and shoos the younger boy to go celebrate somewhere else.

As expected, Mrs. Choi can’t seem to recall much of the break and enter incident at the local convenience store, but they’ll probably be able to figure out who the perpetrator is when they can get their hands on the security feed.

“Is there anything else that you think we should know, Mrs. Choi?” Hoseok asks as a final question.

“Why yes,” The old lady starts to raise her voice, “there was this suspicious man who was walking around the floral shop near the front.”

Hoseok’s hands wander to his notepad, “Oh?”
“He’s quite short, I think his shoes have those insoles in them.” Mrs. Choi furrows her brow as she recalls, “He was just glaring at the flowers! It made me and a lot of people very uneasy.”

Something tugs at the back of Hoseok’s mind and he hopes he’s wrong when he asks, “Was the man dressed in all black?”

A bouquet of primroses suddenly drop down on Hoseok’s desk and he shrieks in surprise.

“That- that’s the man, officer!” Mrs. Choi cries, “It’s him!”

Hoseok looks up to see Yoongi glaring at the old lady in confusion before he turns to face him, “What’s up with her?”

He gawks for a moment before he clears his throat and turns to the frightened old lady with a smile he hopes is friendly enough, “Thank you for your time, Mrs. Choi. You may leave now. Do you need someone to help escort you out?”

“That’s alright dear.” She smiles back at him and reaches for his hands, “You’re a sweet boy with good morals. Please take care of this criminal.” She turns to glare at Yoongi and the mafioso mirrors the expression.

“Officer Jeon, please make sure that Mrs. Choi is escorted back safely.” Hoseok calls before the situation gets out of hand.

“He’s- This man is absolutely preposterous!” Mrs. Choi cries again, “Officer, please don’t let him get away with this! He probably stole those flowers!” Yoongi rolls his eyes.

“Yes, yes. We’ll do that.” Hoseok tries to assure her. He turns to hit Yoongi’s chest lightly, “There. You bad man.” Yoongi raises an eyebrow at that but doesn’t comment.

The old lady is still complaining as Jungkook escorts her out. Hoseok sighs as he slouches back on his chair.

“She looks kinda familiar.” The mafioso takes a seat in front of Hoseok’s desk. “Probably saw her this morning in the streets or something.”

“Hello to you too, hyung.” Hoseok frowns as he gestures to the flowers, “Did you steal these?”

Yoongi frowns back at him, “I have enough money to pay for some cheap flowers.” He reaches into his coat and slams a wad of cash onto Hoseok’s desk. “Anyway, someone dropped this so I thought I should report it.”

“You used this excuse last time, hyung.” Hoseok deadpans.

Yoongi stuff the cash back into his coat, “Well I thought you wouldn’t notice since last time you were too busy groaning in pain.”

Hoseok’s mouth gapes in disbelief, “Hyung, I-” at the corner of his eye, he sees Jimin staring.

“You tease,” He shoves Yoongi lightly, forcing a smile on his lips, “you don’t have to find an excuse to see me.”

The older man hums, “Really?”

“If you’re not disturbing anyone then I don’t see why you can’t,” Hoseok gestures to the flowers again, “are these for me?”
“Perhaps.” Yoongi grins. “Primrose is your birth flower, if I remember correctly.”

“You’re correct,” Hoseok smiles, and it’s not as difficult as before. He looks at the bouquet of primroses in his arms before putting them somewhere safe. “Thank you.”

Yoongi leans in closer as he rests his elbow on the desk, making the familiar gesture of tapping his cheek with his index finger.

After making sure that no one’s looking at him, Hoseok glares at the older man. Do we have to? We don’t. He mouths

Yoongi makes a show of gesturing to where Jimin is sitting with his eyes and smirks when Hoseok sighs.

It’s getting easier to kiss Yoongi on the cheek now, and Hoseok supposes that that should be a good thing. He won’t admit that, of course. He keeps his glare when he pulls away, and furrows his brows even harder when he sees Yoongi’s shit-eating grin in front of him.

“Namjoon said you have your break around now. I thought I could take you out for lunch.” Yoongi says after he settles down on the chair.

“Oh, today? I can’t.” Yoongi lifts an eyebrow at that, “I promised Jimin and a few others that I’m taking them out for bibimbap.”

“How many of you are there?” Yoongi asks.

“Four, including me,” Hoseok answers. “Why?”

“It’s my treat then. I know a good place.”

Hoseok chokes, “Wait, you’re-!?”

“God, that lady had a lot to say.” Jungkook rubs his ears as he steps back into the office. He seems to notice Yoongi then as he makes his way to Hoseok’s desk, “Yoongi hyung! We meet again.”

Yoongi turns to the boy in question, “We’ve met before?”


“I guess you can say that,” Yoongi grins, “I’m taking you out for bibimbap.”

“Me?” Jungkook points at himself, tilting his head in question.

“You and your other friends, too.” Yoongi clarifies.

“I see, I’ll go grab my stuff then!” Jungkook turns on his heels and makes his way back, but not before he turns back with a whisper, “I love you.”

The older man chuckles at that, “He’s cute.”

“He is.” Hoseok agrees. Maybe this is the first time they’ve agreed on something. “Wait, you’re seriously going to take us all out for lunch? You really don’t have to.”

The mafioso smiles, “I’m a man of my words.” He leans closer to whisper into Hoseok’s ear, “I need to convince your friends anyway.”
“Yoongi hyung, is the bibimbap place far?” Jungkook walks up from behind him with his coat and Hoseok’s. The other two are following from behind. Jimin has an expression on his face that Hoseok can’t quite read. "Hyung, I got you your coat."

"Thank you." Hoseok hums and reaches for Jungkook, pulling the boy close enough that he can leave a soft kiss on the top of his head, his laugh nearing into a cackle at the boy's sheepish expression.

Yoongi stares at that, but doesn't say anything. He replies instead, “You might not make it back in time if we walk. I’ll drive you.”

Jungkook shakes his head, “No need! We’ll just take the precinct’s car.”

“Why are we taking the precinct’s car?” Hoseok furrows his brows in question, “Unless you- no.”

The younger boy grins, “Come on hyung! We gotta use our privilege!”

“We are not running the red lights just to get to lunch.”

“The traffic looks pretty bad right now.” Taehyung is looking at his GPS map on his phone.

“Oh right, you can run the red lights with your police car.” Yoongi says, “That’s clever.”

Jungkook has a wide toothy grin on his face and nods at the other two like it’s some kind of competition to earn Yoongi’s affection. “Yoongi hyung says precinct car so let’s go.”

“Are we actually? With him?” Taehyung asks in a hushed tone.

“I guess we are.” Jimin answers, equally as quiet.

Hoseok sighs as he helplessly follows everyone out to the parking lot.

✿

Jimin curses under his breath when his head bumps the car window for the umpteenth time. The car is a bit packed with three people stuffed in the backseat. “Who decided to let Jungkook drive?”

“He hopped onto the driver’s seat and refused to get off.” Hoseok sighs from his left. “Tae, your shoulders are way too big for this.” He complains, but the younger boy doesn’t respond as he wordlessly eyes the GPS map on his phone.

“Take a left here and we should be at in the main road.” Yoongi instructs Jungkook from the passenger seat. The car takes another sharp turn and Jimin is quick enough to push himself away from the window before his head bumps it again, but Hoseok falls into his lap from the impact.

“Kook,” Hoseok whispers as he slowly lifts himself up from Jimin’s lap, “please drive carefully.”

There’s something underlying Hoseok’s tone - old scars that will still hurt if you pick at them. Jimin remembers the first time Hoseok told him about the accident; how it still sometimes haunts him after so many years.

Jungkook stiffens for a second before he murmurs, “Sorry hyung.”
Jimin wraps an arm around Hoseok as what he’ll hopefully take as comfort, smiling when the older boy leans into him. Fishing out his phone from his pocket, he takes the chance to snap a few photos together. From behind his phone held up in front of him, he sees Min Yoongi, specifically the sharp glaring corner of his eye.

It’s odd to see a mafioso in a police car. Jimin still doesn’t know how to feel about Hoseok’s boyfriend, and his suspicions are still there, craving to be answered. Now may not be the best time though. He ducks his head to look through the photos and scroll through his social media feed to kill time. It distracts him for a moment before

“I think I left my phone back at my office, but I need to call Namjoon.” Yoongi turns to the backseat, “Do any of you have your phone in hand right now?”

Namjoon.

The name almost hurts now when it shouldn’t.

It doesn’t.

Hoseok sits up and tries to reach into his pockets, but the tight space and the angle proves to be difficult. He turns to Jimin then, a silent pleading in his eyes.

Jimin stares down at his phone in his lap for a moment before he gives in. “You can use mine.” He hands his phone to Yoongi with a smile half forced.

Phone now in hand, Yoongi dials a number and looks out beyond the window of the car as he waits.

“Hey, it’s me. I borrowed someone else’s phone. I couldn’t remember the office’s phone number so I just called your personal one.” Yoongi starts. “I’m out for lunch with Hoseok and his friends. I have a few files on my desk that were supposed to be sent to hyung, do you mind? And while you’re there, can you check if my phone is anywhere?” He waits for an answer, but just as it seems like he’s satisfied, the other end of the call appears to have some questions.

“Yeah I’m in a car.” Yoongi answers, “No, some kid is driving us.” Jungkook grins. “You’re the last person to be telling me this, Namjoon. You made me fear death for the first time back then when you drove me.” He lowers the phone from his head "Tell them to drive carefully, he said."

Hoseok snorts, “Namjoon still drives?”

“I was doubtful when he said he had a driver’s license, but my dad made him the driver when he joined the gang. Huge mistake.” Yoongi says as he hangs up the call, reaching behind him to hand the phone back to Jimin. “Thank you, Jimin-ssi.”

“You need a driver’s license to work in the force, but we never let Jimin drive.” Hoseok chuckles.

“Well this kid goes over the speed limit any chance he gets, so anything’s better.” Yoongi is referring to Jungkook and Taehyung bites back a laugh.

“Hyung!” Jungkook protests, “I’m a great driver, I’m just hungry.”

“We’re almost there.” Yoongi assures him. “Namjoon’s an intelligent guy, but he gets too scared of running over pigeons to drive anywhere.”

“I had to help him practice to get his license when we were in the academy. I was really living life
on the edge back then.” Hoseok shudders as he recalls and the mafioso snorts.

“Namjoon has always been like that, really. Smart but stupid.” Yoongi smiles. Jimin finds that it’s a lot warmer than he had imagined. “He aced every subject in school, but he kept forgetting to bring his pencil.”

“Wait, you went to school with him?” Hoseok asks.

“That’s how we met.” Yoongi answers simply.

Jimin stares down at his phone and suddenly zones out. The recent calls page is still on his phone screen, and the number at the top - that’s Kim Namjoon’s number.

No, Jimin whispers to himself. He told himself to move on. He’s due to get hurt again at this rate. He thumbs over the unknown number, and a small option screen pops up.

*Delete number*, it says.

Jimin bites his lip, thumb hovering over the option in red. *Just delete him*, he tries to tell himself.

“We’re here.” Yoongi announces and Jimin looks up to find the front of a small restaurant from his window.

Hoseok makes a show of shoving Taehyung and his stupidly big build out from the car and turns to Jimin. “Let’s go eat, Jimin-ah.”

Without looking down at it again, Jimin locks his phone screen and steps out from the car.

He’s not giving himself hope, he thinks.

But he definitely is.

* * *

“I think there’s a new contender for my top coolest guy list.” Jungkook says through his bibimbap.

It’s an interesting view, most likely; a table of four police officers in their blue uniforms, and a man who’s probably hiding a lot under his black trenchcoat.

Hoseok frowns, “Wasn’t I first? What happened?”

“You’re third now.” The younger boy corrects.

That made him choke, “Third!?”

“Does this mean me and Jimin are cooler than hyung now?” Taehyung grins.

“You two were convinced those stray puppies were born from the bush in front of that shop.”

“They came out of a *bush.*” Jimin protests as he picks the vegetables onto a separate bowl with his chopsticks.

“The mother gave birth in the bush and they stayed there until they were big enough to walk.”
Hoseok explains to Yoongi who had an eyebrow lifted throughout the whole exchange.

“I see,” Yoongi hums. “Who took the number one spot from Hoseok then?”

Jungkook smirks, “You.”

At that, the mafioso picks up a few pieces of beef from his bowl with his chopsticks and drops them onto the young officer’s emptying bowl.

Jungkook looks like he's tearing up, "Hyung...you're now number one in my heart too."

“Yoongi hyung,” Taehyung cups his face and flutters his lashes, “I also think you’re cool.”

The older man shakes his head, “Very cute, but you didn’t take the initiative.”

Ignoring Taehyung’s pout, Hoseok gets back to the issue in hand, stretching his arms out to rest on the back of Yoongi’s chair next to him, “If Yoongi hyung’s first on your list, then how am I second?”

Jungkook creates a dramatic pause as he slowly chews and swallows before he answers, “Namjoon hyung.”

Yoongi snorts, “Nice.” Jimin looks up from his food but doesn’t say anything.

“I’m sorry, didn’t we spend the whole car ride making fun of him?” Taehyung protests.

“I base my judgments on primary sources.” Jungkook suddenly takes up his workplace demeanor and Hoseok suddenly feels the urge to hit him. He doesn’t, though. “Kim Namjoon hyung is a cool guy.”

“You’ve seen him before?” Yoongi asks.

“One time.” Jungkook answers. “I was awestruck from how cool he is.” Jimin’s eyes widen at that.

Taehyung coughs, “Gay.”

Jungkook turns to swat him lightly, “That’s not it! I mean yes, that’s me, but I don’t have any feelings for him! He’s just a really cool guy!” Desperate, he turns to Yoongi, “Hyung, you get what I’m saying, right?”

The mafioso shrugs, “You can think someone’s cool without having the hots for them, I get it. Like you’d want advice from them or something.”

“Thank you, hyung. Love you.” Jungkook turns to stick his tongue out at Taehyung before eagerly turning back to Yoongi, “Does hyung have any advice for me?”

“What, other than be gay, do crimes?” He chuckles at his own joke but stops when he turns to see Hoseok’s blank expression. “Why are you asking for advice from a mafia gang member?”

“I’ve considered that,” Jungkook nods thoughtfully, “But I mean, you’re dating Hoseok hyung, so of course I can trust you.” He stuffs his face with the remaining rice in his bowl and smiles at Yoongi, cheeks round from the food.

Hoseok takes note of the way Yoongi smiles at that, fond and endeared, different from what he’s seen. It’s almost...cute, he thinks. He won’t say it out loud, of course.
He also can’t help but feel the drop in his gut from Jungkook’s words, though. He’s been trying to focus on the present and the steps he’s currently taking, but instances such as this trigger him to consider the path ahead of him that he has yet to walk, has yet to be exposed of the lies they’ve been building up from the start. An unknown scavenge into the woods, uncertain of either a clear path or a pitfall.

It all clears from his head when Yoongi reaches up to hold his hand that was draped on the chair behind him. They’re cold from the leather glove he’s wearing but what comes with it is a sense of comfort Hoseok has somehow instilled into his mind.

He doesn’t know if that’s a good thing or not.

Min Yoongi turns up almost every day ever since Hoseok told him that it’s okay to come visit. Jimin finds that he doesn’t really mind, his smiles aren’t as forced as before, and it doesn’t feel weird to see Hoseok kiss him on the cheek. That’s good, he wants to get along with people Hoseok considers dear to him.

It is a bit weird still to walk into them groping each other in the storage closet.

Hoseok squeaks and pushes Yoongi’s hand away, quickly buttoning his shirt up. Yoongi silently pulls his glove back on.

“Jimin-ah,” Hoseok starts, panicked, “it’s I can explain-”

“Hyung,” Jimin sighs, “Listen, I don’t mind that you two can’t keep your hands off each other, but can you please do it somewhere else? You know the door here doesn’t lock and I always have to clean up Jungkook’s desk mess.” Hoseok’s face is still red. “Maybe use the old office at the back next time? I’m pretty sure it’s locked but you can figure something out.”

Hoseok sighs, “Jimin-”

“Sure.” Yoongi interjects, shoving his hands into his pockets. “We’ll do that next time.”

“Hyung…” Hoseok turns to the elder, tugging at the sleeve of his coat. “This doesn’t have a be a secret, does it? We can just tell him.”

Yoongi takes Hoseok’s hand for a moment before he lets go. “If you want to, then I guess we can.”

Jimin lifts an eyebrow at both of them, still confused.

He walks out of the storage closet a changed man with a mop.

A pain condition that soulmates can heal. Hoseok had said.

“Must be nice.” Jimin hums to himself as he mops up Jungkook’s spilled drink. “That would save so much from hospital fees.”

“Kook, I mopped your shit up for you, can you put this away?” Jimin turns to the younger boy’s
desk but realizes that he’s interviewing a witness and quickly moves away.

He walks past Taehyung on his way to the storage closet and does a little spin with his mop in hand as a joke, earning a small giggle from his friend.

That may have been a mistake, though he realized that too late. He slips on his feet and tips backward. Taehyung is staring at him helplessly from a meter away.

Just as he braces himself for a hard fall, a pair of hands close around his waist and his back hits something soft.

“Are you okay?” A voice Jimin doesn’t expect to hear again comes up from behind him. “Jimin-sssi- I mean Jimin-ah?”

As soon as the owner of the soft voice registers in Jimin’s mind, he jumps up from the hold and sheepishly turns back to greet Namjoon. “Hello.”

“Hi.” Namjoon smiles. “It’s been a while since we’ve talked.”

“Has it?” Jimin looks down at his feet, rubbing the back of his head. His other hand is still gripping the mop. He turns up to look at Namjoon’s face until the other boy turns too and their eyes meet, and

and nothing. No wave of senses; no soulmate contact.

They weren’t made for each other.

His situation is not like Hoseok and Yoongi that despite all the odds, they were meant to be together at the end of the day, at the very least. Jimin, however, was never meant to be with Namjoon; there’s no reason, no excuse, for him to keep chasing him.

Perhaps it’s time to let go. At least he got to experience Namjoon holding him and being pressed up to him. That was a nice goodbye gift.

“Nam… Namjoon-ssi, are you here to get Yoongi hyung?”

Namjoon’s eyes widen. If it’s because of the honorific then he doesn’t make it known. “Why, yes. How did you know?”

Planning to absorb every detail before he lets it all go, Jimin’s eyes trace the gold rim of his glasses, then down to his attire. He has a white sweater on, but the collar peeking up from under it is black. Namjoon seems to notice this when he reaches up to the said collar.

“Ah, this.” The older man clears his throat and his expression is suddenly solemn as if he’s been caught doing something wrong when he hasn’t. “I should’ve told you when we first met. I’m sorry if it makes you uncomfortable...”

Jimin is speechless for a moment; he didn’t expect Namjoon to apologize, it’s not his fault. It was never his fault that Jimin gets attached so easily.

Yet that was an apology that left Namjoon’s lips, filled with guilt over something that he’s not responsible for. He’s known about the mafia and their obnoxious pride that they refuse to apologize no matter how big the situation. Yet Kim Namjoon just apologized to a police officer over a black shirt barely visible under the white sweater.
Why is Kim Namjoon like this?

“Take it back.” Jimin feels himself murmur.

“What?”

“Namjoon,” Yoongi brushes past Jimin from behind, “Fancy seeing you here.”

The boy rolls his eyes, “Let’s go, hyung. Head chief called. Are you done with whatever you’re doing here?”

“Just came to see my Hoseokie. Nothing new.” Yoongi pats his assistant’s shoulder and turns to nod at Jimin before they both leave.

The mop handle hits the wall with a soft thunk and Jimin sighs. *No tears today, he promises himself, stop being so dramatic.* Maybe Kim Namjoon is actually a huge asshole once you get to know him. That’s a possibility.

No, he thinks. No more thoughts about Namjoon. He claps his hands onto his face and shakes his head to clear his mind, catches a whiff of something in the storage room and gags.

There’s an odd stench, a repulsing smell coming from the top shelf that’s just out of his reach. Maybe he can ask Jungkook to check what it is later. He doesn’t want a lockdown if it’s an unknown substance. Not when there are so many people in the building.

Hopefully, it’s nothing bad.

Hopefully.

✿

Hoseok is not implying anything, but his life isn’t as dreadful as it was a month ago.

It became less difficult to have Yoongi around, to have Yoongi touch him, though it was never remotely sexual.

Yoongi seems...softer than before. The way he interacts with Hoseok and his friends seems fonder and almost genuine, and the younger kids are opening up to him, Jungkook especially.

Hoseok isn’t implying anything, though.

Namjoon comes to visit from time to time, and Jimin would then be out of sight with an excuse or two. It’s sad, Hoseok thinks, but maybe it’ll blow over soon.

The night shift becomes less exhausting, most likely because he learns to reward himself after coming home from work at dawn every day.

And tomorrow, Hoseok grins, tomorrow’s a day off. Taehyung suggested a little sleepover tonight with just the four of them where they can talk shit about work, their stinky boss, boys, whatever there is to rant about until the sun comes up, and they can all sleep into the afternoon.

Hoseok turns back to his work with a smile. It’s just an hour left until he skips his way to
Taehyung’s apartment where everyone is.

“Hoseok-ah!”

“Yes!” Hoseok jumps at the mention of his name, turning to see Seojoon.

“Someone called reporting a gang fight a few streets over.” Seojoon says, “Can you go settle things down?”

“Hyung,” Hoseok whines, “my shift is over in less than an hour and I have plans. Can’t you get someone else to do it?”

“If you want to get out of the night shift, you better work your ass out during the night shift.” Seojoon frowns. “You can just go home as soon as you’re done with this.”

Defeated, Hoseok sighs as he grabs his coat and phone, texting the younger boys,

[01:04:21] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)(core: i might be late today. sorry !!
[01:04:32] taetae (◉○◉)★: why ??? what happened ??
[01:05:10] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)core: they’re making me go check some gang fight ; ; )
[01:05:30] jiminie (ˊˋ): ??????? that’s so mean
[01:05:45] kookoo U(Ớ Ớ)U: who do i have to beat up >:(
[01:06:03] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)core: kookie...ur a cop
[01:06:32] jiminie (◉○◉)★: its ok we’ll beat him up virtually
[01:06:40] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)core: lol ok just start without me! this will take a while
[01:06:42] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)core: i’ll join u later
[01:06:45] hoseokie (ᯨ ⋆ ⋆)core: love u !!!! ❤️❤️❤️❤️❤️

Streetlights glow and drag past the car window, with yellows and reds and blues bleeding into each other at the corner of Hoseok’s eyes.

It takes him too long to realize that the street the supposed gang fight had occurred was the street where the Min’s mansion is situated.

He sighs when he sees a clean, empty road, void of any signs of mishap, and then Donghyuk.

The mafioso’s face comes into clearer view when Hoseok rolls down his window, “Was there a fight in the first place?”

“Nope.” Donghyuk answers casually.

“Donghyuk-ssi,” Hoseok sighs, “you know it’s against the law to make false police reports, right?”

“Well there should be a law against not knowing that it’s your boyfriend’s birthday.” The man retorts.

“I’m sorry?”

Donghyuk groans, “It’s Yoongi’s birthday.” He pauses as he checks the time. “Well, was.”
“Are you actually mad?” Hoseok frowns.

Yoongi hasn’t even looked at him, and he’s been in the Min’s loud mansion for almost ten minutes. The older man reaches for his glass on the coffee table and sits back onto the couch as he drinks.

“Hyung, there was no way I could’ve known.” Hoseok says after figuring out that he’s not going to get a response to his question.

“I texted you about it the day before.” Yoongi murmurs.

He’s right. “Shit. I’m sorry.” Hoseok sulks, “I had so much work to do it just flew over my head.”

Yoongi is staring down at his empty glass, lips pursing out into a small pout. Hoseok turns to Namjoon for help, but the boy sitting opposite to them just shrugs.

“Hyung,” Hoseok puts an arm around his so-called boyfriend, but the pout makes no move to go away. Getting a little braver, Hoseok leans in to peck Yoongi’s cheek once, twice, “I’m sorry babe. Happy birthday.”

At that, Yoongi turns to face him with a frown. “You better make up for it then.” He says, “Stay the night.”

Hoseok pauses for a second, “I uh- can’t. Not tonight.” He slowly pulls away, “I promised my friends that we’re gonna have a sleepover at Tae’s place tonight. I’m already late since-”

Wait a second.

“Hyung, did you call the cops just so I can come see you?”

The familiar smirk stretches across Yoongi’s face, “It was a gamble, but it looks like I won.”

“That’s so stupid, oh my god.” Hoseok rubs his eyes, “it could’ve been any other officer that came here, then you’d get in trouble for making a false report.”

“Well it’s a good thing that didn’t happen.” Yoongi smiles, draping an arm over Hoseok’s back. “You can take a break for once.”

“I was going to!” Hoseok whines, “I had a whole thing planned tonight!”

“A whole thing that doesn’t involve me.” Yoongi deadpans. “I’m hurt.”

If it weren’t for Namjoon and a few other people in the room, Hoseok would’ve snapped at Yoongi. Why would I involve you if I wanted a break?

“How about this then,” The arm around Hoseok tightens, “I’ll go with you.”

Hoseok lifts an eyebrow, “Go with me? To-” It hits, “You want to come to the sleepover?”

Yoongi shrugs, “You have to make it up to me somehow.”

“Oh my god.” Hoseok buries his face into his hands, “Do you really have to?”

Yoongi pouts again, “Are you going to leave me here to drink alone after forgetting about my
birthday?”

Hoseok looks up to see a few eyes on him. Some more threatening than others, waiting for a chance to pounce as soon as he makes one wrong move.

Which is why Yoongi is standing in his black attire in the middle of three boys in their pajamas.

Jimin is signaling something with his eyes towards Hoseok, *Really?*

Sorry, Hoseok signals back.

Jungkook, on the other hand, is ecstatic.

“This night just got so much better!” Hoseok hears the boy exclaim as he slips into Taehyung’s bathroom to wash up and change.

By the time he slips back out in his own pair of shorts and a sleep shirt, Yoongi is sitting alone on the couch with Taehyung’s dog.

“What’s his name?” Yoongi asks.

“Yeontan.” Hoseok answers, “Where did the kids go?”

Yoongi ruffles the fur on Yeontan’s head, “They went out to buy beer and snacks a few minutes ago.”

Yoongi is still in his formal mafia attire, hair still set up and styled away from his face.

“Do you want to wash up? That doesn’t look very comfortable.”

“It’s my skin,” Yoongi says, “but I’ll change.”

Hoseok spends his time alone to play with Yeontan for a few minutes before deciding to make some coffee so he could stay awake for the night’s affairs. Whether that’s a good idea or not, he’ll decide later.

He turns to see the black bag Yoongi brought with him on the counter, snickering when he recognizes the kumamon pajama pants.

“Hyung!” Hoseok calls, “You forgot your clothes here!”

“Taehyung said I could wear his clothes so I’d fit in.” Yoongi’s responds, muffled. Hoseok laughs at that. “I still need a few stuff from there though.”

Hoseok steps into Taehyung’s bedroom with the bag, shrieking a little too loud when he sees a bare back covered with inked flowers. Yoongi turns to face him, towel still resting on his shoulders. He already has his pants on, at least.

“Sorry!” Hoseok sputters, “I didn’t know you were still changing.”

Yoongi waves him off as he steps toward Hoseok, shirt still in hand. Hoseok’s eyes catch on the inked bud on Yoongi’s heart that stems onto his shoulder, branching off towards somewhere
behind him. The elder seems to notice, “Curious, are we?” Hoseok feels his face redden at that.

Stepping away a little, Yoongi turns around so that his back is facing Hoseok, revealing the intricate branch of different birth flowers blooming along his spine, ending just above his waist. Hoseok suddenly has the urge to bring his hand out to trace them, but holds himself back just in time before he makes any contact with Yoongi’s back.

“It’s beautiful.” Hoseok feels himself say.

After pulling Taehyung’s shirt on, Yoongi turns around and steps closer until his arms wrap around Hoseok’s waist.

The younger boy yelps, “Hyung, what-”

Yoongi tightens his hold and leans in to peck Hoseok’s cheek, trailing up to his ear.

Hoseok gasps, gripping onto Yoongi’s shoulder before flinching away. “Hyung.”

“What? This isn’t against the rules, is it?” Hoseok can feel his face heat up when Yoongi looks at him through his damp hair that has now fallen into his face.

“Well, no,” Hoseok mumbles.

“Good.” Yoongi says, before he ducks down to kiss up Hoseok’s jaw and down his neck. Yoongi’s lips feel like fire against his skin, leaving a lingering warmth everywhere it drifts.

“Wait, hyung.” Yoongi pulls away at that, arms still wrapped around his waist. Hoseok’s legs suddenly feel like jelly. “Why- why are you doing this? There’s no one here but us.”

“I’m training you.” Yoongi says simply.

“Training?”

“You have to get used to me, Hoseok-ah.” He brings up a hand to tap Hoseok’s nose, “This is how you react when I’m in your personal space. That’s a dead giveaway.”

“I-” Hoseok falters, his hands are still clenched on Yoongi’s shoulders, “I thought we were only trying to fool your dad when I agreed to this.”

Yoongi’s expression drops at that. “What are you saying?”

“I mean, I don’t see why I’d have to lie to my friends or anyone else about it.” Hoseok says, “Your dad still won't find out if I tell them.”

The other boy is quiet for a while, hands still curled around Hoseok’s back. Hoseok tenses in his hold as he looks at Yoongi’s muted expression.

“Do you want to let your friends know then? That you’ve been lying to them all along?” Yoongi says after a while, cold. “It’s your choice.”

Distracted by the tension the room has built up, Hoseok doesn’t hear the sound of the front door clicking open, not until Yeontan’s barking gets loud enough, signaling approaching footsteps, until there’s a loud gasp that has both of them turning.

Taehyung stands there with a bag of snacks in his hand and the reddest cheeks.
“Tae,” Hoseok turns to him, breaking from Yoongi’s hold.

“Hyung,” Taehyung interjects, “it’s okay. I was just surprised, that’s all.” He shifts around awkwardly before he turns toward the door, “You can uh, continue embracing each other. We’ll be at the living room! So glad to see you enjoying yourself, hyung!”

“Taehyung!” Hoseok calls after him, but the door slams shut behind the boy.

“So are you going to tell them?” Yoongi’s voice shifts his attention back.

“After what Taehyung just saw? How am I supposed to explain that?”

Yoongi shrugs, “Your choice.”

“Listen,” Hoseok whispers harshly so that the younger boys can’t hear him if they’re eavesdropping. “You have to stop pretending that I have a say in any of this.”

The mafioso lifts an eyebrow at that. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Oh but you do.” Hoseok bites back. “You pretend to give me these choices, but you manipulate it so that the outcome is always what you want.”

“Even at your house, you knew that with so many of your men in the room, I’d be threatened to do what you want me to do. And even now,” Hoseok breathes, “you manipulate the situation so that it favors you. You knew Taehyung was going to come back soon, so you stall until he sees us together and I’d have a difficult time trying to explain things if I were to tell them about this arrangement.”

Yoongi stands there, still and quiet, making no move to rebut or argue back to anything Hoseok has to say. Hoseok feels like the energy that came from nowhere is pent up, as if he should’ve stood his ground long ago.

“Min Yoongi,” Hoseok hisses, “I’m doing you the biggest favor by going along with whatever this is, whereas I have everything to lose by doing this for you.” He can feel himself getting louder and tries to calm down, “But keep in mind that I can blow it all up for you too. You’re not the only one keeping this secret. I can just drop everything and the truth would be out there.”

He walks up to Yoongi before he whispers, “Don’t forget that.”

Grabbing hold of the mafioso’s hand, Hoseok drags him out of the room to meet the others who are pouring the snacks onto the small coffee table.

“Sorry about that,” Hoseok says, “hyung was being a bit silly so I had to tell him off.”

Taehyung snorts, “Are you sure? He’s smiling right now.”

Hoseok turns to his side and Yoongi does have a smile on his face, oddly enough.

“Are you sure you were telling him off?” Taehyung grins.

Feeling his cheeks heat up again, Hoseok smacks Taehyung lightly, “Don’t be gross, we didn’t do anything. Right, hyung?”

Yoongi is silent next to him before he answers, “Nothing weird, no. He’s quite dominant, though.”

“Hyung!” Hoseok exclaims, betrayed.
Jimin spits out his beer, “You guys are so weird!”

Yoongi is chuckling as he reaches for a beer, turning back to look into Hoseok’s glaring eyes. He wasn’t defeated, but Hoseok isn’t going to let him win this either. Oh no.

Hoseok finds himself smiling into his drink, too, but he’s not ready to deal with that yet.

Chapter End Notes

henlo sorry for the long wait! hopefully the next chapter will be up faster

p.s. if you got excited bc of the chapter summary im not gonna apologize for thirst trapping you, ya filthy animal

my twitter, my curiouscat
changes (remember who the enemy is)

Chapter Summary

"Maybe faith wants me to grop you."

Chapter Notes

warnings for mentions of possibly triggering topics such as human trafficking near the end, though they are only very brief mentions.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hoseok remembers that night when it all happened.

Everything was pretty mundane; he celebrated his birthday alone with a beer since his friends were at work, but then they made him visit the station before his shift just so they can wish him luck and fortune and give him his presents. It was sweet.

Work started at six in the afternoon and his friends promised to treat him to cheap alcohol and his favorite grill restaurant when his shift is over. The night shift wasn’t fun, almost irritating with how tired everyone is.

They finished a bit late and he walked home alone, the wishes and fortune he received still on his mind.

Perhaps those wishes were for some other day.

Hoseok went home to crisp, shattered glass, and a broken lock; to quiet shouts and loud murmurings; to the very last thing he needs to end his day.

There were men in front of his apartment, in leather shoes and black coats. They were armed, all of them, but so was Hoseok, so he stood his ground. He remembers the face of the man, the leader of them all, that stood meters away from him with his gun aimed and ready; the sharp glare and the distinct smirk that sends him into a panic.

But it was too late.

He doesn’t remember what happened then, but he can recall waking up to a very worried Jimin next to him, and the primrose that bloomed from his badge, left by some mysterious visitor.

He remembers going home, or to whatever that was left of it. So many things that he could hardly recognize from how broken and displaced they all were. He remembers wanting to cry, but forcing himself not to.

He remembers, although faintly, the face of the bad man who shot him.

The bad man
Hoseok jolts back to the present when he feels Yoongi press up to his side. He turns to see the older man wordlessly sipping through his second bottle.

“Jungkook, eat your damn eclairs.” Jimin deadpans as he strokes through Yeontan’s fur.

The younger boy reaches for the sweets on the table and pops one in his mouth, but his glaring eyes never leave Yoongi.

“Don’t look so mad,” Taehyung nags him through a mouthful of snacks, “Yoongi hyung still looks cool in my clothes.” He turns to Yoongi, “You look cute with your hair down, hyung.”

“You’re less intimidating like this.” Jimin adds, grinning.

“I have a gun in my bag.” Yoongi states flatly.

“Yeah, that’s illegal.” Hoseok says.

“Would you even shoot us?” Taehyung challenges, he doesn’t look very intimidating himself with his cartoon sleep shirt and apple juice.“You wouldn’t dare. You love us.”

“I shot him.” Yoongi nods toward Hoseok.

The three boys freeze for a second, speechless.

“You uh,” Taehyung clears his throat, “you two can joke about that now?”

“Sure we can.” Yoongi answers simply, swinging an arm around Hoseok’s shoulders, pulling him closer before turning to him, “We’re cool, right?”

Hoseok’s eyes scan Yoongi’s face for a hint of how he should play along. He sees something in those pair of sharp eyes, something that underlies the question, that perhaps is asking if they’re cool with whatever just happened in Taehyung’s bedroom.

So to lie, Hoseok answers honestly.
“Of course we are, baby. Sorry again about your birthday.” He pauses for a moment as he considers his decision before tilting his head to peck Yoongi’s nose, red from the alcohol and the weather. The elder scrunches his nose at that, but doesn’t say anything.

“What’s this about hyung’s birthday?” Taehyung asks.

“It was his birthday yesterday and I forgot.” Hoseok mumbles.

Jungkook chokes through his snacks, “His birthday!?”

Taehyung reacts fast, springing up to cling to him, “Happy birthday hyung!” Jimin murmurs a tiny little happy birthday into his drink.

“Hyung!” Jungkook cries, “How could you not tell me?” Yoongi just shrugs in response.

“Birthday slap!” Taehyung brings a hand down onto Yoongi’s thigh. Hoseok freezes, expecting Yoongi to snap, but the elder just laughed, wide and gummy. Jimin joins in with a light one to his calf, then Jungkook on his back, gaining a pained groan from Yoongi from the impact. Hoseok laughs and joins in too, hitting Yoongi’s arm.

Yoongi’s expression shifts though, to this stern, angry one. “Hey now.”

“Oh,” Hoseok quickly draws his hand back and ducks his head, “Sorry…” He can hear Yoongi’s chuckle after a while, and then an arm drapes across his back, bringing him closer.

Yoongi tilts Hoseok’s face up with his hand before kissing his jaw, “Kidding, baby.”

Jungkook gags then pouts, “Yoongi hyung! Don’t make me demote you from my list.”

“Right, a completely biased list where each position is based on your subjective criteria of what is considered cool, which you manipulate to favor yourself. I don’t mind.” Yoongi shrugs.

Jungkook smiles wide, “And with that, you’re securely back on top.”

Cheeks still hot, Hoseok glares at Yoongi for that dirty move, parroting what he told him earlier, but the elder simply turns to grin, eyebrows taunting him.

“Oh, you’ve got those bedroom looks on your faces. Please don’t kiss in front of my virgin eyes.” The youngest boy cowers, and Hoseok flinches away from Yoongi.

Taehyung snorts, “Way to out yourself as a virgin.”

Spraying his beer, Jungkook defends himself “That was an expression! I’m not a virgin!”

“Sure thing, virgin.” Jimin joins.

“I’ve had sexual experiences before!” The youngest boy bites back almost angrily.

“Milking your schlong doesn’t count.” Taehyung counters, and Yoongi chokes on his drink. Hoseok laughs and rubs his back as an act of charity, if anything.

“I’ve done more than that!” Jungkook huffs, “I’ll literally suck a dick right now!”

“Enough.” Hoseok raises his voice, shutting them up before the conversation gets any worse. He can see Jimin covering Yeontan’s little ears.
“Enough,” He repeats himself to try and come up with a good enough threat, “...or I’ll kiss hyung in front of you.” shit. “Let’s talk about something else.” He tries to change the topic.

As ridiculous as a threat it is though, Jungkook snaps his mouth shut with a disgusted face.

“Gross, go do it somewhere else.” Jimin opens another bag of chips. His skin is tinted red from the alcohol and he’s starting to become more loose and honest. “Since we all missed Yoongi hyung’s birthday, tonight is about him.” He straightens up and slams his drink on the table, “Let’s talk about you two then. I’ve been suspicious.”

“Me too,” Jungkook agrees as he turns to Yoongi, “You need to have our approval before you can date Hoseokie hyung.”

“Does he?” Taehyung looks confused.

“Of course he does!” Jungkook counters.

“You told me you love me the first time we met.” Yoongi deadpans.

“That doesn’t mean you have my approval!” The young officer croaks. “Also no offence, but I love Hoseokie hyung more.”

“Wow, you’re saying that to me after missing my birthday?” Yoongi brings a hand to his heart dramatically, “I’m hurt, Jungkook-ah.”

“Wait,” Jungkook panics before he whispers, “I didn’t mean it! Jungkook-ah loves you.”

“How many relationships have you been in before this?” Jimin cuts to the chase, putting up his interrogative demeanor, but drunken and slurred. It’s a funny contrast to the usual officer Park, who’s known for his gentle and caring personality outside the interrogation room, but would leave convicts cowering after an hour alone with him. Jimin has a track record of getting all his convicts to confess to their crimes. Hoseok witnessed it once, and once was enough.

“None.” Yoongi answers simply, catching Hoseok’s attention. Hoseok turns to him, wide-eyed.

Jungkook snorts, “That’s a lie.”

“It’s not.” Yoongi says, tightening his arm around Hoseok. “My family strongly believes that we have to be with our soulmates, so I’ve never dated anyone before this. Not allowed to.”

“That’s...” Jimin whispers, barely audible.

“Oh, so you’re like, saving yourself for marriage?” Taehyung asks, and he doesn’t look like he’s joking.

Yoongi snorts, tightening his hold on Hoseok, “Don’t get it twisted, I’ve had hookups before.”

“Ah, so like Jimin hyung.” Jungkook chimes, though he soon realizes what he just said, and his expression molds into one that wishes to push everything back into his mouth. “Wait, I didn’t mean it like that.”

Taehyung turns to swat him, murmuring something to Jungkook under his breath.

“I mean, it’s true.” Jimin shrugs, his expression mute, or as mute as he can make it.

Yoongi squeezes Hoseok’s shoulder to get his attention, “How many relationships have you been
He’s trying to change the subject to not make Jimin uncomfortable, Hoseok notices. He’s done this before to Hoseok whenever he’s at the Min’s mansion for more reason than one, when Yoongi would verbally, or sometimes even physically, drag him out of situations when he looks clearly uncomfortable.

“Five, I think. Four girls and one guy.” Hoseok answers Yoongi honestly.

The elder whistles lowly, “Not bad.”

“Enough about the past now,” Taehyung clears the air, figuratively and literally as he swats his hands around in front of him, “what do you like about Hoseokie hyung?”

The question is directed at Yoongi. The mafioso takes a second to hum as he ponders and Hoseok unknowingly holds his breath throughout it all.

“The same things you like about him.”

The answer was unexpected, but Hoseok isn’t sure what he was expecting in the first place.

“But there has to be more,” Taehyung whines, desperate for some flavor. “There’s more to you two dating than just because you’re soulmates, right?”

The elder squeezes Hoseok closer for a moment before he relaxes. Hoseok doesn’t know what to do with his hands.

“Sure there’s more,” Yoongi answers, and Hoseok’s chest suddenly feel heavy. “At first it was only because he was my soulmate, yes,” He pats Hoseok’s knee with his free hand, “but then I realized how kind he is to everyone, how hard-working and passionate he is.”

“Oh?” Taehyung smiles, his round cheeks scrunching up his eyes into little crescents.

Hoseok takes a few gulps of his beer to occupy himself as Yoongi continues, “I also like how much he loves and adores the three of you. It’s cute.” His hand skims up Hoseok’s thigh and rests itself just below the hem of his shorts before he turns to him, “I don’t know, I keep finding new reasons everyday.”

“Oh my god.” Jungkook whispers.

Taehyung can’t quite contain his smile at the answer, “Hoseok hyung, you have to kiss him for that.”

“Later though.” Jungkook interjects.

“Can’t I get one now?” Yoongi pouts as he turns back to Hoseok.

His face is merely inches away, all too easy for him to just shift a little and kiss him. There’s a weird beating in his chest and a heat in his face that he refuses to acknowledge.

Deep down, he knows what it is, but he’s not ready to accept it, to solidify it into an actual conscious thing. Not yet. So he lamely turns away, from both the thought and Yoongi in the present, ducking his head to hide his embarrassed face. He can hear the elder chuckle as he draws his arm back from Hoseok’s shoulder to reach for a new case of beer. “Later, later.”

“I have a question,” Jimin puts his hand up as if he’s a highschool student in class.
Yoongi nods, making a gesture with his beer in hand, “Go on.”

The younger boy gulps, “…Do you think you would still be dating if you weren’t soulmates?”

They’re quiet for a moment. Hoseok expected some kind of stupid question, considering how dazed Jimin looks. But drunkenness is known to bring out the most unconscious and honest of people. Perhaps this is Jimin’s repressed thoughts and yearnings.

Jimin’s question does spark something in his mind. This is the only reason him and Yoongi are here right now, ‘together’. This soul-bounded contract, a rule created by something way beyond the two of them. Maybe that’s why old men shake their fists at the sky, angry at their lack of control in their lives, and at some other being that controls it. If it weren’t for this, none of the here and now would have been, and neither would the sensations in Hoseok’s chest; both the pained throbbing and the clench. He has no control over either of them.

The thing that would never have been if it weren’t for this, is Yoongi. Hoseok can probably live his life the same way it used to be if it weren’t for Yoongi, and the way faith brought them to meet, through a sudden roar of thunder, a huge crashing wave that floods his whole life.

At the very bottom of his now ocean though, is a stopper, a plug that he can just pull and drain away Min Yoongi and everything that has to do with him. He can get back to dry land so easily, yet here he is, sunken into the deepest depths.

Perhaps the worst part is that he doesn’t want to get out just yet.

“Do you think you would still be dating if you weren’t soulmates?”

Hoseok’s soulmate takes a long sip of his drink before he clears his throat and answers, “Well, we could. I don’t see any reason why we can’t.”

Jimin is quiet, so Yoongi continues, “Donghyuk hyung’s mother isn’t my father’s soulmate, and they get along well.”

Hoseok turns at that, “Wait, your dad didn’t marry his soulmate?”

“He did, my parents are soulmates. Me and hyung have different moms.” Yoongi clarifies, “Before this, they were in a rush to find a heir, so they allowed him to see someone who wasn’t his soulmate, and so they got Donghyuk hyung.” He runs a hand through his hair, a familiar gesture, “Not long after that though, he found his soulmate. My mother was a waitress at this soju place that they went to, and they got married. They didn’t love each other though.”

“Oh,” Taehyung looks serious.

“Sorry if I asked something weird.” Jimin looks guilty, even in all of his drunken glory.

“It’s fine,” Yoongi assures him before he lies down and plops his head onto Hoseok’s lap, ignoring the younger’s yelp. “Do your thing.” His hand is still running through his own hair before Hoseok gets the hint and replaces it with his own.

“Uh,” Jungkook fake coughs, “do you guys mind?”
Taehyung shushes him, “It’s the soulmate thing Jimin told us.”

“Oh,” the younger boy’s expression clears, “oh right, the pain touching thing.”

“Hyung gets a bad migraine from time to time.” Hoseok explains as he gently massages Yoongi’s scalp. He expected Jimin to tell the other two, and it’s almost a relief in a way, some of the pressures of lying steaming off.

“Yeah, that.” Yoongi confirms half-mindedly before he rolls around to turn to Jimin, one of his cheeks squished against Hoseok’s thigh. “What’s with the question anyway? You got something in your mind?”

Hoseok freezes at that when he sees Jimin’s face, “Hyung…”

“It’s fine,” Jimin says. “We all know this anyway, so I might as well.” He smiles, though pained, “That’s what tonight is all about, right?”

“Not if you don’t want to talk about it.” Taehyung assures him.

“I want to.” Jimin breathes, letting Yeontan hop off his lap before he starts, “I have a pretty big crush on Namjoon hyung.”

Yoongi makes an interested noise, “Okay?”

The nervous boy clears his throat, “And uh, I don’t feel anything weird when I see him, and he’s touched me before, like my shirt or something, but there’s no flower or anything.” He sighs, “I don’t think he’s my soulmate, but I like him. He’s part of the mafia though, and I’m a cop, it just doesn’t work.”

Yoongi lifts an eyebrow at that before Jimin quickly corrects himself, “I mean- no offence to you guys of course. You two are like, the anomaly since you’re soulmates, but I’m not, and yeah...There isn’t really a reason for me to get so attached.”

“I don’t think it matters what occupation you two take,” Hoseok tells him, fingers mindlessly brushing Yoongi’s hair from his forehead, “if you still like him after knowing that he’s a mafioso, then that means you’re willing to overlook it to be with him, and that’s fine. Good.”

Yoongi is quiet in Hoseok’s lap for a while before he answers, “Honestly, being with your soulmate really isn’t special or anything.” He glances back up at Hoseok, “I know I’m not the one who should be saying this since that’s exactly what I’m doing, but it really doesn’t matter, there’s the soulmate contact and all that’s nice, but if you really want to be with someone then they’d matter more to you than some stupid belief.”

“Wow,” Jungkook looks completely in awe, “that’s such a cool thing to say.”

“My father loves Donghyuk hyung’s mother more than anyone, even his own soulmate.” Yoongi continues, “That should be enough to show you that it really doesn’t matter if Namjoon is your soulmate or not, and your feelings for him are definitely not invalid just because he’s not.”

“Do you...approve though, Yoongi hyung?” Jimin asks hesitantly, “Of me liking Namjoon hyung.”

Yoongi shrugs, “I’m not the one to decide that, it’s your feelings.” He smiles after a while, “I think you two would be good together though.”

Taehyung turns to hug Jimin as Jungkook plays with Yeontan like a doll, making him lift his paws
as he coos, “I love you Jimin-ssi~”

Hoseok’s hand rests on the side of Yoongi’s face as the elder shifts back to look up at him, his lips slightly parted. His eyes stare into Hoseok’s like he’s looking out at some kind of scenery, not exactly looking for anything in particular, just looking for the sake of looking; nothing more, nothing less.

He strokes Yoongi’s cheekbone lightly with his thumb, and a hand comes up to rest above his, keeping it there. Yoongi’s hands are warm, so distinctly warm that Hoseok still feels it when it’s not there, when Yoongi touches him with his gloved hands, that Hoseok still finds some weird comfort when he’s caressed by cool leather. They stay like that, though for how long, no one knows. It doesn’t really matter.

It’s Jimin who breaks the trance, “Should I confess? I don’t think he likes me like that, though. Like, what if he wants to be with his soulmate, Yoongi hyung?”

It takes Yoongi a second to snap out of it before he turns, “Hm? Oh,” He lets go of the hold and slowly lifts his head from Hoseok’s lap, patting his arm as a little thank you gesture.

“Maybe Hoseok can ask him about it just to make sure, and if it’s a clear sign then you can just go for it.” Yoongi suggests, “How’s that?”

“That’d be nice.” Jimin turns to Hoseok, “Do you mind…?”

“Anything for you, Jimin-ah.” Hoseok smiles back at him.

Yoongi pats his knee again, “Call him, then. He should still be awake.”

Hoseok’s eyes widen, “Wait, right now?”

“I don’t see why not,” Yoongi shrugs.

“It’s three in the morning though.” Taehyung checks his phone.

“If he’s not awake then we’ll wake him up. Simple.” Yoongi says. “It’s like Jimin said, isn’t this what tonight is all about?”

That was what made five grown men huddle and crowd around Hoseok’s phone sitting in the middle of the coffee table they cleared all their snacks from. Namjoon’s caller ID is bright on his screen and they wait for a second, or two, or three, a few more, until the ‘calling…’ text under Namjoon’s name turns into a timer.

“...Hello?” Namjoon’s sleep addled voice comes through the speaker phone, low and husky. Jimin’s face is red, but Hoseok wonders how much if it is actually from the beer.

“Joon-ah,” Hoseok greets, “sorry, did I wake you up?”

“...You did.” There’s shuffling coming from the other end and what sounds like a yawn before Namjoon’s voice comes up again, “S Yoongi hyung still with you?”

“Ah, yeah,” Hoseok blushes, but he doesn’t know why, “he’s spending the night, if that’s alright with you.”

“Of course, you don’t have to ask me. He looks happy around you.” Hoseok chest flips weirdly at that. But this isn’t what he’s here for, he’s here for Jimin.
Hoseok tries to steer the topic into the right direction, “S-Speaking of uh, being with someone,” Jungkook snorts at his efforts, but Taehyung shushes him, “You’re single, right? And gay?” The younger boy wheezes but muffles it into Yoongi’s back in time. Yoongi brings a hand up to pat his head.

“...You called me at three in the morning just to ask me this?” Namjoon doesn’t sound annoyed. Confused, mostly. “Yes...to both of those.”

“I see,” Hoseok straightens up, “you see, I was thinking of hooking you up with a friend of mine.” Jimin’s eyes widen. “Would you be down to try? Even if he’s not your soulmate?”

The line is quiet for a moment, “Well...about that. Probably not?” Hoseok freezes at that, that isn’t the answer he expected. “I mean, no hard feelings toward your friend of course. I’m sure he’s a great guy if he’s friends with you.” Yoongi rolls his eyes.

“Oh,” Hoseok breathes, “is there a reason why? Are you like, traditional?”

“No, no. I’m very open-minded.” Namjoon quickly corrects him, “I’ve just figured from... past experiences that maybe I’d be happier being with my soulmate, you know?” There’s a long sigh before he starts “Me and Jin hyung, we started dating a year ago. It was nice. I didn’t really think about the whole soulmate thing until we both realized that we’re not each other’s soulmates. Then it just fizzled out, I guess. We’re fine now, of course. It was a long time ago.”

The sudden confession leaves Hoseok at a loss for words. His friend seems to notice when he chuckles, “And yeah, that’s why I’m just... waiting for the day my soulmate comes around, I guess. Sorry man, I appreciate the thought though.”

Hoseok looks up at Jimin, but he’s staring down into his lap, Taehyung and Jungkook cradling him in their arms.

“I see...” Hoseok sighs, “well, that’s fine, sorry for bothering-”

“Namjoon.” Yoongi interjects. Jimin’s head shoots up at that.

There’s a pause before Namjoon answers “...Yoongi hyung?”

“I know you’re a smart guy or whatever, but that was the dumbest thing you’ve ever said,” Yoongi scolds him, “and you once thought a vibrator is a back massager.”

Namjoon sputters, “I- the tip part looks similar!”

“You’re gonna give up on all of your potential partners? Just because they don’t make you feel goosebumps?” Yoongi carps.

“No...I-”

“You’re letting one failed relationship control all your future potential ones.” Yoongi cuts him off, “Maybe the reason you and Jin hyung didn’t work out wasn’t because you two aren’t soulmates, maybe it’s because you’re just not right for each other.”

“Well yeah... soulmates are right for each other.” Namjoon says weakly.

“The head chief and chieftess were soulmates and the only reason my father tried to keep my mother alive was so he doesn’t die.” The mafioso deadpans, “They don’t give two shits about each other.”
It’s completely silent on both ends of the call.

Yoongi sighs, “Don’t let the whole soulmate thing determine who you should be happy with. Just go with whatever comes your way.”

Hoseok was convinced Namjoon had hung up before his voice comes through again, “…Alright.”

“Alright what?” Yoongi tests him.

“Alright I’m gonna get my head out of my ass, hyung.” Namjoon sighs, “That means I still have to say no to Hoseok’s offer for now though.”

Hoseok chokes on his drink, “What? Why?”

“For now.” His friend counters, “I uh, I’m...interested in someone right now. I don’t know if it’s gonna go anywhere though.” Namjoon chuckles softly, fond. “Recently, I found out that he’s not my soulmate, and I was gonna let it go, but if hyung insists so much that I should give it a try, then I’ll see where it takes me.”

Jimin’s expression is unreadable, but the other two boys just squeeze him tighter.

“I don’t mean to prod, but is it one of the guys in the clan?” Yoongi asks, though he’s definitely prodding.

“Hyung…” Hoseok tries to stop him, tries to tell him that enough damage has been done.

“No. It’s not.” Namjoon is quiet again before he finishes, “I knew him through Hoseok.”

“Oh?” Hoseok straightens up again.

“I think I did something wrong though. He...he’s been quite distant lately.” Namjoon murmurs, almost sad. “But it’s fine, I’ll just, I’ll see how it goes.” He tries to cheer up, “If it all goes to shit then tell your friend I said hi, I guess.”

“Sure man.” Hoseok laughs.

“Yeah.” Namjoon chuckles, “Do you need anything else?”

“Nope, that’s all.” Hoseok chirps, “Sorry for waking you up.”

“That’s alright.” His friend assures him, “It’s almost four, you really should sleep soon. Good night.”

Hoseok shifts over to join the hugging pile as soon as the call ends.

“That could be you,” Hoseok kisses the top of Jimin’s head, “couldn’t it?”

“No I-” Jimin breathes, “I doubt it. But it’s fine.”

“I can go talk to him tomorrow- well, today, or something.” Yoongi suggests.

“No really, it’s fine hyung.” Jimin shakes his head, “Thank you.”

Taehyung yawns, “That was too much tension, I’m exhausted now.”

“That was so fun though,” Jungkook murmurs, cheek squished against Jimin’s shoulder.
“Yeah,” Jimin laughs, “it was exciting.”

Hoseok stands up and stretches, “Time to hit the hay I guess.” He yawns, “we should all go brush our teeth and cuddle Jimin until he suffocates.”

“Sounds like a plan.” Taehyung rises and makes his way to the bathroom, followed by the other two.

They push the coffee table to a corner of the room as Jungkook alone pushes Taehyung’s mattress off his bed and drags it into the living room. They lay out spare comforters and throw pillows around until a good portion of the room is one large nest.

Jimin lays down in the middle and he is immediately enclosed by two of his friends. Hoseok throws a large comforter over all three of his sleeping kittens and give them each a little kiss good night.

Yoongi is sitting on the couch the mattress is pushed against, a bit dazed as Hoseok joins him. He’s looking at the lump of sleepy kids in front of him, three cuddly peas in a pod.

“Taehyung’s gonna start snoring soon, and then they’re all gonna drift away from him.” Hoseok whispers, giggling quietly. Yoongi smiles at that.

“Seems like Jimin fell pretty hard.” The elder murmurs.

“Yeah,” Hoseok sighs, “I hope it goes well for him this time.”

“I hope Namjoon knows that he’s missing out.”

Hoseok chuckles quietly as he turns to look at Yoongi, he’s still looking forward at the boys who are now fast asleep, fond. That’s a nice look on Yoongi, he thinks. The room is dark, save for the lone lamp in the corner of the room, dim and orange just behind Yoongi. It makes his skin glow in a way that reminds Hoseok of a small lighthouse in the midst of a dark ocean. Perhaps that is Yoongi’s role in Hoseok’s flooding life, the whole metaphor. Amongst the confusion of waves that Yoongi brings with him into Hoseok’s life, Yoongi himself stands as a lone lighthouse whose role is to guide him to shore, but isn’t quite bright enough for Hoseok to be certain.

But maybe it doesn’t have to be certain right now, with the way Yoongi smiles so warmly at someone without them knowing, like it’s his little secret.

Without considering anything carefully, Hoseok leans in to peck his cheek.

Yoongi makes a noise at that, “What’s that for?”

“The kiss I owed you from earlier.” Hoseok answers simply.

“Oh,” Yoongi breathes, “you didn’t have to.”

Hoseok’s gut sinks but he ignores it, “I just don’t want to owe anything to a mafia gang member. You’re gonna hunt me down.”

He can hear Yoongi snort, “You can just admit that you want to. I saw your face when I kissed you earlier.”

Hoseok’s cheeks blaze at the memory. He wipes his face with his hands to somehow cool it down. He doesn’t know what to say.
It’s silent, but not awkward, for a while before Yoongi asks, “That…wasn’t too much, was it?”

“Oh… no.” Hoseok clears his throat, “It’s fine. I’ll uh- I’ll tell you if I’m not comfortable with something.”

“Okay.” Yoongi breathes. “What you did then, you should do that more often.”

“What?” Hoseok asks.

“Stand your ground,” Yoongi answers, “put your foot down or whatever. Say what you want to say.”

Hoseok tilts his head, “…You want me to do that?”

“You need to call bullshit when you see it, nothing else matters.” Yoongi says, “that’s how the mafia works.”

“Oh.” Is all he says in response.

“I’ve… never been in a proper relationship before,” Yoongi murmurs, “so I’m more familiar with… physical things, and what happened then, that was all just a spur of the moment, I guess.”

“I see.” Hoseok doesn’t know why he doesn’t like the sound of that - a spur of the moment, an unintentional thing.

“Wait, that sounds weird.” Yoongi groans, “I didn’t mean as in like, I’m always horny or anything, I guess I just don’t know exactly what to do with someone in a relationship.” He tries to explain, “Like, I don’t know if we’re supposed to hold hands or something, it’s all surface level.”

*That’s all we are*, Hoseok wants to say, *surface level*. It’s all just an elaborate act. But…

But there’s no audience right now, the spectators are asleep. It’s only them. But…

But Hoseok reaches for Yoongi’s hand anyway, interlacing their fingers in a loose hold.

“What’s *this* for?” Yoongi chuckles quietly, “Did you owe me this too?”

“I don’t know.” Hoseok answers honestly, breaking off into a whisper, “I guess I just want to.”

Yoongi tips his head back on the back of the couch, staring up at the ceiling. “Weirdo.” He grumbles before curling his fingers to properly hold Hoseok’s hand.

Hoseok has been putting it off for a while, this weird sensation in his chest when he’s with Yoongi, or even when he’s very briefly mentioned. He hasn’t put a name to it yet for reasons that feel like they’re beyond him.

Reasons like how this is just pretending, just a white lie that’s not so small. He remembers when the whole ordeal broke him down, but now it feels less like an ordeal, now that he’s realized that he has to put his foot down, ensure that he has a say in it all, like a contract. Though “contract” doesn’t seem to go with what is happening right now.

Contract is not a word for it. Not anymore at least, because now Hoseok-

...Now, Hoseok l-

“Hoseok-ah.”
“Yes?” Hoseok snaps out of his thoughts and turns to face Yoongi.

“Do you think our pain thing comes up more intensely when we’re together?” Yoongi furrows his brows as he thinks, his lips pushed into a small pout.

Hoseok takes a moment to consider it, “Maybe. I get my chest pain from time to time, but the ones that occur when you’re not around is more bearable.”

Yoongi hums in acknowledgement. His eyes flutter close. “I wonder why. Maybe faith wants me to grope you.”

“Hyung,” Hoseok is cracking up, “are you even hearing yourself anymore?”

“Good point, no.” Yoongi is smiling too, all wide with his neat row of teeth barely visible in the dark. “Go to sleep, stop listening to me.” His words are slurred as he lets go of their intertwined hands to blindly find Hoseok’s hair and runs his fingers through it.

Hoseok tries to hold back his laugh as to not wake up the younger kids. “I’m not going to suddenly go unconscious just because you play with my hair.”

“No?” Yoongi still has his eyes closed. “That’d be a terrible weakness to have.”

“That’s true.” Hoseok smiles to himself as Yoongi cards his fingers around in his hair. He lets himself enjoy it for a bit more until he reaches up to pull Yoongi’s hand off. “I’m gonna go sleep. Night hyung.”

Yoongi nods, hands folded and resting on his stomach. “Go cuddle your brothers so I can occupy the couch. Night.”

Hoseok rolls onto the mattress until he hits a warm lump and throws his leg around it, pulling another comforter over him. He’ll sleep well tonight.

He thinks.

He’s wrong.

Sunny

Rain

Traffic

CLEAR
Oh wait

“Oh wait, there are a few left here.”

Hoseok jolts awake from the stabbing pain in his chest; deep and brutal, throbbing with no sign of stopping. His breathing grows heavy and he rolls away to clutch at his chest, curling into himself.

“Hyung.” He whispers, but it stabs into his lungs and he winces. “Hyung.”

His eyes are starting to water from the sting, until a hand slips under the hem of his shirt and up to rest above his heart.

“I’m here.” Yoongi presses up to his back, murmuring things Hoseok can’t quite make sense of into the back of his neck with warm lips. Other areas that his lips has drifted to before feels like they’re warming up too; the trail up his neck to his jaw, across his cheek, to the shell of his ear.

“Hyung’s here.”

Hoseok tries to breathe as the pain subsides, his eyes threatening to shut but he’s too afraid of what he’d see. He can hear Yoongi’s breathing behind him, the slow, careful inhales and exhales into his neck.

It isn’t until after a while that Yoongi whispers, hands shifting on his chest, “So faith does want me to grope you.”

Hoseok laughs despite all that has happened, snuggling into the comforter “Shut up.”

He drifts to sleep with Yoongi’s hand still on his heart, though he doesn’t remember what dream he had, but he knows it wasn’t the same recurring one that had kept him awake.

Everyone else (except Yeontan) is still asleep when Hoseok cracks his eyes open. They’re all vague shapes of lumps and crumpled pillow waves, fuzzy and only visible because of the lines of light that manage to slip past the curtains.

He crawls out of the heap gingerly and makes his way to the kitchen to fill his stomach with something before feeding his brothers when they wake up, greeting Yeontan on his way there before stopping to pour some food into his bowl.

Seeing the pile of glasses and utensils on Taehyung’s messy drying rack, Hoseok decides to do him a favor and put them away, partly because he can’t stand to see something so disordered for so long. He sees a warm shadow looming on the cupboard as he reaches up to open it. Taehyung probably woke up.

“Hey,” Hoseok greets the younger boy.

“Hey yourself.” Yoongi’s husky morning voice comes in response before a large hand rests on Hoseok’s waist. “Where does Tae keep his mugs.”
Hoseok jolts, “Oh,” he reaches up to open the cupboard above his head. “They’re up here.” He shifts to make way for Yoongi, but the elder’s hand is still firm on his waist. “Hyung?”

“...Get it for me.” Yoongi murmurs.

“Wha-” Hoseok looks up to the high shelf where Taehyung’s mugs sit, then he turns around to see Yoongi, eyes barely open and hair sticking out in little tufts, the large collar of Taehyung’s white shirt almost hanging off one side, a clear contrast to when he’s groomed and cleaned with his black attire on.

He looks at Yoongi, then back to the cupboard, then it strikes him, “Oh.”

Yoongi frowns when Hoseok starts to crack up, the hand on Hoseok’s waist tightening, “Shut up.”

Still with a wide smirk on his face, Hoseok turns back around to reach for a mug. It’s not that easy for him either, but he manages to reach a handle when he stands on his tip toes and pull it down.

“There you go.” He hands the mug to Yoongi and, feeling cocky, brings up a hand to ruffle his hair before turning to turn on the kettle for him. “Is this why your brother called you pipsqueak?”

“It’s too early to be talking about hyung,” Yoongi says, voice still raw and gruff, “my day’s gonna start off shitty if I think of him.”

Hoseok chuckles. “Don’t be like that. Having siblings is fun.”

“That’s what they all say.” Yoongi grumbles around his coffee mug. “You don’t have any siblings, do you?”


“What do you- oh.” Yoongi suddenly goes quiet. “I’m not gonna ask.”

“It’s fine if you do.” Hoseok assures him, the scar from the memory doesn’t bleed anymore.

“Nah, I won’t.” The elder says as he downs the rest of his coffee and leaves it on the sink. “I’m gonna go shower now that I’m awake. Hey kid.”

Jungkook yawns in response as he slips past Yoongi into the kitchen, making a beeline to Taehyung’s fridge and wordlessly going through its contents.

Hoseok doesn’t see Yoongi again until Jimin and Taehyung has woken up and joined them in the kitchen.

“I’m off.” Everyone turns to the sound of Yoongi’s voice, now clear and rid of sleep. Yoongi’s back in his black attire, though he doesn’t have his usual tie on, and his trench coat is hanging on his arm.

“It’s already lunch time though,” Jungkook whines, “can’t you stay?”

Yoongi shakes his head, “Maybe next time. I have illegal shit to do.”

“You’re talking to a table full of cops.” Taehyung points out.

“Arrest me then.” Yoongi counters, leaning on the doorframe as he sticks his hands out, as if awaiting handcuffs. The four of them stare at him, unmoving, before he snickers and straightens
up, “See? You love me.”

“Damn it, he’s right.” Jungkook curses under his breath.

“Thanks for letting me join your little party.” Yoongi waves, “It was fun.”

“Hyung,” Jimin pokes Hoseok from where he’s sitting, “go see him out.”

“Oh, sure.” Hoseok stands up.

After a chorus of byes from the other three, Hoseok follows Yoongi out to the front door.

“Satisfied?” Hoseok asks as he opens the door for Yoongi.

Yoongi’s slightly taller than Hoseok now with his shoes on. The elder’s eyes flicker behind him for a moment before he smiles, “Very.” He reaches out to wrap his arms around Hoseok’s waist, ignoring the younger boy’s shriek as he pulls him close enough to kiss his jaw.

Yoongi has his usual cologne on, and as much as Hoseok protests sudden contacts like this, he finds that he doesn’t really mind them too much. Yoongi doesn’t smell bad; that’s a good thing.

“Bye.” Yoongi murmurs against Hoseok’s cheek before he pulls away, grinning at the way Hoseok’s ears are probably red. He looks somewhere behind Hoseok before nodding and turning on his heels as he walks away.

Rubbing his face as if the redness would go away, Hoseok turns back around and Jimin trips trying to turn back, pretending as if the three of them haven’t been spying on Hoseok and Yoongi.

“You guys are weird.” Hoseok grumbles as he closes the door.

“We’re just curious!” Taehyung defends himself, “your relationship is so interesting.”

Hoseok cocks his head to the side, “What do you mean?”

“Hyung, seriously?” Jungkook looks almost offended, “A mafia gang leader and a police officer! You guys are enemies and supposed to hate each other but you two are like, in love and everything!”

“Kook!” Jimin swats him, “They’ve been together for barely a month!”

“They’re soulmates, it doesn’t really matter how long they’ve been together.” Jungkook shrugs, “Plus, they were all over each other this morning, I saw them.”

The blush Hoseok had (probably) successfully gotten rid of reappears, “You—”

“Oh yeah, they were cuddling last night too.” Taehyung adds, “I took a photo.”

“You what!?”

“Lemme see!” Jimin jumps on Taehyung, followed by Jungkook as Taehyung pulls out his phone, “Aw Hoseok hyung is the little spoon.” Jungkook probably notices that Yoongi has a hand up Hoseok’s shirt in the photo when he pulls a face.

“I woke up randomly last night and I saw them in their own little corner.” Taehyung says, “I had to take a picture.”
“Hey!” Hoseok snatches the phone from Taehyung’s hand. He catches a glimpse of his sleeping face from the dark blurry image. Yoongi’s face is hidden, but his arms can be seen creeping up from behind Hoseok to rest under Hoseok’s shirt. There’s something oddly peaceful about the image, undeniably, it’s almost cute. “...can you send me this picture?”

“Already did.” Taehyung grins.

_They need to have photos of them together in order to fool people anyway, Hoseok thinks, that’s all there is to it._

He sends the photo to Yoongi, who doesn’t reply until late at night that day just before Hoseok goes to bed.


It’s weird how Hoseok’s chest tightens at the word. He texted him earlier that it was Taehyung who took the photo, and how the other two were fighting to look at it. Yoongi doesn’t specify which part of the whole message he’s responding to; the text or the photo itself.

* 

Hoseok doesn’t let himself space out for long enough that he will start thinking about his...feelings again. Not for a whole month of Yoongi visiting the station, of him staying over at the Min’s mansion.

He has several ways to distract himself. First, Jimin has started to talk to Namjoon again whenever he visits, and Namjoon always seem a little too flustered. Second, the precinct has been infiltrated by a stench that gets progressively worse every day, but no one seems to know its origins. Many people are accusing the captain as he’s notorious for his terrible hygiene or whatever, but no one ever steps forward to say it.

Donghyuk talks to him more too, surprisingly. In fact, Seokjin dragged him to the station a few times with the excuse that he has to get Yoongi back to his office and Namjoon is busy, often enough that their conversations are not just short, quick exchanges anymore.

Seokjin seems to have taken a liking of Taehyung, so much so that he buys him snacks from time to time, but no one can ever seem to resist the boy’s charm in the first place. Jungkook, on the other hand, claims that Seokjin activates his fight or flight reflex and he’s tempted to fight him every time the mafioso is in his peripheral vision.

Yoongi is a comfortable sight by now. Hoseok often finds himself smiling a little when he sees the familiar pair of leather shoes walking towards him. He’s developed this habit of resting his head on Hoseok’s lap or shoulder whenever his migraine surfaces, and they’d sit there together in that abandoned office that Yoongi manages to break into (by using his feet to kick the handle off, _ridiculous_) until Hoseok pushes him off or someone comes calling for them. Even then, Hoseok would distract himself from those thoughts somehow.

It’s all going well for the most part, until the four officers were called into a meeting room.

“I’ve called you in today as I fear that you might be getting too...” Captain Bang moves to shut off all the blinds before he finishes, “comfortable.”
“What’s happening?” Taehyung whispers, all of them are just as confused as he is.

“In this world, there’s an us, and there’s a them.” The captain starts, “We do whatever it takes to keep ‘them’ away from ‘us’. Though I can’t help but notice that you’ve been appearing quite close with ‘them’.

“If this is about the mafia, sir, we don’t share any precinct information with them.” Jimin speaks up, “We just talk.

“Officer Park, what do you think the image of the mafia - criminals - loitering around in a police station does to our reputation?” Captain Bang challenges. Jimin doesn’t respond. “Perhaps, it couldn’t be, that you’ve forgotten this? That’s they’re criminals? Well, I’m here to remind you.”

“Do you remember the unknown stench in the precinct? Officer Park? Officer Jeon?”

“Oh uh,” Jungkook stutters, “the weird smelling thing in the storage room?”

The captain nods, “We’ve taken a look through it, and it’s a box containing a new type of narcotics that weren’t in our records.” He turns to Hoseok, “I remember hearing some commotion about a mafioso who likes to make trips into the storage room.” All the eyes in the room widen at that.

“Sir, I was always with Min Yoongi when he enters the storage room, and I can assure you that he’s never carried anything with him.” Hoseok speaks up.

“Defending him now, are we? I’m disappointed, Hoseok.” The words punch Hoseok low in the stomach and he suddenly feels nauseous.

Captain Bang slams a file onto the middle table, eliciting a jolt from Taehyung. “If that wasn’t enough proof for you, officer Oh has been staking out outside the Min’s mansion for almost a month now, and he has a few goods.”

“Hienjin hyung…” Hoseok mutters under his breath, so this is what he was on a stake out for?

“You see, officer Jung, your sweet Min Yoongi doesn’t shy away from dabbling with other kinds of trafficking too.” The captain says as he lays out another file. Photographs spill from the file, several of them. They’re all photos of women, a few children too, entering the Min’s mansion from a black van. The photos were all taken from afar and zoomed in.

“You mean they’re…” Jimin can’t bring himself to say it.

“Sex workers.” The captain says it for him. “Prostitutes delivered to his doorstep. Children, too.”

“That…” Taehyung whispers, “that’s impossible.”

“Your brain may be denying it, I understand.” Captain Bang tells them, “But here is the full, solid truth right in front of you.”

“I don’t- I don’t understand…” Jungkook murmurs, “I call bullshit. Yoongi hyung would never-”

“Behave.” The captain warns him. “Hoseok, come with me.”

With his brain half functioning, he confusedly follows the captain into his office.

“I heard that the Min clan promised to fix your apartment back together.” He says once he settles himself down into his worn out chair.
“They did.” Hoseok answers, trying to not breathe in too hard as to not catch the stench in the room.

“Well, I sent officer Oh to go check out your apartment, and the place is still trashed and ruined.” The captain turns his laptop screen towards Hoseok, and his heart stops.

The door is still broken, and so is everything else beyond it, in ruins like they were a month ago.

“I…” Hoseok starts, though he never finishes. Doesn’t know how to.

“I hope you know the people you hang around better now.” The captain says sternly. “This is my final warning to you. Remember who the enemy is.”

The enemy

is Min Yoongi.

Sunny

Rain

Traffic

CLEAR

“Oh wait, there are a few left here.”

Chapter End Notes

reminder that i love yoongi with my whole heart yoongi i love you with my whole heart
i'm still :/ about this chapter hhh i actually finished a while ago but i’m not that satisfied with it hhh there are a few complaints in my cc so i decided to quickly readjust a few things and just post it anyway. i'll be making a few changes later on the grammar and a few literary parts here and there but the plot will remain the same after the editing

hope you're doing way better than me right now (sick, rejected by a college but it's all good i'm writing angst to maximize the damage) take care of yourselves !! ♡

my twitter,
my curiouscat
us (the things i would have risked for you)

Chapter Summary

“Oh, the things I would have risked for you if you hadn’t said that.”

Chapter Notes

welcome aboard the angst train

thank you so much to my valentines sham and gill for beta reading this chapter for me
:( ♡♡♡

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The enemy is Min Yoongi.

Perhaps it’s just that straightforward, but why does that sentence sound so… weird?

“I know it’s a lot to take in.” The captain says. Hoseok can almost see the stench oozing around in the room. “But you have to understand that this has been our objective all along. You know this.”

Hoseok thinks back to the very day mishap ensued, when Min Yoongi entered the station, the start of their little agreement when the captain told him to gain the mafia’s trust and become a mole. It was all to put them behind bars; he knows this.

So Hoseok answers truthfully, “I do.”

“You were trained to serve justice, officer Jung,” says his superior. “you were trained to serve the country, to do good things like putting people like Min Yoongi in jail.” He smiles when he says this, “It’s what your parents would’ve wanted.”

His parents.

Sunny

Rain

Traffic

Not now.
“...Right.” Hoseok grumbles.

“Hoseok-ah,” The captain softens his tone, “you know I consider you as my son, right?”

Hoseok’s head shoots up, “... you do?”

“Of course, it’s unfortunate, what happened to your parents and sister,” The captain says, “but if it means anything to you, I’m proud of you. You’re a hero.”

“Sir...” Hoseok whispers. At the back of his mind, something feels...off, but it's most likely because of the statement itself, especially the word ‘son’; it feels so foreign to him now.

“That’s all.” The captain pats his shoulder, “Go get some rest, okay?”

It was heartfelt, truly, but the stench had yet to fade, and Hoseok leaves the office with the thought of Yoongi ringing uncomfortably in his ears.

“Let’s think about this logically first,” Jungkook says as he idly pulls at the stubble on his chin, a habit he unconsciously resorts to when he’s stressed. “Yoongi hyung’s gay, why would he have...women come over to his place?”

“Maybe it’s for other people in the mansion?” Jimin suggests, “That still means he overlooks it and is okay with it though.”

“I don’t think it’s possible, like at all.” Taehyung speaks, barely louder than a whisper, “It can’t be.”

With Taehyung’s denial now made known, they all know that this situation is not like any other. Officer Kim, who follows orders down to a T, is strongly refusing to believe the words of his superior.

“...I agree,” Jimin says. “People have different sides to them, but this- we’ve all seen actual vicious criminals before, and Yoongi hyung... I’m not saying that he’s completely innocent since he’s not, but sex trafficking… children... that’s inhumane.”

“We all know he’s not like that,” Jungkook says. “We... we know him.”

Amidst the conspiracies, Hoseok exits the captain’s office, leaving the door to shut by itself as he slumps down onto his seat.

“Hyung...” Jungkook murmurs as he gently sprays Hoseok with the usual febreze, “are you okay?”

Hoseok tips his head back to face the ceiling, both hands coming to rub at his eyes, “I don’t... I don’t know. Apparently, my apartment is still in the same shit state that it was in a month ago.” He tries to breathe in as deep as he can; in, out, in, and out again. He turns to the others and smiles, “At least I don’t have to work the night shift anymore since Hienjin hyung’s done with his stakeout.” Some of them smile back, though they all know that’s it’s Hoseok’s go-to coping mechanism — feigned happiness.

“Well, our shift is over in half an hour,” Jimin tells him, “do you wanna go somewhere? Just to get your mind off of things?”
“We can go to that corner store you saw with those shoes you said you liked,” Taehyung suggests, “I’ll buy you a pair!”

Hoseok shakes his head, “I’d rather not. I think I’m gonna go home and nap or something. It’s been a while since I get to sleep early.”

When he says home, he’s referring to Jimin’s apartment, but it seems to spark something in Jungkook.

“Wait,” The youngest boy says, waiting until all the eyes are on him until he talks, “I’m not saying that the captain is...lying, but we can go check for ourselves, can’t we?”

“Check what?” Jimin asks.

“Hoseok hyung’s apartment,” Jungkook elaborates, “Maybe it’s just under construction or something. If we go see for ourselves that the mafia has actually been doing some fixing to it, then who knows if the captain’s words are actually true?”

“That’s actually a really good idea,” Taehyung’s expression brightens, “should we go check then, hyung?”

Hoseok doesn’t know what to do, but “Sure.”

❀

Hoseok doesn’t know what to expect.

Scratch that, he knows. He knows that he desperately hopes that whatever he saw was all a lie, that the pictures the captain had shown him were old ones, that it’s pure deception that he’s been gullible to; that Yoongi isn’t what he’s made out to be.

Oh, how hope is such a terrible, shitty thing to have.

Hope deludes people in the most ridiculous way. It takes people up to great heights, high enough until your head can snuggle into the clouds, just so that the drop is especially fatal.

Hoseok falls to his knees among the remains of what he used to call home.

He feels a weight drop down onto his back, then arms wrap around his front; Jimin, then Taehyung, then Jungkook.

“I don’t understand…” Jimin murmurs into his shoulder, almost broken.

“It can’t be…” Jungkook says, almost like a sob, “I don’t-”

“The proof is right here,” Hoseok says, completely broken. “It’s all true.”

Hoseok has been through several ruins, ranging from broken windows to completely burnt down houses, the usual yellow police wires that frame them, but those places never meant anything to him. This, however - this was all he had left of his family; the cracked frames of his mother, his father, his then little sister, Sunhee; Sunny.
“Oh wait, there are a few left here.”

There’s a sudden sting, stabbing straight into Hoseok’s chest. It hurts worse than all the ones he’s had alone, so much that he feels limp and weak as electrical pulses shoot through his body.

But, like any other situation Hoseok finds too difficult to deal with, he sucks it up.

The other three shift a little as he stands back on his feet. Before anyone can say anything, Hoseok’s phone vibrates in his pocket, signaling a message notification.

[18:32:50] yoongi hyung: are you staying over today?

Admittedly, the messages used to feel reassuring somehow. It’d make Hoseok at least crack a small smile when he reads them for what they say and for what they entail. Yoongi liked to visit him late at night from time to time with coffee, a little chat, and a kiss farewell before he leaves. That’s what those messages meant.

Now though - now they make Hoseok want to vomit.

Tempted to just throw his whole phone away, though he knows better, Hoseok tucks it back into his pocket with a sigh, “I’m gonna go and uh, take a nap.” He smiles; of course he does, “See you later.”

He manages to drag himself back to Jimin’s place with his shaky limbs and the excruciating pain in his chest. The other boys didn’t follow him, and he’s grateful for that; they understand that he processes things best alone.

He quickly changes, turns his phone on silent, leaves it somewhere away from his mattress, and drops himself down. Everything was done in a rush as if he’s not giving himself the chance to dwell on anything too much. He sleeps with the ever powerful storm inside his chest, and the one single tear he decides to let out. At least the pain distracts him from any nightmare or recurring dream that he may have, any tantrums his mind wants to throw; even from this sinking feeling of betrayal that pushes low at his guts.

[19:10:40] Min Yoongi: i’m at your rat hole where are you
“Hyung!” Hoseok jolts awake from someone shaking his shoulder. Jimin looks a bit panicked and almost confused as his blurred figure comes into view. “We tried calling you, but you didn’t answer.”

Hoseok slowly pushes himself to sit up as he yawns and rubs at his eyes. “I turned my phone on silent, sorry. What’s up?”

“We have to go to the station. You should change.” Jimin sighs. “It’s Yoongi hyung.”

“Right,” Hoseok tightens the tie on his uniform, “is he still inside?”
Seojoon nods as he hands Hoseok the case file and opens the door for him. Hoseok takes a deep inhale before he goes in.

Hoseok has never been too fond of interrogations. Some convicts take hours, if not days, to confess, and it’s exhausting to be in a small room with a criminal for so long even after all the training they’ve done. This, however, may be the worst one of all.

Min Yoongi doesn’t look up when Hoseok sits down in front of him. He doesn’t have handcuffs on, probably refused to wear them, and he looks so tired that it makes Hoseok wonder how long he’s been kept in here, laid back in his chair with his feet propped on the table.

“Told you long enough,” Yoongi murmurs as he looks up to face him, “where were you anyway? You weren’t here when I came, and you didn’t answer my texts or my calls. They tackled me all of a sudden, and now I’m here.”

It’s almost...annoying how Yoongi is mad as if he has any right to be.

“Min Yoongi-ssi,” Hoseok starts as calmly as he can, and Yoongi raises an eyebrow at the sudden formality. “Do you know why you’re in here?”

“Suspicion of sex trafficking or something was what I heard, which is fucking ridiculous if they actually said that. Would’ve probably heard it better if they weren’t trying to tackle me to the ground.” Yoongi motions to the two-way mirror behind Hoseok with his chin, “Let’s get this over with so I can go home.”

“You’ve been detained for suspicion of drug and sex trafficking.” Hoseok reads out of the case file.

“So the sex trafficking is there,” Yoongi scoffs, “can you believe this?”

Hoseok doesn’t answer, and that in itself is already an answer. He can see the moment Yoongi’s annoyed expression shifts into this dark, villainous smirk that he used to put on when they first met.

“Oh, I see what’s happening here.” Yoongi brings his feet down to the floor and sits up, leaning closer to Hoseok, “You’re with them.”

Still, Hoseok remains silent. It feels like a punch in the gut for some reason, the ones that force all the air out of you that you can’t say anything. He can hardly process how things can go so wrong.

Yoongi chuckles, though it’s dry and almost pained, “Go on then, what do you have? Ask away.”

Flipping through the case file, Hoseok starts, “There were traces of foreign narcotics found in the storage room only accessible to officers and staffs in the building, though you were the only outsider who accesses it from time to time.”

“Bullshit,” Yoongi nods, “what else?”

Hoseok breathes before he shakily presents the photographs in front of him and says, “We’ve found incidents of… sex workers, including minors, entering your mansion.”

Yoongi arches an eyebrow at that, “Sex workers, huh. Have you identified these… sex workers?”

“Not yet, but we’re working on it.” Hoseok answers flatly.

“Well, I’ll just identify them for you.” The mafioso points at a woman in the photograph, “Kim
Chaewon,” then another, “and that’s Song Jihye.”

“So you know their names,” Hoseok comments. Yoongi seems...weirdly familiar with his victims.

“Yeah, I do.” Yoongi taunts him, “Are you going to use this against me, officer?”

“It’s not out of the equation,” Hoseok says.

Yoongi scoffs, “So that’s how you work now? You’re just gonna take everything I say and reword it a little so that there’s an excuse to arrest me? To make me look like satan’s descendant with my army of sex workers?”

Hoseok frowns at that, “You are in no place to question or challenge the way our system works.”

“Oh, but do you think I care?” Yoongi counters, “so many things are illegal, but the Min clan still prospers. Can’t you see?” He looks Hoseok in the eye, “No one follows your rules, cop, but you’re gonna arrest me anyway, aren’t you?” He softens his tone before he says, “You’re really just like the rest of them. Thought you’d know better, but that was a miss I guess.”

Before Hoseok can even say anything, and for sure, he has a lot to say, Seojoon’s voice sounds from the intercom. “Min Yoongi’s case has been cleared. Let him out.”

That shit eating grin returns to Yoongi’s face as he pushes himself up from the chair and walks out of the now open door.

Hoseok laughs then, the kind of irritated laugh that he resorts to when he’s frustrated. “Ridiculous,” He runs a hand through his hair. “Absolutely ridiculous.”

“Hyung,” Taehyung is there when Hoseok leaves the room. “That didn’t sound so good. Is everything okay?”

“How did his case even get cleared?” Hoseok groans.

“I have no idea,” Taehyung says, almost exasperated. “A few guys came in, demanded to talk to Seojoon hyung, and then a few minutes later it’s all done?”

“Fucking hell,” Hoseok murmurs under his breath, pained.

“... What are you gonna do?” Taehyung asks hesitantly.

Hoseok grabs his coat, “I’m gonna go talk to him about it. That’s what I’m gonna do.”

“Talk to who?”

“Min Yoongi.”

*

It’s definitely a dodgy move to come to the Mins’ mansion after all this, but Hoseok figures that if he wants to actually pin Min Yoongi down, then being dodgy is the only way.

Yoongi appears at the door after a while, tie off and sleeves rolled up, “Here to argue some more,
officer? I thought harassment was illegal.”

Hoseok scowls, but then catches himself and tries to breathe before he answers, “I want an explanation.”

Yoongi raises an eyebrow, “On what exactly?”

“Everything.” Hoseok tries not to shout, “Why did you lie to me? What are you even doing?”

Yoongi’s whole demeanor, from the way he stands to the tone of his voice, is predatory as if they’ve come back to where they started; mafia and cop. Hoseok doesn’t like it.

“And why do you want to know?” Yoongi counters, “So you can put it in your little file and arrest me? That’s what we’re doing now, right? Just fuck everything that happened, why don’t we? One minute you’re kissing me, and now you’re trying to put me behind bars.”

Hoseok snaps then, finally. He isn’t sure what pushed him over the edge, but he suddenly can’t deal with this anymore.

“You’re a fucking criminal, Yoongi!” Hoseok hisses, “If anything, you’re supposed to be in jail!”

Yoongi stays silent for a few seconds then, breathing in slowly to calm himself down before he sullenly says, “Yeah, I’m a criminal. Like that’s not fucking obvious enough already.” He looks back up at Hoseok, “I’m supposed to be in jail, aren’t I? I’m supposed to be rotting behind bars and throwing up shitty food because I’m such a terrible human being, aren’t I? That’s what you want, isn’t it? That’s the sole reason why you’re doing all this, aren’t you?”

Hoseok doesn’t answer.

“I lie, and I kill, and I take sides, and I use my power to manipulate situations to favor me.” Yoongi continues, “Sound familiar?”

“What are you implying?” Hoseok scowls.

“Oh, you know what I’m implying,” Yoongi scoffs, “What makes someone a criminal? When they kill someone? When they steal something that isn’t theirs? When they use weapons?” He looks Hoseok up and down, “Well how many times has the police shot someone? How many times have they stripped half of someone’s life away to rot in prison and get beaten by officers? And is that not a gun at your belt?” The mafioso laughs dryly, “You wade through rivers to look for some kind of scum, but little did you know there’s plenty when you just look at a mirror.”

“Hyung,” Hoseok warns, “I’ve agreed to help you with this shit that you got yourself into when I gain pretty much nothing and lose everything from it.”

Yoongi scoffs, “You’re the one who agreed to help and get tangled into this mess, so who’s the fool here? Don’t start backtracking now. I never forced you to do it.”

Hoseok’s mouth hangs open in disbelief, unable to form any words from just how ridiculous this all is.

“You…” Hoseok tries to breathe, irritated by the bubbling anger building up inside him, “I’ve even told you this before! You manipulated me! You guilt trip me with your poor dying criminal of a dad, and you made me feel sorry enough to help you! So stop trying to act like you didn’t use your dad to bait me!”
Yoongi freezes for a second, the expression that runs through his face was so brief, but maybe Hoseok caught a glimpse of it - of disappointment. It quickly washes off though, and Yoongi laughs, an exasperated chuckle, “Oh, the things I would have risked for you if you hadn’t said that.”

Hoseok doesn’t know exactly what Yoongi means, but it sounds disappointed, betrayed, like any kind of light Yoongi had used to try and guide Hoseok in his lighthouse among the ocean has blown out, completely dark and cold. Beneath his laugh was all of that; hurt.

“I side with my dying father. That’s just the way it all is. It sounds pretty reasonable to me.” Yoongi shrugs. His expression takes on a darker one. “Yet you somehow turn it around to make it all about yourself, about how I didn’t take your side when I have been for quite some time, for reasons beyond me.”

Hoseok frowns, “What are you talking about?”

He stands up straight, “I take sides, and for once I took your side, Hoseok.” Yoongi starts. “My dad decided to trust you when I know damn well that you’re the last person we could trust, but guess what? I didn’t tell him!” He growls, furious now, “I didn’t tell him about your damn police wire or that you’ve been snooping around because I took your fucking side!” He sighs as he shakily runs his fingers through his hair, a sign that his migraine is acting up and Hoseok almost reaches for him like a reflex, but he manages to hold himself back.

“I took a risk by taking your side,” Yoongi murmurs, “at least I know now that that was a fucking mistake.”

“Just tell me the truth then!” Hoseok snarls, “Have you been smuggling drugs into the station? Why do you have sex workers coming to your house? Why did you lie to me about fixing my apartment?”

“You want the truth? I’ll give you the truth.” Yoongi growls, “the drugs thing and your apartment is the dumbest bullshit I’ve ever heard-”

“I saw it with my own eyes,” Hoseok cuts him off, “My ruined apartment hasn’t changed at all.”

“Don’t be ridiculous, I’ve been overlooking the whole process.” Yoongi scowls. “About your ‘sex workers’, there were four women and two children. I already told you two of their names.”

“Kim Chaewan and Song Jihye.” Hoseok answers.

“Oh good, you can remember things.” Yoongi says sarcastically, “Kim Chaewan’s husband died in his duty a few years back, and now she’s left with two daughters. Song Jihye has two kids.”

Hoseok pauses, “What are you-”

“Wanna know the others too? There’s Min Soojin, and Min Yeojin, they’re twenty and sixteen.” Hoseok doesn’t breathe, “ Min Eunji is ten. Her brother, Min Sungho, is six but he’s smarter than his dad, although anyone is smarter than Donghyuk hyung.”

Min, Min, Min, Min.

“They’re-”

“The women and children you’ve been calling sex workers are my aunt, Donghyuk hyung’s wife, and his fucking kids.”
“Wait, I don’t-”

“We noticed that the police has been on our tails for a while, so all the women and children in the mansion were moved to a different complex to ensure their safety.” Yoongi says, “They visit from time to time since hyung still wants to see his kids.”

Hoseok’s silence this time is not like the others where he was quiet for the sake of being quiet. This time, he has no words, not a single phrase that he can say in response. He feels stupid, all of a sudden; so so painfully stupid. He’s stupid, and Yoongi is pretty much fuming, though it’s justifiable at this point.

“Happy with your truth?” Yoongi asks sarcastically.

Someone approaches Yoongi from inside the mansion, but he seems to notice Hoseok a little later, “Hey Yoongi, you- wait, why is the fucking cop here!?” He turns to Hoseok, “Why the fuck are you here!?”

Hoseok just arches an eyebrow at him, kind of obnoxiously challenging him, try me.

Yoongi pushes the man back before he can pounce, “Don’t bother, Hyunsoo.” He says, “I don’t think we’ll be seeing him for a while anyway.” And without turning back for a final glance, the front door slams shut in Hoseok’s face.

Hoseok doesn’t cry.

Even when he’s alone, kicking the pavement with his sole every step of the way, he doesn’t cry.

This is the way it should have always been, he thinks, or convinces himself to believe. Mafia and cop, us and them, the border between them so strong and defined yet they both have somehow crossed that, or at least had fuzzed it so much that Hoseok could barely see it anymore. Today was just the wall rebuilding itself, establishing its presence.

He doesn’t really know what state they’re in now, and how serious of a fight this was. Does this mean they’re over? That Hoseok can just tell everyone about this act that he’s been putting up for over a month? Has he finally pulled the plug, draining away the ocean, and lighthouse, and all that Yoongi had thrown at him?

If he has, then why does he still feel like drowning?

There’s a reason why he’s mad, and there’s a reason why the urge to cry persists to the point that he has to hold it back.

Like the weakling that he is, though, he’s not ready to face it yet.

As a way to distract himself, he fishes out his phone from his pocket to text Jimin.


He trips on something as soon as he hits send and his phone drops from his hands. His hands and knees hit the pavement and he hisses at the sting when he shakily brings his palms back up from the ground. It takes his exhausted brain a while to process that he walked straight into another pedestrian.

“Are you alright?” A girl’s voice sounds from near him, “Your phone- oh.”
Confused by the reaction, Hoseok lifts his head up to see the stranger in question. She’s pretty, and appears to be his age or younger. He casts his eyes down to her hand where she’s holding his phone and,

the reaction isn’t as odd as it was initially.

In her petite hand is Hoseok’s phone, its screen shattered but that’s not the point of focus. Not at all.

There’s a flower that had bloomed from the cracks. Hoseok doesn’t recognize which flower it is, perhaps from the lack of lighting at the time of the night, but it’s a flower.

“I-” The girl breathes, “This is my birth flower.” She says.

“Oh,” Hoseok’s heart starts pounding in his chest from an overwhelming wave of emotions; confusion, mostly, but also excitement and curiosity.

The girl suddenly gasps, “I just felt it, the soulmate contact!” She exclaims excitedly and ducks down to help pull Hoseok up to his feet, although it’s mostly just Hoseok standing up by himself. His hand grazes hers and it stings slightly. “Can we talk about this?”

Hoseok considers the option for a while. This is quite strange. “If you want to.” He smiles. He looks into her eyes but he doesn’t feel anything; no weird, exciting wave of senses or anything of the sorts. It’s most likely just because of his injury since she felt it.

He’s heard of a few cases where three people are tied together as soulmates, although it’s not as common. He wonders if his already peculiar case of enemies can be ascended to chaos with the addition of the girl’s presence. He can’t seem to bring himself to care about the girl at all though.

Another weird thing is that he remembers Yoongi mentioning that he’s gay. He’s not quite sure how things are supposed to work anymore.

The girl smiles at his affirmation, “I’m actually on my way to a cafe near here. Maybe we could go talk there?”

The girl looks innocent, even if looks don’t determine anything. Hoseok evaluates the situation; the area is quiet since it’s late, the street lamps barely doing much more than faintly outlining the buildings and sidewalk. It’s a bit suspicious actually, the whole setup. Why is she going to a cafe so late at night anyway? Hoseok realizes then that the girl is still holding on to his flower-bloomed phone.

“Are you going to keep my phone?” He asks, quirking up an eyebrow in question.

“Ah, do you mind if I keep it? As a souvenir?” The girl asks shyly, “The flower...I don’t want to forget this moment.”

“I would prefer it if I get my phone back.” Hoseok extends a hand out, he doesn't have time for this, “Please.” the situation seems less and less appealing.

“I should introduce myself.” The girl says suddenly. “I’m Soobin,” Soobin smiles. Hoseok arches a brow at the gesture, but then the smile shifts into a grin as she finishes her sentence, “Shin Soobin.”

“Shin…” Hoseok murmurs the familiar surname under his breath before it clicks.
“Oh Yoongi...I thought we'd agree that you'd marry my daughter. Business would prosper if we join forces.”

“Sure he's not a cop now, but his mind is still that of one. I don't want him here.”

“Kill him.”

“Kill him right here.”

“Shin Doyoon.”

It clicks, though it clicked a little too late when he gets pulled into a tight chokehold and a cloth comes up to muffle him.

After years of training, Hoseok’s first instinct is to hold his breath before his brain catches up on the situation. This isn’t going to end well, but he’ll try.

First, he has to pretend to faint; easy. He collapses into the hold and surely enough, the cloth is lowered from his face. Taking a deep breath in, he quickly recalls the steps he had to memorized for so long as a training officer; duck, push, turn, and lock. That’s how Namjoon taught him to remember. He should still have his handcuffs on him. Okay, he’s got this.

God, he hopes this works.

Duck; chin to chest, protecting his throat. The attacker notices and tightens his hold against his jaw, which fucking hurts but at least he can breathe now. He has to be fast.

Push; god, this is gonna hurt. Both hands still free, he pushes the joint deeper into his face. Fuck fuck fuck, okay, he has to focus. His eyes snap around quickly. Right arm is choking him, okay, it’s now or never.

Turn; to the right. Was it 180 or 220 degrees? Doesn’t really matter right now. He kicks his left feet to his right and spins, breaking the attacker’s hold. Oh shit it worked.

Lock; the rest is more familiar. He locks the attacker’s arms behind him and tackles him down to the ground. It’s done.

Thank god he took extra time to learn this with Namjoon back at the academy. That was the worst. Maybe things will end well.

Before he can reach for his handcuffs at his belt, he hears the familiar sound of a gun cock behind him. Shit, he forgot about Shin Soobin.

“Hands up, cop.” He hears her threaten. Hoseok sighs as he slowly releases the guy and stands up, hands above his head like he’s some kind of criminal. “You’re gonna walk forward and get in that van in front of you, alright?”

Taking his time with slow, languid steps, Hoseok tries to breathe, to calm down before an alarm can go off in his head and make him panic.

He can hear Soobin’s giggles as she speaks into her phone, “Daddy, I got him.”

This isn’t going to end well.
happy valentines lol the next chapter will be in yoongi's pov !!

my twitter,
my curiouscat
Chapter Summary

“I’m not sure how much of this is for dad anymore.”

Chapter Notes

someone said i should add this in case you don't follow me on twitter hhh so !! i drew a bit of the characters like namjoon, yoongi, hoseok, and also That soulmate pain touching thing if it helps you envision them any better!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

A flower looks quite lanky by itself, Yoongi thinks. Frail stems just appear fuller, in a way, when bunched up in a bouquet. Primroses, especially, just look too weak on their own; there’s a reason why they bloom in bunches, several ones at the same time. The space in the columbarium is too small for a bouquet, but a small one should fit.

As Seokjin drops him off at the entrance and he makes his way in, Yoongi ponders why looking down at his hands, does the sight of a small primrose bouquet feel so familiar and recent. He remembers then that he bought Hoseok a bouquet not too long ago.

It was the cheapest excuse to get a kiss from him, he recalls. This, or a cup of coffee with cream and sugar. Hoseok’s face would light up at it whether it’s a bouquet or a coffee. He’d take it, then he’d notice Yoongi tapping his cheek, which is the best part of it all, honestly. Or perhaps the best part is what follows, with him blushing and scanning the room quickly before leaning in, even though the whole point of it was for people to see.

He sets the flowers down on the usual spot and sighs, “Hello, mother.”

His mother’s section is quite empty, with a few mementos like her watch and her flower hair pin. Yoongi had wanted to keep her withering birth flower here, but by tradition, they are to be kept in the main room in the mansion. He tried to protest it though, to argue that his mother never followed any traditions or rules; that was how she got to where she was. It’s practically bizarre to put her birth flower, a part of her identity, a rebel, a revolutionary, in the same place as everyone who abided by the rules.

His eyes cast to the framed photo, his mother had sharp eyes, and dark raven hair framing her pale face. It’s a great contrast to the floral patterns she's wearing in the photograph, and often wore when she was still around. She said it herself though that she didn’t have any special fondness of flowers, no more than the average person in this world.

Yoongi once asked her, a long, long, time ago, why she insisted on wearing those pastel, sickeningly colorful florals if she didn’t have much liking for it. It was a statement, she told him. She was going to break through the system men ruled by breaking all of their conducts, including appearance. Besides, black can get so dull, she also said.
And what a sight it was when she led a group of men in black in her floral dress, a rose among the waves of thorns.

His parents’ first encounter was unexpected. His mother was still in university, doing her part-time job of serving drunks before she got dragged into this whole other world of crime and violence. Her role, at least initially, was simply to produce a heir, and that was it.

She refused though, refused to have her journey cut short, and took advantage of whatever she had. Perhaps that was why Yoongi’s father never liked her. She broke the rules he created, redefined all of his words. Because of that though, it was the first time any mafia clan had ever heard of the term ‘chieftess’.

She was a better leader than he ever was, and ever will be, most likely. She climbed the ranks somehow; from spouse, to gun moll, to assistant, to donna. She had the bravery he never had, and basically the balls to take risks, go out to sea to find new land. Eventually, Yoongi’s father got over his pride and gave in, accepted that she advanced the clan to greater heights, and he needed to learn from her. Yoongi doesn’t think he ever did, though.

His father lacks the sophistication she had. She used to drive Yoongi to school, and picked him up without a single trace of blood on her clothes. She didn’t obnoxiously carry her gun around, and instead carried herself in a way that no one would have ever thought she’d be anything more than a loving mother. When Yoongi got into trouble big enough for his parents to be called in, she never let his father come. Everyone feared Yoongi in a way, but they’re not wrong for fearing the mafia’s son. His mother broke the mold though, with the type of kindness she would never had shown when she was working. She was even kind to Yoongi’s best (and only) friend at the time. She’d let him visit Namjoon’s place and leave Namjoon’s parents a gift every time, then soon stopped when Yoongi told her the truth, proceeding to donate a part of her time to find a way to get Namjoon out of that household. It was fascinating, how she was the then living proof that ambition and courage can coexist with integrity and kindness.

“I just realized that you and Hoseokie share the same birth month,” Yoongi says to his mother. “Sometimes he reminds me of you.”

Hoseok seems quite uptight and obeying, but he has been taking a pretty big risk for agreeing to this whole arrangement in the first place. He seemed to be able to tell the difference between doing the right thing and following the rules, although last night may be a warning for Yoongi to be more careful with his assumptions.

“Things are quite complicated with him right now,” Yoongi murmurs, “sometimes I wonder what you’d do if you were still here. I don’t think you’d even agree to it in the first place.” He chuckles, “I won’t even have to tell you about it, but you’d find out somehow, then you’d tell Hoseok to just call it off and make a run for it, since it’s never worth it to sacrifice that much for a stranger. It’s also never worth it to do so much for dad, too.”

Yoongi taps his chin as he ponders, nipping at his nails, “Looks like he broke your rule then.” He grins, “I bet you’d like him.” His mind suddenly reminisces to last night though, and his small smile drops, “I got really angry last night. I can’t remember the last time I got that upset with someone.” He sighs, “I don’t think I’m that mad at him anymore though. More like… confused, curious, even. Some of the things he said, the anger that came from him, it seemed to have come from somewhere else too.”

He’s silent for a moment before he finishes, “I’m not sure how much of this is for dad anymore.”

The confession startles Yoongi a little, but it’s about time. He considers going deeper into it, but
then if this separation is fatal enough, would it be too painful for him?

After bidding his mother farewell, Yoongi leaves the columbarium with more questions than answers. It helps though, to speak with his mother.

Seokjin is waiting by the car when he arrives.

“Was the interrogation room that bad?” His assistant asks.

Yoongi frowns, “Where did that come from?”

“That knot in your eyebrows,” Seokjin points out as he opens the car door for him, “also I had a hunch, judging from how grumpy you are today.” He sighs, “was the fight really that bad?”

Yoongi gets into the car. He wants to curse at Seokjin, tell him that it’s none of his business what went down with Hoseok. He can’t, of course, it’s Seokjin, for god’s sake. Yoongi’s going to end up telling him everything either way.

“He thought my relatives and nieces were sex workers, it’s pretty difficult to not get mad at that.”

“That’s rough, but you have to understand that he didn’t come to that conclusion by himself. That kind of statement had to have come from someone else since he wasn’t the one on the case. That’s what Namjoon told me.” Seokjin slips into the driver’s seat, ignoring Yoongi’s frown. “You also need to understand that there’s a reason why he’s mad at you too. It’s not his fault that he believes what his boss says. I believe what you say, most of the time.”

“Yeah I got that part,” Yoongi waves him off. “He also… basically thought that I’ve been having it easy this whole time? Like, he thinks he’s the only one going through shit when I’ve had less than four hours of sleep this whole week because I kept stressing about it all.” He sighs, hates to admit it, “I risked a lot for him.”

There were nights - long, tormenting nights - where Yoongi watched the sun come up from his window with all the conflict that had kept him awake since the moon was up still there. Nights where he questioned himself, but came to no answer, none that were good enough. Questions like whose side he was really on, what he was doing all this for, and the guilt of it all, of course.

There were nights where Yoongi forced himself to pick a side, but also nights where he wondered if he had to; both of which he never found the answer to. He’d just sit there, looking at the sunrise with his pounding headache.

There was also the night before; Yoongi already noticed then that things were off. He shouldn't have risked it.

He should've taken Hoseok not replying to his texts or his calls as a sign, but he was so determinant. Fuck, he was so confident that nothing was wrong. He strutted into the precinct, the enemy's land, like he had every business to be there. He usually never paid the inhabitants there any attention since Hoseok was always his only reason behind being there, but with the sudden void of his presence, he felt all the eyes on him, almost predatory.

However, Yoongi himself was a predator, and he returned every single glare with his own, deadlier one. It had always been his technique to ignore any possibly creeping feeling of panic that may come his way; it helped to suppress it, the confusion of Hoseok's absence that was edging suspiciously onto that unusual panic. If he could handle the judgemental stares of people in the café as he requested his drink (Hoseok's) extra sweet and extra cream, he sure as hell could handle the stares of a few cops. A fleeting thought came then; perhaps he shouldn't have come alone
today.

Hands gripping tight on Hoseok's coffee, he headed towards the direction of Hoseok's desk before he got tackled down from his side. It was too sudden for him to duck, the coffee spilling across the laminated floor.

Things moved at an impossibly fast pace, with murmurings he can’t quite make sense of. He eventually caught up, somehow managing to wedge himself up from the ground and elbowing the bastard that tackled him until he replaced Yoongi’s place on the floor. He held him down until a few officers, a crowd, form around him and pulled him back, and it eventually got all too exhausting to resist.

It was downright humiliating to listen to a cop, to have them shout at him like he broke into the building with open fires when all he had in hand then was a cup of coffee for Hoseok. He even left his gun in his car as to not cause a ruckus, but all that care went to waste when one was being held against him. It was embarrassing to hold his hands up in the air like he just got caught killing someone. Yoongi scowled at one of the officers who tried to put handcuffs on him and he backed off, but he still felt so... unusually helpless.

Yoongi went into the interrogation room with a mixture of anger, humiliation, and confusion trailing behind him, along with the distant speculation of where Hoseok could be.

The memory leaves a bitter taste on Yoongi’s tongue, his scowl from then resurfacing but quickly shifting into this sad little pout, “I went through a lot of shit because of him too.”

“I’m sure you both went through equally as much shit.” Seokjin says, “There has to be a reason why he thinks that you haven’t done anything, though. Rewind a little.”

Yoongi hums for a while before he recalls, “There’s something he’s been upset about for quite a while I think, like he’s mentioned it before.” Seokjin urges him to continue, “Something about me manipulating him into agreeing to this… arrangement.”

“Did you try to guilt trip him or something?” Seokjin asks, confused.

Yoongi shrugs “I just said that my father’s dying. Which is true, and it’s the only reason I was asking him in the first place.”

“Well, his record did say that he doesn’t have any family. Not nearby, at least.” Seokjin says, “Do you know anything else about his past?”

“He seems to have this thing about… reckless driving?” Yoongi recalls, “and…” he isn’t sure if he should mention this, but oh well, “his little sister, or something.”

Seokjin is hesitant when he says, “This is just me putting two and two together, but do you think he… lost them in a car accident?”

“I mean probably,” Yoongi shrugs.

“Do you think it’s…” Seokjin bites his lips, “the dates might correlate with… you know.”

Yoongi lifts his head to look at Seokjin, who now looks kind of uneasy, hesitant on whether he has stepped too far. “Are you saying he-” He sputters, “no way. Nah, that’s too crazy to assume.”

“You're right,” Seokjin clears his throat, “silly me.” He changes the subject, “Sungmin and the others are looking into the apartment incident. That really caught us off-guard.”
“Yeah,” Yoongi sits back in his seat, “I went to check it first thing in the morning yesterday and it was fine, almost done actually.” He grumbles, “The bastard who broke in probably waited for the opportunity. If Sungmin’s on the case then everything should be taken care of by next week.”

“You make me drive you to that damn apartment every morning, and just as soon as it’s almost done, they have to fix everything up again!” Seokjin complains as he pulls out to the road, “it’s… quite a lot of effort for a relationship that’s just made for show, don’t you think?”

Yoongi snaps his head at him, “What are you implying?”

“I’m saying,” Seokjin says, eyes on the road, “that you’re doing a lot for simply trying to convince the head chief. He still won’t suspect a thing even if you didn’t do all this.”

Seokjin never really prodded ever since he found out about Hoseok and Yoongi’s arrangement. Other than a short “be careful” one time, it was like he’s just as oblivious to it as anyone else. It took Yoongi by surprise for him to suddenly bring it up.

Yoongi shrugs, “I don’t see the harm in being detailed.”

“Is your relationship still fake?” Seokjin asks.

“Yes.” Yoongi answers.

“Are you two completely detached outside of this?”

“Yes.” Yoongi answers again. Lying is easy.

“Then why are you so upset over him?”

Yoongi freezes. “I’m not.”

“Did you talk to the chieftess about him?” Seokjin asks still.

Yoongi frowns, “That’s none of your business.”

“So you talked to your mother about the guy you definitely don’t have feelings for?”

“Either we talk about something else or you shut up.” Yoongi snaps at him.

Anyone else would’ve gone quiet, but Seokjin is not anyone, “Even better, either we talk about this or I tell you a joke. What did Cinderella say when she got to the ball?”

Yoongi doesn’t say anything, and Seokjin starts making choking noises, eyes still on the road in front of him.

“Oh for fuck’s sake,” Yoongi curses, scowling at the sight of Seokjin trying to muffle his own laugh as he grips the steering wheel. “So what if I talked to my mother about my soulmate? I talk to her about everyone. You and Namjoon included.”

“Me and Namjoon are different. You’ve known me for like what? Eight years? Namjoon for even longer.” Seokjin’s right, “I bet you don’t talk to her about our fights.”

“I’m gonna make Jaeun drive me next time.” Yoongi murmurs.

“Do you know why you have to knock on the fridge door before opening it?” Seokjin starts as he makes a turn, a smile creeping at the corner of his mouth before he even delivers the punchline,
“There might be a salad dressing-”

“The fuck do you want me to say?” Yoongi hisses.

“I want you to sort your shit out before you dig yourself a hole you’ll never get out off.” Seokjin says simply. “If you’re gonna avoid this, just know I have a hundred more jokes in my head, and one of them is about vegans.”

Yoongi sighs, “The problem is that I don’t even know where to start.”

“So I ran into this vegan girl who said she knew me, but I’ve never met herbivore.”

“What the fuck,” Yoongi half shouts, “I’m not avoiding it!”

“Yeah but as soon as I mentioned the vegan joke, I can’t help not telling it.” Seokjin manages between his squeaky laugh. “Retrace your steps then, from the very start.”

“The very start of what?”

“When you first met Hoseok.” They run into traffic, and Seokjin sighs as he impatiently taps on the wheel, eyes colored slightly red by the traffic lights.

Yoongi looks out the window, but doesn’t focus on anything. “Well, when we first raided his house-”

“That doesn’t count,” Seokjin cuts him off, “go to the part where you actually met him.”

Sighing, Yoongi starts,

He remembers he was kind of pissed at his father for making such a big deal out of the whole Yoongi-shot-a-cop shenanigan, so he wanted to go so ridiculously far just to spite him. A proposal speech sounded like a killer, so he wrote one putting half a mind into it.

Jung Hoseok was different from what he thought. He seemed much more courageous, and everything the usual cop was when he saw him that fateful night. Now though, among the lot of his wide-eyed friends, his blush spread to his ears and neck, and he couldn’t say a word without stuttering. Maybe the marriage proposal was a tad bit too far.

Jung Hoseok was a lot more different than he thought, when he agreed, came straight to his door in his blue uniform and agreed, signing a contract that will do nothing but mess up his life.

Jung Hoseok’s level of kindness was even beyond his mother. Perhaps it was because of his sense of justice too; he’s a cop.

There are lots of unexpected things that Hoseok bears, like his fear of lying, and his past friendship with Namjoon that Yoongi never seem to have known about before.

Hoseok broke down when he had to lie, but wasn’t afraid to have a gun held at his head. Hoseok would do what Yoongi tells him to do, but didn’t hesitate to stand his ground, to call Yoongi out on his bullshit, wasn’t afraid to tell Yoongi what to do.

Hoseok is… interesting.

“That kid, he’s too nice for his own good.” Seokjin says. The traffic doesn’t look like it’s going to get any better soon, and Yoongi can sense that Seokjin is growing more impatient by the minute, blinking and tapping the steering wheel.
“That’s true,” Yoongi says, “he’s gonna wind up dead with that kind of kindness.”

“He almost did, didn’t he?”

Yoongi expected Hoseok to snitch, it was too good of an opportunity not to. It was a meeting with another clan about drug trafficking, and considering how righteous Hoseok was, he wouldn’t miss the chance to benefit from that.

Perhaps that was why he wasn’t surprised when he felt a bump on Hoseok’s chest when he ran a hand down his chest through his black mafia attire. There was something glued to the middle of the boy’s chest, Yoongi had seen them before; police wires.

He wanted to call out Hoseok for being a mole for his rat hole as expected, that he completely tarnished any chance of Yoongi developing any kind of trust or faith in him. There wasn’t a good time to do it though, what with Hoseok breaking down and breathing so harshly just from the prospect of lying, and them being called to the car afterward. A car ride with Seokjin would help him calm down, he thought, and then he can snap at him later.

Throughout the ride to the meeting place, Yoongi looked out for any police vans that may be there for Hoseok, but all the streets they’ve passed were empty. A past, something not so good, hinted at the back of his mind, but that sounded all too trivial to be true, so he ignored it.

“There was a police van a few blocks away from the building, none of you cops are slick.” He said to Hoseok anyway, just so he could see the worry ease out of the boy’s face. It was a white enough lie, he thought.

“I gave Hoseok my trust,” His father said, ignoring a very confused Yoongi on the chair opposite to him.

“On what basis?” Yoongi asked him, lifting an eyebrow.

“He was ready to die for your sake, Yoongi.” His father told him like it was the most obvious thing. “Some of our men don’t even have that kind of loyalty.”

His father was so gullible for a mafia boss it hurt to see. Yoongi should just tell him about the police wire, what Hoseok was set up to do, why he should be the last person the mafia could trust. But,

“If you say so.” Was all he said. He didn’t know why he said that, why he didn’t protest. It was like something compelled him to take Hoseok’s side, some otherworldly force that wanted Hoseok safe, that made him risk the future of the clan on this one police officer who got tied up with him in some crazy twist of fate. In another life, Yoongi may have suspect that it had something to do with soulmates, if it weren’t for his parents who wouldn’t sacrifice anything for each other. The only

[18:35:43] Jung: hyung
[18:35:45] Jung: [1 image attachment]
[18:35:48] Jung: ur dad left me this huge bouquet at jimin’s place ???
[18:35:54] Jung: how am i supposed to keep it T-T it’s too big…
plausible reason would be that Yoongi took Hoseok’s side, which sounded bizarre.

Perhaps, what was even more bizarre was that the thought solidified in his head, yet he did not find it repulsing.

The things Yoongi risked for Hoseok weren’t small, weren’t insignificant. Not at all.

He won’t tell Seokjin any of this, of course. It’d be better for him to not know that Hoseok had any malicious intent. So, did Hoseok almost die because he’s too nice?

“Yeah,” Yoongi answers instead, more breath that words, “he did.”

“That’s quite drastic for something fake,” Seokjin comments, “I think he likes you. Love, even.”

Yoongi chokes on his spit at that, “Don’t be fucking ridiculous.”

“I’m not,” Seokjin shrugs, “Hoseok looks at you the way the sea looks at the moon.”

The remark makes Yoongi silent for a moment before he straightens up “You’ve been hanging out with Namjoon too much,” he deadpans, “What does that suppose to mean?”

“There’s a pull from you that he follows,” Seokjin says, “like how the phases of the moon cause the ripple in the sea.” He turns to Yoongi after staring hopelessly at the blinking red traffic lights, “Don’t tell me you’re completely oblivious to that.”

Yoongi would be lying if he says he is.

He can simply ask, and Hoseok would follow. That’s just the kind of person he is. But it’s not that simple.

“He’s- I’m not,” Yoongi tries to find his words, “I’m not the only one who has an effect on him.”

“You’re saying it’s the other way around too?” Seokjin asks, though he’s looking at the road ahead of them again.

Yoongi doesn’t know if he’s ready to admit it. “Maybe,” he mumbles.

Hoseok is a lot of things that Yoongi didn’t have in his life prior to this. He’s loud, but collected when he needs to be; cheerful, but makes it known most of the time if things upset him.

Hoseok is… very casual. Especially when he texts. It made Yoongi feel oddly casual too.

[12:43:22] Seok: where was that bibimbap place u took us again??
[12:43:24] Seok: i want to go again :( its good
[12:44:03] yoongi hyung: i can take you again if you want
[12:44:08] Seok: really !!!!!???
[12:44:12] Seok:(☆▽☆)
[12:44:13] Seok: ☆*:..·o(≥\(\leq\))o..*:☆
[12:44:15] Seok: THANK UUUUU
[12:44:17] Seok: (kook said he loves u!!)

Hoseok is...different.
The first time Yoongi did something without really thinking about it was when Hoseok walked in on him changing.

Yoongi doesn’t think he’s too shabby in the looks department, but his body was different. He’s heard it all, high school was a thing; short, scrawny, an occasional belly when he eats too much. He doesn’t consider it a weakness, per se, but it’s best that no one knows anything about making him feel vulnerable.

Perhaps that was how he got so good at lying, at putting up a front. Hoseok looked flustered standing there, and he used it in his favor. He just had to do something he’d never expect himself to do.

He stepped closer to Hoseok, holding off on pulling Taehyung’s shirt on just to look at the boy. He could see that Hoseok’s eyes were drifting somewhere around his chest, and with a deep breath, Yoongi manages out the slickest “curious, are we?” before showing him the whole piece on his back. Vulnerable, slightly, but what mattered was that Hoseok didn’t know that.

People don’t fear flowers, though a lot of them fear the mafia. Yoongi had yet to have a lot of good experiences with those who witness the ink on his back. It felt like an embarrassing scar at one point when he first got it when he turned eighteen and his classmates saw it when he was changing. It came to the point that Yoongi tried to hide it, not out of shame, but to avoid any potential conflicts. He wore black undershirts under his white uniform in the summer to ensure that the tattoo wasn’t visible, even if it may have been so hot he was convinced he was going to get a stroke. With such negative stigma towards his branch of ancestry, he didn’t expect any appreciative comments from Hoseok who was technically his enemy, if he’d say anything at all.

But, “It’s beautiful.” He said.

Out of all the things Hoseok could have said, he said that.

Hoseok saw the branch of flowers that symbolize a history of crime and people that he should be against, and managed to find the beauty beneath it that Yoongi had long forgotten, and felt compelled enough to say it, that it was beautiful. The word had never been used towards Yoongi before.

Perhaps that was what compelled Yoongi to kiss Hoseok anywhere he could. It felt nice, too, to just drift randomly up his neck and across his cheek. It felt nice to hold him close. Hoseok was warm, always. It felt even nicer to hear him gasping, to see him blushing so damn much. Thank god he came up with some bullshit excuse on the spot, though.

Things got interesting then, when Hoseok snapped at him. Yoongi didn’t expect that after seeing how Hoseok was, soft and gullible. It took him by surprise when Hoseok just stood there and call him out on all his bullshit, brows furrowed and eyes wide. Yoongi couldn’t help but smile at the sight, at the discovery that Jung Hoseok has such colorful diversity within himself, and there’s probably more to him that Yoongi had yet to discover. How interesting. How cute.

Cute.

Hoseok is… kind of cute when he smiles or laughs. It was something that clouded Yoongi’s mind for longer than he’d like to admit. That doesn’t mean anything weird, though; he finds a lot of people cute. Hoseok’s friends, for example, are all very endearing. Hoseok laughs at everything, be it Taehyung doing something stupid, or Jungkook being himself. He laughs especially, at the
terrible fucking jokes Yoongi steals from Seokjin, but this information is classified for him and you only.

There’s something about Hoseok’s laugh that reminds Yoongi of something, but he wasn’t sure at first.

This isn’t an excuse, though it may sound like one, but Yoongi usually doesn’t set his contact names to the actual individual’s names as to avoid any leakage of information. Instead, he sets them to symbols he can understand and associate said individuals with. Namjoon, for example, is simply ∞.

Hoseok isn’t any different.

He’s not.

[14:12:32] ♡: tae took a pic of us when we were sleeping last night,,,
[14:12:40] ♡: jungkook and jimin were fighting each other trying to look at it njdshg
[14:12:45] ♡: [1 image attachment]

Hearts aren’t necessarily romantic, it’s simply just a symmetrical shape that is involved in the concept of “life imitates art” with Hoseok’s lips being the main subject. His smile just looks like a heart. That’s all there is to it.

It’s definitely not the way Hoseok’s heart would pick up its pace every time Yoongi puts his hand on his chest. It’s not.

It is.

Yoongi didn’t have any suspicions at first; he just assumed that it was the pain that made his pulse rate rise, which should be true to an extent, but Hoseok’s heart would be beating so persistently even after he’d claim that the pain had gone away. He’d still be blushing, too.

It made Yoongi kind of excited, the whole idea of feelings and crushes, all the things he never really experienced before. The way Hoseok reacts to him made him almost… hopeful in a way.

He hadn’t come to a conclusion to what he was yet since there was no one he could ask. He was supposed to be certain about it since that’s the act that they’ve both been putting up. He was just excited, a bit giddy.

It fizzled slightly though as time went by and the next time his hand rested on Hoseok’s chest, it was calm. Hoseok wasn’t excited or flustered anymore, and it struck Yoongi that he may be too late, that maybe Hoseok’s stupid heart would still be beating fast if he had made his mind up sooner.

He tried though, tried to be bolder, to do anything that might get Hoseok red and feel that constant pulse under his palm again. Nothing. It was like his pull was no longer there, and Hoseok had started a ripple of his own - the phases of the moon seem to be following the high and low tides of the sea now, against all scientific laws of the earth.

Hoseok is pulling him, somehow, into his world. This world of office desks and late nights and
brothers. His brothers, all three of them, that only pull Yoongi in further until it feels too difficult to escape.

“So you two are definitely fake, but you think he has a crush on you?” Seokjin asks.

“Had.” Yoongi corrects him.

“Right,” Seokjin says, “you totally don’t have any feelings for him, you just panic because you think he doesn’t like you anymore.”

Ducking his head, Yoongi murmurs, “Shut up, it sounds bad if you say it like that.”

“Just say it and get it out there, Yoongi.” The elder nags him, humming happily when the traffic clears. “You’ve laid out the facts. You got excited at the thought of him liking you, and you got worried at the thought of him *not* liking you. You think he’s different, and you find excuses to kiss him.”

“Oh my god, shut up.” Yoongi buries his face into his hands with a groan.

“I’ll say it for you then, you like him.”

Yoongi sighs, staring into the darkness of his enclosed hands before he rubs his temple and breathes. “Yeah, that. Whatever.”

Seokjin pats his shoulder, “I’ll take it.” The car enters a dark tunnel before coming to a stop. “We’re back.”

After Yoongi settles into his chair in his office, his words from earlier resurface, the reality of it all hits him.

There are feelings involved now. That’s not good.

Scanning around the room, he tries to distract himself, “Namjoon,” he finds his target, “what are you watching?”

His assistant jolts in his seat and straightens up, looking away from his phone. “...Fish videos?” He says it like it’s a question.

Yoongi cocks his head, “Fish? You got over your baby chicks phase already?”

Namjoon’s cheeks redden and he rubs the back of his neck sheepishly, “I mean, they’re still cute, but they remind me of... something and every time I watch one it makes me feel guilty so I just... stopped.”

It seems that Yoongi had picked the best target to distract himself. It’s all too amusing to see a man so huge squirming around about his obsession with baby chick videos. Yoongi had known Namjoon for long enough that he can just push all his buttons.

“Who does it remind you off?” Yoongi tries, grinning.

Namjoon frowns, “I’m not gonna tell you that.”

Yoongi snickers, “So it *is* a person.”

Yoongi puts his hands up in defeat, “Fine, I’ll stop reading into your little crush on Jimin.”

For a while then, Namjoon just gapes. He eventually catches himself, “It’s not a crush. All three of them are cute.” He continues after Yoongi’s nod of agreement, “They all have this personality that makes you feel challenged, or something, but that’s what makes them so endearing.”

“Yeah,” Yoongi hums, “they do.” Jungkook, Jimin, and Taehyung are an interesting bunch, one that he has never seen before. The chaos that they bring makes him feel defeated sometimes, which is rare for someone like Yoongi, who knows all the ways to intimidate someone with his words alone. Despite it all, though, despite having an enemy sitting in front of them, they managed to fluster him to the point that he accidentally made some insensitive joke about shooting Hoseok in order to retaliate. That was a low blow even for him, especially considering how the event traumatized Hoseok to the point that he developed that recurring chest pain from it. He almost apologized.

And there’s the other problem.

Yoongi had often found himself almost apologizing to Hoseok for even the smallest thing, which goes against the belief he was raised with. Hell, his father laughed when Hoseok asked for an apology for raiding his apartment.

That was new, but it’s not the good kind of new Yoongi’s used to.

No, he’s in his head again.

“About the two proposals I made,” Yoongi resorts to business talk, “has hyung chimed in his opinion yet?”

Namjoon fixes his glasses, “For the loans in that new street and the unit against Japanese and Chinese infiltration?’

“Those, and the fake paintings branch. I forgot that, three.” Yoongi corrects himself, “I want to get those over with so I can just submit it to my dad for the approval, then we can get moving.”

“Well, I’m pretty sure he said he liked the fake paintings one, but I have to look for a few artists that we can work with to make it happen. I’ll have to compile a list of names before presenting it to the head chief.” Namjoon tucks his phone away and starts making notes on his work tablet. “I think he’s still a bit wary about the unit. It’s a pretty big thing.”

Namjoon is right. An organized unit specially for keeping the town - possibly the country’s crime scene from being infiltrated by the Japanese and the Chinese will garner a lot of requests for alliances as well as warding off any competition from other countries that may match up to the Min clan. It’s ambitious, certainly.

“Big steps for big changes,” Yoongi says, “can you go check with him again? If he’s still hesitant, then I’ll make him certain myself.”

“Sure, I’ll do that now,” Namjoon pushes up from his seat, startling a little when his phone buzzes in his pocket. He quickly fishes it out to check, but squints at the unknown set of numbers on his flashing screen. “…after I take this suspicious phone call. Excuse me.”

Yoongi slouches back in his seat when the door closes, there goes his distraction. Now he’s left alone with his annoying fucking thoughts.
He’ll have to do something if he wants to straighten things out again with Hoseok. An apology would be nice if he were anything but a mafioso. Twirling around in his seat, he starts to ponder when Namjoon is going to come back.

What if he just imagines that Namjoon’s here? Would that help?

Yoongi sits up. If he were to complain to Namjoon about his fight with Hoseok, and this conflict that the mafia and the police have, the guy would probably go on this passionate streak about some psychology stuff...what was it called? Extended contact hypothesis, he snaps his fingers.

_It says that the best way to break down the conflict between two rival groups is for some of us to form friendships with the others in that group, hyung._ He can practically hear Namjoon say it.

He’s formed his friendships with the police, some of them, specifically three, for sure. That wouldn’t lead to some sudden peace treaty between the two sides though. The best way would probably be to work together on something, something big and perhaps devastating that would require the task force of both the mafia and the police. Pondering on that, nothing seems to come to mind.

Does he actually want peace between the two of them, though? Is that the best way to go about things? What would his father say?

Yoongi’s back in his endless wandering thoughts again.

Fuck it, he’ll just work or something. He turns back to his computer, slapping his mouse a few times until the screen lights up in… red.

Yoongi recognizes the symbol on his screen, and the level of emergency it implies. He stands up from his chair just as Seokjin opens the door to his office.

“Someone broke into the headquarters.” He says.

“I thought we had an emergency unit for that,” Yoongi recalls, “have they disappeared or something?”

“Oh no, they came right on time,” Seokjin shakes his head, “apparently, the intruder fought through all of them.”

“There are twenty men in that unit,” Yoongi argues, “Donghyuk hyung handpicked then from the military.”

“Which is why I’m here to evacuate you to the panic room.”

“They took down twenty men!?” Yoongi sputters, “What, are we dealing with some kind of monster?”

“I don’t know what they are, but it doesn’t sound safe—”

There’s a loud shout, noticeably one of the clan members’, down the hallway. Something garbled that sounds eerily similar to ‘Backup! He’s heading to Yoongi’s office!’

Before Yoongi could even start to panic, another shout sounds, but this one is much more desperate and all too familiar,

“Yoongi hyung!”
this took me a while to write hhh there were a lot of things i wanted to address in yoongi's pov (i probably forgot some jghdsj sorry) anyways next chapter !! the kidnapping !! dramatic music !!!

my twitter,
my curiouscat
countdown to sunset (calm down)

Chapter Summary

"He's not coming."

Chapter Notes

ok first of all ! fan art !!!! YOONSEOKIES made an awesome edit, mini_moani made this adorable drawing AND hopamine_ also made this amazing drawing AAAAAAAAAAAAAA i'm so overwhemled they made me so happy thank you so much !!

warnings for Violence (hello mature rating), more allusions to a traumatic past, and ptsd :( sorry hoseok

See the end of the chapter for more notes

At the prisoner visitation, the world beyond that glass border is grey and mono-toned. Hoseok shifts around in his chair, his warped hands tapping the cold steel counter, reflecting bright white lights from the ceiling above, all wobbly and blurred just like everything else here. His fingers come up to reach the border sometimes, maybe even sink through it a little, but he doesn’t go through it, doesn’t want to. On the other side, the chair is still empty, the telephones still hung up in their respective places. Hoseok glances at the black borders at his sides that separate him from the other visitors, and beyond it to see warped, faceless people, murmuring in languages he doesn’t recognize.

Footsteps sound then, crisp yet vague, until a dark blue, washed out jumpsuit appears in front of him.

Yoongi sits down on the chair robotically and reaches for the telephone from his side, a cue for Hoseok to reach for the identical one hung near him, the metal wire hitting the steel counter with a loud clunk.

His whole entire peripheral vision is suddenly filled with Yoongi’s lips, the small, pink-tinted, doll-like pout that stands out from his pale skin. It’s moving, wobbling and bending into words, though Hoseok can’t hear any of it.

There’s a sensation in his ears, not sound, but some kind of tension, a pressure that pushes in. A high frequency buzzes in his mind, Yoongi’s mouth still teetering and jiggling in his eyes.

Something pops then, suddenly, and everything goes quiet.

“Od yojd ejsy upi esmyrf?” Yoongi’s mouth garbles.

What?
“Is this what you wanted?” His voice rushes into Hoseok’s ears, so fast and sudden that it feels like bullets through his head.

Hoseok shakes awake suddenly, his limbs spasming from the panic, hard enough that he can feel his wrists pulled by cold steel and his feet kicking up.

“Hey, hey!” A deep voice sounds from beside him, “Pull that shit again and I’ll tie your fucking legs, cop.”

_Calm down, Hoseok whispers to himself, calm the fuck down._

He got forced into a van last night, driven through the dark with a bag over his head, and moved into a room where they sat him on an antique looking chair, and cuffed his hands to each of its arms with the two handcuffs he carry around. His legs are unrestrained; for now at least. He got tired and went to sleep like that so he wouldn’t feel exhausted, as difficult as it was to sleep like that. And the dream was definitely terrible. Not the usual traumatic one, but still terrible.

And now — now he’s awake.

Despite still being half awake and slightly dizzy, he breathes and clears his throat, “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to.” He keeps his ankle in front of each leg of the chair he’s sitting on to prove his point.

He can hear man scoff, but doesn’t say anything.

Taking another deep inhale to keep his fight or flight instinct at a low, he looks down at where his hands are strained on the arm of the wooden antique chair. He can feel cold metal just under his forearm, and lifts it slightly to find that the fabric padding on the arm is fastened on with nails, a bunch of them all around the cushion, on both arms of the chair. Noted.

There’s a light source from somewhere, and Hoseok looks up to find that there is sunlight, presumably, pouring from the small windows, high up near the ceiling. It’s morning, almost noon, perhaps?

There’s only one guy sitting in the room with him, a few feet away. Maybe he’s in a storage room of some sort, judging from the space.

The man is quite large, overall, sitting in a chair similar to the one Hoseok’s sitting on, except he’s unrestrained, legs crossed as he scrolls through his phone. He doesn’t look like the type anyone would want to piss off. Compliance is key.

So Hoseok keeps quiet for a while as he tries to discreetly scan around the room. The door is to his right, the guy is to his left, he’s facing a shelf of cardboxes that are slightly worn out, sitting just under the one window, positioned too high up for him to see nothing but the sky, so he can’t work out his location. He can’t see what’s inside the boxes either.

He counts to himself just to keep track of time, and how much of it has passed. After approximately five minutes of silence, he tries again.

“I’ll gladly shut up if you wish.” He starts, trying to sound as polite as possible, as if he’s not being held captive, “but would you be kind enough to tell me what all this is for?”

The man looks up from his phone with a smirk, “You’ll find out soon.”
Calm down, Hoseok chants it like a mantra inside his head, **calm down.**

✿

“I’m not mad that you’ve injured all my men,” Yoongi says sternly, “I’m just curious how you found out where our headquarter is, and why you need to see me so desperately that you knocked at least ten men unconscious, triggering a lockdown.”

Silence.

“Answer him, you brat.” Seokjin threatens, though there’s no real aggression behind his words. It’s basically impossible.

Silence.

Yoongi sighs, “I swear I’m not mad, Jungkook,” he softens his tone, “but I need you to talk. That’s what you came here for, right?”

Jungkook finally looks up to meet his eyes, “I uh- I saw Namjoon hyung and Hoseok hyung around the area this one time when I was out on a case, so I made a guess.”

“And you were right,” Yoongi nods, “What’s all this for then?”

“It’s Hoseok hyung,” Jungkook says shakily, “I think he’s in danger.”

Silence.

Yoongi collects himself before he asks, “And what makes you think so?”

“He didn’t come back to Jimin hyung’s place last night even though he said he was going to, and his phone is dead or something. No one can contact him.” The boy answers, “He’s never done this before.”

The chair lets out a squeak as Yoongi drops himself down, teeth unconsciously closing on his nails before he scrubs his hand across his face.

“Taehyung hyung said he went to your place last night,” Jungkook says after the silence.

“Yeah, he did.” Yoongi murmurs. “He didn’t stay though.”

“I really don’t know what to do,” Jungkook’s voice breaks and the rest of his sentence comes out shakily, “The captain went somewhere for a case so he can’t help us, Taehyung hyung and Jimin hyung hasn’t slept all night trying to find him, but it’s no use.” He sobs, “I don’t know who else to go to but you.”

It’s the first time Yoongi has seen Jungkook cry like this, folding onto his desk and sobbing into his arms. Seokjin curls a hand around the boy’s shoulder before Jungkook gives in and clings to him, clutching onto his black suit. With him like this, no one would’ve even imagine how he managed to break through the tight-knit security of the mafia’s headquarters.

A small ache builds up at the back of Yoongi’s head, and he rubs his jaw as he tries to breathe, each exhale getting shakier.
Calm down, he whispers to himself, calm down.

Namjoon isn’t sure how the head chief is going to feel about this, but he’ll suffer the consequences later. The desperation in Jungkook’s eyes were apparent, clutching onto his shirt and begging to talk to Yoongi. Take the stairs so they can’t find you. He said. Go straight to the dead end and slide the wall to the right.

He clicks through a few files in the main computer. They tracked Hoseok’s phone long ago to know his whereabouts in preparation for the apartment raid months ago, it should still be here somewhere. Nope, it’s gone. Shit, did his phone break or something?

Sweaty fingers desperately dig through a drawer of files before giving up and pulling out the lot of them to settle on his desk, he pulls out the few with the red labels and pushes all the other ones off onto the floor to deal with later. He’s being ridiculous, he thinks, his body is practically moving on its own at this point, fueled by the sob in Jimin’s voice in that sudden phone call.

“N-Namjoon hyung? It’s Jimin.” The voice rings in his head, “I know this is really unexpected and sudden, but please help me. I don’t know what else to do. Please.”

“Focus, Namjoon.” Namjoon slaps himself lightly as he pulls up a map and scans through the routes with his fingers, marking a few areas in red. If Hoseok disappeared around ten hours ago and he was travelling around by foot, then he shouldn’t be far off a certain radius.

There are way too many possibilities though, there has to be a way to narrow them down. Is Hoseok’s disappearance his decision, or is there another party involved? Was it against his will or has he planned it? No, it can’t be the latter, he texted Jimin. If it’s a kidnapping situation, then they could’ve traveled by car, which just makes the possibility even wider. Shit.

Wait, no. What did they say about kidnapping situations at the academy? Come on. Namjoon smacks his head a few times before it comes back to him. Right, the victim is most likely to be taken to a secluded area. He can do this by process of elimination, just cancel out all the public places like the marketplace, busy streets, and-

The door slams open and Namjoon jolts.

“Felt like CSI trying to find you,” Seokjin says, “come to Yoongi’s office right now.”

“I’m busy,” Namjoon goes back to scribbling through the map.

“It’s about Hoseok,” Seokjin grabs his arm, “they sent Yoongi a video.”

Looking for something? 27 May 2019, 9:43 (3 mins ago)

Min Yoongi,
You still haven’t returned our shares after ‘cancelling’ the contract, so now we’re equal.

If you want to trade back, deliver the shares in cash to our last meeting point by sunset (18:00), or you know what happens.

Looking forward to seeing you soon,

Shin Doyoon

[video attachment]

*

So Hoseok is in a hostage situation. Cool. He suspected that it would involve Yoongi as soon as he heard the surname ‘Shin’.

“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.” They made him say to the camera.

Don’t panic.

Hostage situation means that he’ll get out of this somehow. He won’t die. Focus on that instead.

But… he will if Yoongi doesn’t come, right?

Don’t Panic.

Hoseok grips the chair arm he’s cuffed to. There’s a way out of this.

Jimin should be suspicious by now, maybe he and the others are doing something.

If no one actually comes for whatever reason, then that’s fine too. He can find a way out by himself.

The guy who was in the room with him switched shifts with someone else, and he caught a glimpse of what was beyond the door. There were a few silhouettes, which means there’s a window in the other room, maybe a glass wall? He isn’t sure. A few men came in to take a video and they made him recite their words, then he saw a little more behind the door. There was something dirt red, but far away. A car? Is there a street just outside of this place? The room is a bit brighter, so it’s probably noon or past that. He still has a long while before it gets dark.

The new guy is thinner in comparison to the first one, but taller and quite limber from the way he walks. Hoseok can risk it, but should he?

No, don’t do that. There might be more people outside of this room and he’s gonna end up either back in here or dead. Let’s put that away until last minute.

Breathe.

Hoseok breathes. He can’t fumble too much or they’ll tie up his legs. Calm.

Should he rely on himself or Yoongi? Or Jimin and the others?
Maybe Jimin, Jungkook, and Taehyung are looking for him. But what if they’re not? What if they think he needs some time alone and decided to go MIA for a while?

Maybe Yoongi is going to leave him to die, move that video file to his spam folder and go “to hell with Jung Hoseok.” and that’s it. That’s the end. This is how he goes.

Shut the fuck up, he curses at himself, digging his nails into the cushion. One of the nails in the cushion comes loose, and an idea sparks in Hoseok’s mind.

* *

[10:32] **448 MINUTES TO SUNSET**

Taehyung scrubs a finger against his eye. He split up with Jimin about half an hour ago after Namjoon called to give them a list of possible places Hoseok may be.

They spent quite a while trying to calm down, though. It took Jimin longer to get up and continue the search, but it’s really not his fault if it takes him a while to process this. They’ve been up since four in the morning, just the two of them wandering through the streets, hands finding each other whenever they feel hopeless, and letting go to keep moving. He gave Namjoon a list of places they’ve checked to narrow down the list of possibilities, so that should help. They’ll find Hoseok.

They will find Hoseok. Taehyung is confident of that. He’s going to break into some huge warehouse, fight all the bastards in there, set Hoseok free of his restraints, and carry him into the sunset.

He’s checked all the streets near the Mins’ mansion and there wasn’t any trace of Hoseok there, so he’s now onto the narrower ones that he’s visited a few times while Jimin goes to another place Namjoon suspected.

All the shops here have huge glass walls to display their goods, and after a quick scan, there doesn’t seem to be anything remotely suspicious. This area is poorer than most, with a few makeshift homes scattered around. There's probably a 'house' in every possible space.

A few people came up to Taehyung asking for directions, probably thinking he’s a patrol officer. Someone even reported that their car has been trashed, that they’re going to press charges because they got it recolored to this blindingly bright red shade just a few days ago and now it’s dirtied with spray. Taehyung reported it to his workplace, but explained that this area isn’t for parking, and that he would’ve gotten his wheel cramped and fined for it. What kind of person parks across from a bridge anyway?

The neighbourhood isn’t a very friendly one, and that’s coming from Taehyung who’s exceptional at getting along with everyone. A large truck drove past him and one point and he almost cursed. It created this huge shadow that loomed across the street for the few seconds that it passed.

* *
The room suddenly goes dark for a few seconds, and Hoseok looks up the see the windows completely dark. Even the thin guy seems to notice, but goes back to his business after the light passes back in.

A lot of things happened in that few seconds. For one, there was a sound, low and intense like a motor. A truck? It was too fast for Hoseok to make sure.

At least he knows now that there’s a road beyond this wall.

* *

“Where are you right now?” Jimin’s voice rings in Taehyung’s ears.

“I’m at the street next to the bridge,” Taehyung speaks into his phone, “it’s pretty crowded here.”

“The small road next to the bridge? I don’t think it’s an actual street,” Jimin says, “I’m near Kim Yoonah’s school for the blind a few streets away. Nothing so far though.”

“Same here,” Taehyung leans against the window of an old antique shop, “I guess we have to keep going.”

The line is quiet for a while, “... do you think we’re gonna find him by today?”

“Of course we are,” Taehyung assures him, “if not today then tomorrow, or the day after that. But I’m not stopping until hyung is back.”

“Me too.”

“And you never know,” Taehyung pushes himself up from the window to make his way to the next street, “he might be just under our noses this whole time.”

* *

“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.”

Yoongi presses play.

“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.”

Yoongi presses play again.

“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.”
“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.”
“Drop the cash off at our last meeting place by sun down.”
“Drop the cash off at our last-”

“I don’t think he’s in a warehouse.” Seokjin murmurs.

“I’ll eliminate the factory areas then.” Namjoon reaches for his pen, “That narrows it down by a lot.”

Yoongi grabs his hand, “Don’t be hasty.” He warns, “We haven’t even checked that place yet.”

“Jungkook checked the closest warehouse and it’s empty.” Namjoon counters, but drops his pen anyway. “We’ve also sent a few people to check a few other factories and they’re either in use or empty.”

“Well what if he’s in one of the warehouses we haven’t checked? Then what? We’re gonna scurry around like headless chickens checking every single area again!” Yoongi’s tone comes out harsh, more emotional than he expects of himself. He lowers his voice, “What makes you think he’s not in a warehouse?”

Seokjin ignores the sudden outburst, which is for the best, really. “Well, if you look at the video you can see that his face is bright but his torso is dark. His shadow at the back is pretty clear too. The lights in warehouses don’t make that big of a contrast. My best guess is that he’s in a closet or a storage place, those small ones with the high little windows.”

“Right,” Yoongi whispers, “okay.”

“We can still check if you want,” Seokjin shrugs, “I’ll send Jaeun and the others over.”

“No, that’s-” Yoongi breathes, “let them check the more obvious places.” He lets go of Namjoon’s hand, doesn’t realize that he’s been holding it this whole time, “I trust you.”

Part of Namjoon’s hand was white before it turns into red splotches from how tight Yoongi gripped it, but his friend doesn’t say anything as he reaches for his dropped pen. “Taking out all the warehouses would leave us to thirteen possible areas. Oh wait, twelve.” He reaches over to cross out the street under the bridge. “Taehyung already checked this place and it’s a clear.”

★

“... May I know what time it is?” Hoseok asks, as politely as he possibly can.

“Three.” The man mutters. This is the fourth guy he’s seen so far since he woke up.

“Right. Thank you.” Hoseok murmurs as he picks on the loose nail on the cushion.

★
Taehyung reported a case of money laundering and two cases of racketeering from going through one street. There were a bunch of criminals, but Hoseok was nowhere to be found.

* 

They gave Hoseok water when he asked.

The sky is not as bright anymore, but he knows it’s not long until dark.

If he’s not released yet, then that means Yoongi has not delivered the cash.

_Calm down._

That doesn’t work anymore.

Maybe he is being left for dead after all.

The loose nail is almost completely out. It’s longer than he thought.

* 

Jungkook runs into Taehyung in one of the streets.

“It’s been like twelve hours since you started.” Jungkook says as they exit another shop after finding nothing. “Are you tired?”

“That doesn’t matter,” Taehyung murmurs, “are you?”

“You’re right, it doesn’t matter,” Jungkook says, “this is the last shop in this street.”

It looks like a second-hand store, although there’s no sign that indicates so. It’s the only conclusion they can make from the array of things on display, from mismatched shoes to movie posters to water bottles, and old jigsaw puzzles.

“Does anyone even buy this stuff?” Jungkook scrunches his nose.

Taehyung shrugs in response, pushing the door open and poking his head in. The shop is quite dark, but the most repulsing thing about it is the sickening stench that attacks their noses as soon as they enter.

The shelves are full of rundown objects, worn out printers and old computers that probably don’t work anymore. The space was quite small; too small for a hostage to be kept for a long time.
“The store’s closed.” A low, grumbly voice sounds from the back, “Come back next time.”

Taehyung and Jungkook leave the street slightly confused, but more disappointed that their brother has yet to be found.

The store is still on their minds even as they part ways to check other areas.

[16:47] 83 MINUTES TO SUNSET

The door opens as the guy Hoseok recognizes to be from a few hours before comes back in. “Just came back from the meeting place. He’s still not there.”

“Min Yoongi’s got terrible fucking punctuality huh.” The other guy who was already in the room groans. “He’s usually early when we trade off the goods,” he snickers, “I guess he’s taking his time since it’s not drugs.”

“He’s not coming.” Hoseok feels himself mutter.

Both their heads turn at that. “What did you say, cop?”

“Min Yoongi’s not coming.” Hoseok looks up at them.

“Don’t be fucking ridiculous,” one of them scoffs, “he’s probably gonna turn up at the last minute or something. No way he’s gonna just dip. We’ve got his most prized possession here.”

Hoseok feels himself laugh dryly, like the deprivation of everything has finally gotten to him. “Sounds like you have more faith in him than I do.” He shifts his palm to hide the protruding nail from view. He suddenly pushes it back in when one of the men walks toward him angrily.

He grabs Hoseok’s face roughly, thumbnail digging into the corner of Hoseok’s bottom lip and it stings slightly. “You’re getting a bit brave, aren’t you?”

“Hey, fuck off with that.” The other guy calls from where he’s standing, “chief said no marks. That’s part of the agreement.”

“Beat me up all you want,” Hoseok hisses, “you’ve chosen the wrong hostage from the start. He’s not coming.”

“You’re his soulmate.”

“And that means he’d pay to get me back?” Hoseok snickers, “I’m a cop. It’s laughable that you think he actually cares.” He looks the man in the eye, “He’s probably been waiting for the chance to get rid of me.”

“Jung Hoseok.” The door clicks open, and the hand clenching Hoseok’s face suddenly lets go.

Shin Doyoon shifts to his view and waves, “It’s been a while. Your commotion was getting pretty loud so I came in to check.”

Hoseok stays silent.
“Shame,” The man continues, “you were behaving so well today. Your little cop friend didn’t even notice you were here.”

“What?”

“He was wandering around outside a few hours ago.” He says. “Yoongi’s still quiet.”

Shin Doyoon leans against the shelf in front of Hoseok, but seems to decide otherwise from the way it wobbles. “Maybe he’s giving you another chance to die.”

Hoseok feels cold.

“I wouldn’t have a problem killing you at all,” he snickers, and Hoseok can see the barrel of his gun just behind his hip. “After all, it was you who fucked everything up for us and Yoongi.”

Gripping the arm of the chair to hold himself back, Hoseok is so fucking tempted. The guy is less than a feet away and his legs are free, he can just kick Shin Doyoon in the balls and lavish in his pain.

But he can’t, get a grip of yourself. There are three people here, he won’t make it out alive if he does something so stupid. So for now, he just glares.

“Oh, don’t look so mad,” Shin Doyoon snickers, “I’m just being considerate. You’re gonna be joining your parents at sundown.”

Hoseok tenses.

“And who was the other one? Sunhee?”

Sunny

“It was a pretty rainy day afterall.”

Rain

“The traffic was awful.”

Traffic

“Clear.”
“Oh,” The voice triggers something in his brain, “wait. Looks like there are a few left here.”

And with that, Hoseok is pushed back to the one moment that had affected him every single day that followed.

[16:50] **70 MINUTES TO SUNSET**

Jimin walks through the identical storage units, one after another, stopping to peek into any that seems to have some kind of movement. Most of his suspicions so far turned out to be the trick of the eye.

He has an aisle left to look through, and then it’s another clear if it’s nothing.

He can see the sky tinting slightly pink, signalling the nearing end of the day. How long has he even been awake for? He ate a little every now and then, so he’s fine, but now isn’t really a time to be thinking about himself.

He feels a crash behind Jimin, and he quickly whips his head back to look. There’s no one behind him, but he thinks he can guess where the sound comes from.

One of the storage units is slightly open, and Jimin immediately skitters off to the side to hide. There’s someone in there.

He slowly creeps up to the suspected storage unit, as quietly but also as quickly as he can. Adrenaline rushes through his body as his right hand hovers over his gun, the other reaching down to close his finger around bottom of the door, preparing to slide it up.

He’s got this.

One deep breath. He pulls the door up in one swift motion and pulls his gun out, aiming it in front of him.

A loud crash.

“Shit!” Jungkook curses, trying to push himself up from the pile of boxes he has fallen into.

“God fu- are you okay?” Jimin puts his gun away to help pull the younger boy up.

“My whole life flashed before my eyes. Wow.” Jungkook smooths out his shirt

“I could say the same thing.” Jimin runs a hand through his hair, “Sorry about that. Where else have you checked?”

“The old public bath place, a few parking lots, and like three hundred storage rooms.” Jungkook counts, holding up a finger for each place.

“There are fifty storage units here.” Jimin deadpans.
“Well it felt like three thousand,” Jungkook complains, stretching his arms above his head.

“This is the last aisle, so no luck here I guess.” Jimin sighs, “I’ll tell Namjoon hyung.”

“Jimin,” both of them startle from how quickly the mafioso picks up. “We’re on our way right now. You’re at the storage unit, right?”

“Wait, what?” Jimin manages, “hyung-”

“Be careful, go take cover somewhere before we get there. It’s too dangerous to go alo-”


The line goes quiet.

“Namjoon hyung?” Jimin hesitates.

“I don’t- I-” Namjoon's voice is shaky when it comes back on.

“What's wrong?” Jungkook asks, worry coating his tone.

They can hear Namjoon take a long deep breathe before his voice comes up again, low and dark,

“That’s the last area. We've checked all the possible areas.”

*  

[17:00] 60 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Sunhee

Rain

Traffic

CLEAR

“Oh wait. Looks like there are a few left here.”
Everything suddenly feels numb. Hoseok’s knuckles go white from the grip he has on the chair.

*Hold Sunhee*

*It’s raining*

*Traffic’s awful*

*CLEAR*

“Oh wait. Looks like there are a few left here.”

“Take care of it then.”

*

[17:10] 50 MINUTES TO SUNSET

“Check everywhere!” The head chief shouts from the top of his lungs among a scurry of men and women, “Today isn't going to end until Jung Hoseok is found!”

“Stop looking at the clock, Yoongi.”

Seokjin's eyes are glued to the laptop screen. The video of Hoseok playing for what feels like the thousandth time.

“What about the marketplace?” Namjoon speaks, the knot in his eyebrows prominent.

“The whole area is an open space, hyung!” Jimin's voice sounds from the speaker phone.

Everything goes mute for a second as Yoongi clutches his head, curling in on himself. The migraine this time round is the most painful wave that he's experienced so far.

*

[17:20] 40 MINUTES TO SUNSET
Can you hold Sunhee?

It’s raining hard today.

Right. The traffic’s awful.

[ C L E A R   T H E   S T R E E T S ]

“I think that’s all of them.”

“You sure?”

The room is empty, save for an unconscious police officer handcuffed to a chair.

It’s dark.

“Oh wait. Looks like there are a few left here.”

There needs to be a way out of this.

“Take care of it then.”

What’s the one thing that has always brought him back?

“Roger.”
[17:30] 30 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Taehyung sprints through the street he checked hours ago, desperately hoping that he was stupid enough to have overlooked something.

[17:40] 20 MINUTES TO SUNSET

The one thing that always brings Hoseok back.

“Hoseok, can you hold Sunhee?”

What was it?

It’s raining hard today. Accidents are bound to happen.

Oh.

Right. The traffic's-

“Jung Hoseok, my dear soulmate. Will you marry me?”

CLEAR THE-

“Here’s your stupid triangle. Don’t be mad.”

“I think that's all-
“Hyung. Call me hyung. I’m older than you.”

“Bastards. Plural. And yes, I did shoot you.”

“This is the family garden. It looks better in the morning.”

“Say bye to your boyfriend, Hoseok-ah.”

“Try kissing me on the cheek.”

“Go freak out in your own time!”

“This is how you react when I’m in your personal space. That’s a dead giveaway.”

“My father’s dying.”

The water’s surface is a few feet away.

“Does Min Holly miss daddy~”

“Maybe faith wants me to grope you.”

“Feel better? Need me to kiss you or something?”

Hoseok can see his hand reaching for the surface; the sky above him is dark, but there's light from the moon, blurry but there, pulling him towards it like he’s the waves that follow.

“Oh, the things I would have risked for you if you hadn’t said that.”
The pain shoots him up, breaking the water surface with his fingertips as he rises. Everything flows past him like moments in time - memories - that's what they are.

“Hyung,” Hoseok can feel himself whisper.

“I'm here.”

They're memories. Hoseok breathes.

“Hyung's here.”

Hoseok reaches the chore and climbs back to the present.

***

[17:50] 10 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Yoongi’s office is a mess at this point, with multiple copies of the city’s map scattered about the floor, all their coats gathered into a messy pile on a chair. There are people constantly coming in and out to report what they’ve found as Yoongi sends almost everyone in the headquarters to an area they’ve already covered.

They are scurrying around like headless chickens.

Seokjin’s eyes are wearing out, clicking through the settings to manipulate the lighting of the video, Hoseok's face turning dark then too bright on the screen.

Something catches his eyes then.

A scribble, but so, so, faint. It's been painted over with cheap wall paint, but Seokjin would recognize it anywhere.

Just to make sure his brain isn't playing tricks on him from the panic of it all, he manipulates the video until Hoseok's face completely disappears from the screen from how high the contrast is, and there it is.

“Yoongi,” Seokjin pulls Yoongi's hands from his face, uncurling him, “Yoongi.” He turns up the brightness on the laptop when Yoongi looks at him with a scowl, “Do you see that scribble on the wall?”
Yoongi stares at where Seokjin points on the screen and nods. “Yeah, it kinda looks like- oh shit.”

“Indeed.” Seokjin shoots up from his seat, “Oh holy fucking shit.”

*

[17:51] 9 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Taehyung sprints out of another empty street and onto the next one that sits just beside the bridge.
The unfriendly street, he calls it.

*

[17:52] 8 MINUTES UNTIL SUNSET

Now with no one else in the room, Hoseok’s right hand scrambles to pull on the loose nail in the cushion, making no effort to be subtle about it.

*

[17:53] 7 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Taehyung's sprinting slows to a run,

that slows to a jog,

then a pause.

After Seokjin has made every living soul left in the headquarters look at the screen and confirm that the scribble isn't part of his imagination, Namjoon grabs for his phone.

*

[17:54] 6 MINUTES TO SUNSET

The loose nail comes off. It's long enough to be bent, Hoseok thinks.
Taehyung scrambles to the nearest building and crouches down, desperately grabbing for his phone and pressing wildly on the top contact.

His phone dies.

He curses.


“Oh for fuck's sake.” Namjoon drops the phone like it's nothing.

“Does anyone else have one of the officers’ number?”

“No.”

“Fuck, we should've written it down or have everyone save it or-”

“This isn't the time to fucking complain.” Yoongi pushes up from his seat and practically runs to the door. “Get the fucking car.”

Hoseok bends the nail with all the strength he can gather in his right hand, and tries to jiggle it into the lock of the handcuffs.


“This is the fastest it'll go unless you want to crash.” Seokjin deadpans.

“Is your phone working yet?” Yoongi turns to Namjoon.

“No.” Namjoon stares helplessly at his phone that's slowly charging.

“Fucking crash then.”
Taehyung's body is so sick and tired of sprinting, but the only thing keeping him going at this point is pure fucking desperation. Jungkook was somewhere around here before they part ways.

* 

[17:58 pm] 2 MINUTES TO SUNSET

Hoseok sets both his hands free and stands up from the chair, his back crackling from the hours he spent sitting.

* 

[17:59] 60 SECONDS TO SUNSET

“Jungkook!” Taehyung shouts as he sprints to the boy. Jungkook turns to him with wide desperate eyes. “I know where he is!”

“Seriously!??” Jungkook sprints to Taehyung's direction.

“Namjoon hyung?” Jimin's strained voice comes on and Namjoon almost cries.

“Jimin!” Yoongi shouts into Namjoon’s phone from the passenger seat, “We know where he is!”

“You do!?"

“Fuck, where!?” Jungkook asks, nearly shouts.

“Where is he!?” Jimin blares.

“He's under the bridge!”

* 

[17:59] 50 SECONDS TO SUNSET

The men come back into the room.
Hoseok crashes the shelf into them.

One of them holds Hoseok down.

They’re holding onto Hoseok’s shirt but he gets back up.

Hoseok realizes that he has to do unthinkable things that he so hates if he wants to get out of this alive.

Hoseok gouges someone’s eyes.

One of them is unconscious.

Hoseok uses the unconscious body to shield himself from the bullets and pushes his way to the door. His heart is beating so loud he can’t hear anything else.

Hoseok scrambles through what looks like an antique shop, but he doesn’t have time to process everything as he pushes out the glass door.

Hoseok doesn’t recognize the street. He turns right to see a river, and immediately turns left to sprint out to the main road.
Hoseok escapes. His knees hurt and his back aches from sitting all day but he runs, and runs, and runs, ignoring the angry red sun behind him, casting a long, panicking shadow in front of him, always a step ahead, as if it’s leading the way.

His wrists sting from the handcuffs and his right hand is bleeding from pulling and bending the metal nail. His top buttons popped off and his Wednesday uniform is ruined but it doesn’t matter. None if it matters right now as buildings pass behind him and he’s out on the main street.

Hoseok stops then.

Not because he thinks he’s safe now, not because he’s too tired to keep running.

He stops, because he was a few meters away from running into a car.

Before he can even ask for help or keep running, before his brain can catch up and process it all, the moon appears.

“Oh.” The voice that pulled Hoseok from the deepest depth of his mind sounds from near him, and everything clears. “You’re...here.”

“Hoseok!” Seokjin scrambles to him, clutching his shoulders, “Are you okay? Are they still inside?” Hoseok’s nods to both questions sent Seokjin running past him towards that angry red sunset he was running away from earlier.

Namjoon’s hand brushes past him as he makes his way into the street, shouting out commands behind his back as more cars turn up and every silhouette journeys into the direction he came from.

Among all the movement, Yoongi is still standing there, face blank but pale and dark under his eyes. Everything else at his side is a blur from how fast they move, making the only thing Hoseok’s weary eyes can focus on is Yoongi.

Yoongi wakes up from the trance a few seconds later, and walks towards Hoseok just as fast as Hoseok walks toward him before it escalates into a jog and just running until they’re both close enough.

Hoseok doesn’t even know what to say, but seeing Yoongi makes him want to cry.

Yoongi reaches forward to grab Hoseok’s shirt, trying to put them back together though it’s no use now that three buttons fell off.

“Seok-ah,” He huffs, gloveless fingers slightly brushing Hoseok’s sternum before he looks at him, “what did I tell you about wearing an undershirt?”

“Hyung.”

“Right, not the time. You’re right.” Yoongi corrects himself. One of his hands, warm despite the cold wind, drift up to trace Hoseok’s jaw. “How did you get out here?”
“I...escaped?” Hoseok doesn’t really know what to say or how to say it, distracted by Yoongi’s touch.

The look on Yoongi’s face is hard to read. He’s not suppressing any emotion, more like there are too many happening at once. His hair, the smooth raven that is usually neatly styled is sticking out in tufts from the wind. The top part seems like a mess after running his fingers through it too many times. His eyes, red-cornered and tired, travel down Hoseok’s face before he mutters, “What’d they do to you...”

He’s never seen Yoongi like this before with this kind of expression. It’s similar to the first time Yoongi told him about his father, the solemn that takes over his whole face. It’s that, but so much more intense that Hoseok feels like he will cry.

“I’m okay,” Hoseok tries to say, though shaky and unconvincing.

Yoongi isn’t looking at him in the eyes, brows furrowing and lips pushed into a frown before he shakes his head.

He tugs Hoseok closer by the hold on his shirt and guides his face towards his own until Hoseok’s lips push against his. They’re both shaking like this is the tipping point, and Hoseok flutters his eyes closed before he can even think of anything else that’s happening.

Chapter End Notes

it’s 2 am

also before i pass out this is what the antique chair looks like in case ur confused why and how hoseok was trying to pull a nail out of a chair to pick his handcuffs.

my twitter,
my curiouscat
the realization (a different kind of pain)

Chapter Summary

“We have to talk about earlier. We- I broke a rule.”

“... What?”

“I kissed you, Seok.”

Chapter Notes

i’m officially chris’ (hopamine_) ride or die like LOOK AT THIS JADHGKJD ITS THE ULTIMATE SCENE FROM CHAPTER 9 WHEW THE SCREAM I LET OUT ILY ❤❤❤❤❤❤

WARNINGS !!! for a Lot (like so many) graphic depictions of violence and fighting like this is where the Mature tag kicks in pls be aware ok thats it i think enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The storage room felt like a cramped cave, a border that isolated Hoseok from the rest of the world, leaving him to dwell and drown in the water; still, no momentum or any kind of push that would get him back to shore.

Hoseok wasn’t sure what happened to him then, but without any kind of physical weapon, he was pushed into the day his brain never fully processed.

What he was sure of, however, was what pulled him up.

Though it would have in other situations, it wasn’t to do with soulmates. Yoongi wasn’t there to touch him, or to physically pull him away from the deadly still waters.

The thing that pulled Hoseok back up wasn’t something the stars or the universe determined – they were words that Yoongi determined himself, that Hoseok accepted; the little pebbles of truth in a river they made up of lies.

It was the thought of Yoongi that pulled him back; the soars of emotions following along that
surfed him up. The things that they decided for themselves went against all that the universe wanted.

If the solution to such things were Yoongi, then how many more of Hoseok’s questions that he has put off bear the same answer?

The cold wind bats against Hoseok’s face, but Yoongi’s lips are warm. Hoseok’s pounding heart has yet to slow down after the strain his body went through when he was running, and it’s only going faster, louder, but the way Yoongi strokes his jaw is light and slow and gentle. The softness of it all made Hoseok wonder why he was so against kissing Yoongi in the first place.

Yoongi pulls away, hands sliding down to rub a thumb along the stinging red bands on Hoseok’s wrists from the handcuffs, the little breakings of skin on his palms and fingertips.

He looks at and beyond Hoseok, towards where all his men are running to as if they were magnetised.

“Hyung-”

“Go sit in the car, okay? Don’t let them find you.” Yoongi starts to step away, his hold on Hoseok’s hands loosening until he gradually lets go and turns back to make his way towards where everyone else was going.

“Wa-” It hits Hoseok then.

They kissed.

They actually, properly kissed.

They kissed and–

and it didn’t feel like a lie.

Yoongi pulled him into a kiss like he wanted to, and Hoseok let him because he wanted to. No one was watching them, everybody just ran past to the task at hand – the only witnesses were Yoongi and Hoseok.

Hoseok covers his mouth and heated cheeks, flustered beyond measure at the realization.

Hoseok likes Yoongi.

No,

Hoseok-

A heavy coat is dropped onto Hoseok’s shoulder in the middle of his haze before he turns to see Donghyuk.
“It’s cold out,” Donghyuk grumbles, “looks like everyone forgot their coats with how fast they were rushing to get here.”

Hoseok pushes his thoughts away, “It’s all because of me… I’m sorry.”

Donghyuk frowns at him, “What a stupid fucking thought,” he gestures towards the street with his chin, “if Yoongi didn’t pull that shit with the contract thing months ago then this wouldn’t have happened. That pipsqueak never considers the consequences of his actions because he thinks he’ll always have someone cleaning up after him.” He turns to fix his coat on Hoseok so it covers him more, a gesture for Hoseok to put it on properly, “He’s gonna become a shitty head chief and I’ll watch the whole clan suffer before my eyes.”

Hoseok’s eyebrows raise, “He’s the heir? What about you?”

“I’m not a pure soulmate blood, Yoongi is. That’s just how it works.” Donghyuk shrugs, “I don’t really care. It’s too much power and pressure for one person. Yoongi’s been getting his panties in a twist because of it. Doesn’t seem to stop him from- oh fuck.”

Donghyuk suddenly pulls Hoseok closer to him by his coat, raising his gun to fire several shots behind him, rapid and unhesitant. Gathering himself and turning to look, Hoseok sees a new car that was pulled up to the street, though now with broken windows and slowly retreating away.

“Let’s hope that that’s the only backup they called.” Donghyuk fires a few more shots, loud and numbing before he lets go of Hoseok. “How many of those shits were there at the start?”

“Seven, I think, I’m not sure,” Hoseok tries to recall, “ten at most.”

“Oh, Yoongi brought twenty, so we should be fine,” Donghyuk looks at his watch, “they’re taking a while though. I’ll go check. Keep that coat on.”

“I’ll go with you,” Hoseok follows him.

“And let Yoongi blame me for letting you get hurt? No thanks, he’s gonna teach my kids to come into my room when I’m asleep and recite bible verses in my ear again.” Donghyuk pushes him back, “Your minions are here. Stay with them.”

The mention of Donghyuk’s kids reminds Hoseok of what he said about the alleged sex workers, and guilt suddenly chokes him. Before he can even begin to apologize though, he can hear a familiar wail from the distance.

“Hoseok hyungggg!” Jimin tackles Hoseok before he can even manage to say hi. Jungkook and Taehyung follow suit and soon enough, Hoseok is enclosed in a circle of tears and kisses that almost made him shed a few tears of his own too.

“I’m okay,” Hoseok wraps his arms around the three of them as best as he could, kissing the top of their heads, “I’m fine.”

“Oh hyung, your hands!” Taehyung sobs, holding Hoseok’s arms up and looking at all the fresh scratches on them. “I’m so sorry…”

“Did Yoongi hyung save you in time?” Jungkook mumbles into his shoulder, wet and shaky. Hoseok tightens his hold for a second, “Ah, well, I escaped first and then kinda ran into him…?” Jungkook lifts his head, “You escaped? On your own!?” Hoseok sheepishly nods, “Hyung, that’s
awesome! What the fuck.”

“Those bastards are still there, aren’t they?” Jimin turns suddenly, rolling up his sleeves, “They don’t know what’s coming.”

“There are like thirty people in there already,” Hoseok warns, “don’t.”

“Don’t make the fight any bigger,” Taehyung instructs, “just arrest them.”

“That would be fine if it were anyone other than Hoseokie hyung that they decided to hurt.” Jungkook cracks his knuckles, walking towards the street.

“Guys,” Taehyung helplessly follows them, there’s no stopping them now that they’re so determined.

Hoseok sighs, following after them, returning to the place he just managed to escape from not long ago.

It’s messy; windows are broken and cars are destroyed. There are a few men lying unconscious and Hoseok recognizes one of them. How can he not? Both his eyes are bruised.

The few men that are conscious stand around the little gaps between the buildings and on the bridge in the distance, some that Hoseok remembers talking to at the headquarters and the mansion. They’re blocking all the possible escape routes. They ignore Hoseok and the others as they walk through to where all the actual commotion is.

He can see Yoongi in the distance, eyebrows furrowed so intensely, upset in a way that he’s never seen him before. There’s a fresh wound on his left cheek that isn’t large but bleeding down to his chin. Namjoon is further away near the edge of the docks, bent down and struggling until Seokjin comes to stand behind him and pulls him up, revealing a pair of legs breaking through the water, each ankle gripped by Namjoon’s hands. They weren’t even going to let them swim away.

The head chief is also there, surprisingly, standing at the side as he watches a line of men being pulled and dragged to the middle of the road. Donghyuk seems to be doing a headcount: five so far.

He suddenly hears a loud grunt behind him, and Jimin is holding down a man twice his size, fastening his wrists with handcuffs from his belt. Jungkook is already next to Yoongi, eyes shooting around to check the damages as he murmurs something to the mafioso. He can’t find Taehyung.

It’s dark now, figures turn into silhouettes and blurred shadows, illuminated by the broken street poles that are barely working.

The head chief’s shadow is tall and looming, staring at the increasing pile of men on the mucky street; nine now.

Hoseok notices movement at the corner of his eye, another long looming shadow at the corner, slowly creeping up to the head chief’s direction. The silhouette lifts up its arms, as if aiming, and that was the cue for Hoseok to run towards it.

There’s suddenly another loud sound of thunder.

The right sleeve of Donghyuk’s coat rips and a surge of pain shoots through Hoseok’s arm. He bites back a whimper as he tries to tackle the gun off of the man’s hand before another sound of thunder. He eventually pulls the gun out of its grip after unrelentingly twisting his wrists until his
fingers gave in.

Turning back around with the gun, he finds Taehyung then.

Taehyung is on his knees, clutching his stomach and curling into himself. The head chief is behind him with this shocked, exaggerated expression that is unusual on a face like his.

Hoseok doesn’t breathe. The bleeding in his arm suddenly doesn’t matter anymore.

“Tae!” He cries, running towards him, adrenaline coursing through his veins and his heart thundering in his ears. Jimin, now with an overflowing amount of rage and purely fuelled by red hot, blistering anger coursing through his veins, runs towards the direction of the bullet, tackling the attacker and swinging him over his head to knock him into the ground relentlessly with the purpose for it to fucking hurt. There’s a loud crack that sounds from one of his limbs, followed by a blaring groan of pain as Jimin leans in closer to murmur something to the man, now powerless beneath him.

“I’m okay,” Taehyung pats Hoseok’s hands as soon as Hoseok reaches him. “I have a vest on, hyung.”

“God- fuck,” Hoseok finally breaks, balls of tears breaking down the corner of his eyes, blurring his vision, “why the fuck did you do that? I really thought I was going to lose you.”

Taehyung pulls him into a hug and Hoseok sobs into his neck. “I was trying to protect him. I’m sorry for worrying you. I’m fine.”

“Sir!” Seokjin runs up to the head chief, “Are you hurt?”

“No, and only because of him,” Head chief Min nods to Taehyung, “make sure the boy is okay.”

“Ri- wait Hoseok, you’re bleeding!” Seokjin drops down to the ground where Hoseok is, pulling Taehyung’s bloodied hand from Hoseok’s arm and inspecting it.

“The bullet grazed me a bit,” Hoseok murmurs.

“Shit,” Seokjin swings the arm over his own shoulders, “can you stand?”

“Y-Yeah.”

“There’s an emergency kit in the van,” Seokjin says, “walk with me.”

As Hoseok makes his limping way to the van, arm numb and probably bleeding all over Seokjin’s back, he can hear faint, distant noises from the street he just left, kicking and groans of pain and voices, several of them, telling Yoongi to calm down.

*

It’s one thing to hear of the mafia’s ruthlessness, thought it’s a whole different thing to see it in person.

Crimson blood is spat onto the pavement from a man, considerably old and worn, the side of his head pressed to the ground and held there by the sole of Yoongi’s boot.
“Shin Doyoon,” Yoongi murmurs, “what made you think it was a good idea to hold my lover captive for something I owe you for?” the boot presses harder until Shin Doyoon is squirming, hands spasming uncontrollably, “Hm?”

Silence.

“Do I have to crush your skull for you to answer?” The mafioso threatens.

“Yoongi,” Donghyuk warns.

“You know, one of your men confessed to how you managed to capture officer Jung,” Yoongi slowly lifts his boot off of Shin Doyoon’s head, “now that he’s still alive, he can easily identify who your daughter is, and that’d be the end of the Shin bloodline.”

“No,” Shin Doyoon finally talks, “No, please, spare her.” He turns his head so that his forehead touches the ground as if he’s bowing, “Kill me if you must, but please spare her. Don’t condemn her for something I’m responsible for.”

“Jung Hoseok didn’t have anything to do with our agreement, but you had no problem traumatising him,” Yoongi deadpans.

Shin Doyoon whimpers, “Please, please… It was wrong of me to do that.” He’s shaking at this point, “Please forgive me, the ever so generous Min Yoongi, please spare my daughter.”

Yoongi tuts, “How pitiful.” His boot shifts closer to Shin Doyoon’s head again, hooking the tip under his chin to make him look up, “I don’t give a shit about your daughter. I’m not like you.”

“Oh sir, M-Min Yoongi, you are ever so k-kind, I-”

“Tell me something and I’ll let you go,” Yoongi nudges his chin with his boot, “You used to be part of an organization. What was it?”

“C-Clear…”

“What?” Yoongi furrows his brows.

“...Clear the streets.”

The head chief, who has been standing around for a while, suddenly looks alert.

“Consider this the one final warning for you then,” Yoongi commands, “if I ever see you near officer Jung again, even if it’s by some pure fucking coincidence,” he grits his teeth, “I’ll snap your family tree in half and kill you myself. Are we clear?”

“Yes,” Shin Doyoon squeaks, “Yes!”

Yoongi draws his foot away from the man’s chin, letting it hit the cement pavement with a loud crack, followed by a wail, “Good enough.” He turns on his feet towards the the exit of the street, “All your cars are fucked, so have fun crawling home. Release him.” He tells Jimin, who hesitantly lets go of Shin Doyoon’s wrists.

Everyone else have been making their way back to the vans, the night so dark and black that Jimin can’t even see the faint clouds like he usually can.

He walks under a lamp post, seeing the way it casts a long shadow from his side. It’s like he can even tell through his shadow that he’s exhausted.
At the corner of his eye, there’s another shadow, longer and looming, creeping up to where he is. Still in defense mode, Jimin waits for it to approach before grabbing the man’s arms and swinging it in front of him with full force, feeling his torso lift above his head, a loud grunt sounding from the man’s throat and then – and then regret.

“Oh my god,” Jimin squeaks, “oh fuc- oh my god.”

Namjoon is still rubbing his tailbone as Jimin helps him up to his feet, “Wow, wouldn’t want to get on your bad side.” He jokes, although he’s clearly in pain.

“Hyung, I’m so sorry,” Jimin hasn’t stopped apologizing, “I thought you were- god I’m so sorry.”

“It’s fine, really,” Namjoon assures him as he straightens up, but then groans as his hand comes to rub his tailbone again, “god, wow, you really didn’t hold back.”

Jimin swings Namjoon’s arm over his shoulder, “Your lower back is going to bruise for a few weeks. I’m really really sorry. I should’ve been more careful.”

“It’s fine Jimin,” Namjoon’s pats Jimin’s shoulder, “it’ll heal. I just didn’t expect you to lift me like that. Do you know taekwondo?”

“Yeah, that was an aikido move though.” Jimin ducks his head, still guilty.

“I see,” Namjoon hums, “are these part of your police training curriculum or did you learn it outside?”

Jimin shakes his head, “You only need to know the defensive tactics that you had to learn back at the academy and that’s it. You don’t really get to use it anyway.” He tightens his hold as he slowly walks a limping Namjoon to the van. He feels kind of bad for how much smaller he is; Namjoon has to hunch a little in order to rest on his shoulder properly. “I learned taekwondo, aikido, and judo in high school.”

“That’s amazing,” Namjoon sounds genuinely impressed, “you’re really cool.”

Jimin blushes, “I’m really not-”

“Namjoon,” Yoongi walks up to them suddenly, “do you know where Ho- are you okay?”

“Sort of,” Namjoon laughs, ducking his head, “it’s just going to hurt when I stand for a while.”

“Right,” Yoongi nods, “be careful.” He turns to Jimin then, “Jimin, I know we kinda got off at the wrong foot last time… and well,” he chuckles dryly, “seeing me like that doesn’t make me look any better, but I swear I’m not always like that, I was just- well, a bit mad and angry, afterall, yeah.” He shrugs.

Is Min Yoongi being shy? That’s new.

Jimin shakes his head, “It’s fine, hyung. You did so much to find Hoseok hyung, I’m really grateful.”

Yoongi smiles then, “Thank you for coming to us for help.”

“Hyung, were you going to ask something?” Namjoon asks.

“Ah yeah,” Yoongi says, “do you know where-”
“Yoongi hyung!” Jungkook tackles Yoongi into a hug that looks way too tight to be comfortable, judging from the look on Yoongi’s face.

“Hyung, you really-” The younger boy pulls away suddenly, “that sex worker thing was a lie, right? And the apartment-”

“I’ve done no such thing,” Yoongi states flatly.

“Hyung!” Jungkook pulls Yoongi back into another death grip, “I knew it! You’re the best!”

“Ridiculous,” Yoongi deadpans, but brings his arms up to hug Jungkook back anyway. Jimin can see the little smile he tries to hide into Jungkook’s shoulder.

“Are you hurt anywhere?” Jimin can hear Namjoon ask from above him.

He looks up to shake his head and smiles; Namjoon still looks so handsome in the dim light. He doesn’t have his glasses on and his eyes seem bigger and bolder than usual, or maybe it's just him fantasizing again, “No. Just a couple bruises that’ll go away after a few days.”

Namjoon looks away suddenly, clearing his throat. “I see. Well I uh-” He lets go of Jimin to stand on his own, wincing from the pain, “I’ll go talk to the head chief about getting a few days off or at least to rest a little and uh, go home. Yeah.” He nods a little at Jimin with a smile, “See you, Jimin-ah.”

Jimin awkwardly waves as Namjoon limps toward one of the vans, hand still holding his lower back.

“Wait, did Namjoon leave?” Yoongi asks, “I was going to ask him which van Hoseok is in.”

“No idea, hyung.” Jimin shrugs.

Yoongi scans around a bit before he sighs, “Oh well. Hyunsoo!” He calls one of the wandering men over, “Get Jimin, Jungkook, and Taehyung in your van. Make sure they get inside the building before you drive off.” He pats Jimin’s back, “Rest well tonight. Thanks again for your help.” Before turning on his feet, probably to look for Hoseok.

It makes Jimin smile a little, even after he starts to follow Hyunsoo to his van.

* 

Hoseok doesn’t see Yoongi until a few minutes after Seokjin fixes up his wound back at the living room of the Mins’ mansion.

“My blood is all over your back,” He scrunches his nose, “sorry.”

“Eh, it could be worse,” Seokjin shrugs, “could’ve been Donghyuk.”

“I’m right here,” Donghyuk deadpans, sitting across them. His face is barely in view from the crowding in the room.”

“Hi hyung,” Hoseok greets him awkwardly, even though they’ve talked less than an hour ago, “sorry about your coat.”
Donghyuk waves him off, “Not the first time. Hey Jin, you done yet? My face is still bleeding.”

“Tell it to stop,” Seokjin retorts, but makes his way there anyway with a little smile, trying not to laugh at his own joke.

Someone drops down next to him suddenly, and it’s all too sudden – the way Hoseok’s heart rate picks up at the sight of Yoongi.

Yoongi lays his back flat on back of the couch, as if waiting to sink into it, and turns to Hoseok. He doesn’t have his tie on anymore and there’s a bandaid on his left cheek. “Hey.”

Hoseok gives him a wonky little smile in response. He doesn’t think he can form words right now. Not with Yoongi looking at him like that.

Yoongi doesn’t say anything for the while that he just looks, though at nothing in particular, just at Hoseok as a whole, at the bruises on his cheek and the cut on his lip. His hand trails suddenly, slowly, to meet Hoseok’s limp one, covered in bandaids, reeking of rubbing alcohol.

“Does it still hurt?” He can feel Yoongi ask. His thumb is careful as it rubs across Hoseok’s palm, though he’s looking at the bandage on Hoseok’s upper right arm, the rolled up sleeve.

It hurt when it happened, and it stung painfully when Seokjin cleaned it, though it’s soothed slightly from the way Yoongi’s hand is still tentatively holding his. He bites his lip and nods.

Yoongi sits up then, hand still holding Hoseok’s, “Come with me?”

Hoseok weakly pushes himself up to stand and follow Yoongi by the hold of his hand, out and away from the busting of people to the stairs and up to Yoongi’s room.

Holly greets them at the door, and Yoongi only bends down to pet him a little before closing the door behind Hoseok and sighing. “We have to talk about earlier. We- I broke a rule.”

“... What?” Hoseok can’t seem to catch on.

“I kissed you, Seok.” Yoongi says it for him.

Oh.

Oh.

That stupid ground rule that Hoseok established months ago. That’s what Yoongi’s talking about.

“I mean- well, we broke the rule a few times,” Hoseok tries to say, though he barely recognizes his own voice, “Taehyung and the others know about the pain condition and they’ve seen me touching you and it’s pretty normal when you come to think of it, and uh-” he can feel his cheeks redden as he blabbers on, “yeah it was quite overwhelming to see you and stuff so I under-”

“You had a cut on your lip,” Yoongi cuts him off, “you uh- it was bleeding and stuff too so I tried to just, stop the bleeding. Yeah.” He rubs the back of his neck, eyes averting to where Holly is sitting on the floor.

“Oh,” Hoseok feels a pang in his chest, but it’s not the surging painful one he usually gets; this one aches, and it aches more and more as his heart beats. “That’s fine then, hah, it’s not like you’d get penalized for breaking the rule or something. It was a pretty stupid agreement anyway.”

“But it helped, right?” Yoongi asks suddenly, “It was sudden, but the wound is closed now.”
Hoseok catches himself and touches his lower lip. There’s no pain, “Oh yeah. I just noticed. That’s good.” He tries to look up at Yoongi, “Anyway, what’d you take me up here for, hyung?”

Yoongi clears his throat, “Well, you said it still hurts, so I thought I could help by… you know.” Yoongi gestures with his chin at nothing before his hand comes up to trace the red burn on Hoseok’s wrist, easing the sting.

“Oh, right.” Hoseok breathes, “Yeah, that’d be nice.”

It’s probably really awkward for them to just sit there on Yoongi’s bed as Yoongi rubs Hoseok’s wrist with his thumb, his fingers with the other hand as the pain slowly subsides. Hoseok doesn’t find it awkward, though only because he’s completely distracted by the thundering in his chest, so loud in his ears that he’s afraid that Yoongi might hear.

“It sucks,” Yoongi says suddenly after a minute of silence. He’s still staring down at their hands.

“W-What does?” Hoseok asks.

“This,” Yoongi murmurs, “it sucks that you got dragged into this shit because of me.” Yoongi’s hands tighten before they relax again, “I couldn’t even get to you in time.”

“It’s fine hyung. Really.” Hoseok shakes his head, “I’m just trying not to think about it too much.”

“Still, it’s really fucking shitty to be put into that kind of situation.” Yoongi says, “I’d be mad, like, fucking fuming if that were to happen to me.”

Hoseok feels himself grinning a little, “Is this an apology I’m hearing?”

Yoongi whips his head up to face him, cheeks tinted red, “What? Of course not.”

“No it’s not.” Yoongi ducks his head again, “Shut up. I’d rather you be mad at me or something.”

Hoseok sighs, “I feel like I’m too tired to get mad,” he chuckles, “guess I’ll let you live this time.”

“How kind,” Yoongi comments, “do you usually forgive everyone so easily?”

“Everyone but you,” Hoseok sticks his tongue out, childish, “My arm still hurts like hell hyung, come on.”

Yoongi chuckles as his left hand trails up to rest above the bandage on Hoseok’s arm, “Yes sir.”

Hoseok sits back on his other hand as Yoongi smooths his hand up and down his injured arm, humming as the pain gradually starts to fade, his heartbeat slowing down as he distracts himself by looking at Holly pat around on the floor with his little toys.

Yoongi’s eyebrows are still furrowed when Hoseok turns to look at him, as if pained. Very hesitantly, he asks, “Are you injured anywhere, hyung?”

“Just here and here,” Yoongi points at the bandaid on his left cheek and jaw, “and a few bruises on my back.”

“Oh,” Hoseok says, “do you want me to-”
“It’s fine,” Yoongi says, “really, just think of it as payback for me dragging you into all this.”

“Well, I can still do it anyway…?” Hoseok says, though he doesn’t know why it sounds like a question, “It’s kinda awkward with you only doing it to me.”

“How is it awkward?”

“I don’t know I just…” Hoseok looks down at himself, “I feel weak.”

A hand suddenly lifts his chin up, “You’re not weak,” Yoongi murmurs as their eyes lock.

Hoseok breaks the sudden eye contact, “I am.”

“Listen,” Yoongi brings up his other hand to hold Hoseok’s face, “The Shin clan used to be the most powerful clan in the city. They’re not easy to defeat.” He says, “You escaped the hold of some really fucking powerful people all by yourself. You’re anything but weak.” His hands drop down to hold Hoseok’s again, but he’s still looking at him, “Don’t ever let me hear you say that again.”

Feeling his cheeks heat up, Hoseok ducks his head with a small smile, “Fine, I’m not weak,” he looks up at Yoongi again, “let me help you anyway? I… I want to.”

“Sure,” Yoongi shrugs, “I have to take my shirt off though, if you don’t mind.”

“I don’t,” Hoseok says too quickly, “I- do you?”

“No,” Yoongi shakes his head as he reaches for the top button, “you’ve seen it before anyway.”

“Ah, right,” Hoseok chuckles, he doesn’t know why, “I did.”

The black shirt contrasts so greatly with Yoongi’s skin, and the black ink on his heart stands out from under his shirt. Yoongi turns away as he pulls his shirt over his head, and he’s not terribly lean, but that doesn’t stop Hoseok from staring, meeting those little blooms of ink on his back again.

There are a few bruises near his shoulder and upper back. Hesitant, Hoseok reaches out to brush his fingers over one of them, “Does it hurt?”

“It did when Seokjin touched it,” Yoongi replies, “but not- not with you, no.”

Hoseok nods even though Yoongi can’t see him, resting his hand fully on the bruise on his shoulder, over a little water lily. The skin is warm under his hands, and Hoseok can see the back of Yoongi’s neck, slightly red compared to his pale back. He considers any thoughts he has now as wishful thinking, if anything.

It turns out that bruises take longer to heal, probably because it’s deep under the skin.

“It’s fine,” Yoongi says when Hoseok tells him, “I feel better anyway.”

“I mean I can try, uh, can I try something?” Hoseok asks. He’s lost his mind at this point.

Yoongi is still, which he takes as an okay. Heart thrumming harder in his chest again, Hoseok lifts his hand from the bruise before he, very slowly, and really fucking nervously, leans in to kiss it.

Yoongi jolts slightly, “Oh. Wasn’t expecting that.”
“Sorry,” Hoseok suddenly sits up, “I’ll stop, I don’t know what I was-”

“No, it’s fine,” Yoongi quickly says, “I don’t mind that. It helps more, right?”

“Well, yeah,” Hoseok stares at the bruise that’s significantly faded, just from the kiss.

“Continue then.”

The room is too quiet for this to not be embarrassing. All the kisses are light, but they seem so loud and amplified by the silence. Hoseok continues though, face red and hot as he watch the last remaining bruise on Yoongi’s back fade into his skin before it’s barely visible.

“That’s all of it, yeah?” Yoongi shrugs his shirt back on, not bothering with the undershirt. “Thank you.”

“You still have the ones on your face though,” Hoseok hears himself say before his brain catches up from the daze.

“Oh, well, I do.” He turns back to face Hoseok, his shirt still unbuttoned. “You don’t have to though.”

“Let’s just-” Hoseok sputters, “why don’t we get rid of all of them while we’re at it?”

Yoongi seems to consider it for a while before he shrugs, “I guess you have a point.”

Hoseok leans in closer as does Yoongi. He cups the side of Yoongi’s face as he inches closer until his lips rest just under the bandaid, staying there for a little before he feels too embarrassed and overwhelmed to stay. “Does that- does that feel better?”

“Yeah,” Yoongi answers, more breath than sound, and Hoseok can feel the words on his own cheek.

He tilts Yoongi’s head up slightly to kiss his jaw, drifting to his chin. He can feel Yoongi’s lips on his nose from the angle and he can’t even imagine how flushed he is.

“Can I,” Yoongi suddenly ducks his head back down. Their noses brush and their faces too close. Hoseok can’t seem to pull away though. Their foreheads are touching, and Yoongi’s eyes, the same ones he’s been trying not to meet, are impossibly close. Yoongi asks then,

“Can I kiss you?”

Hoseok doesn’t breathe, can’t feel himself breathe, as if Yoongi’s words had punched all the breath out of him.

“You can say no,” Yoongi says, and Hoseok can feel the words on his lips, “I just thought it might help.”

Hoseok feels like it’s going to hurt him, though in a different way. A different kind of pain. It’s
going to ache, to throb and twinge because the thought that this isn’t anything more will hit him and it will pound and sting so badly for him.

He still hasn’t moved away from Yoongi though, and Yoongi is still there, quiet and waiting.

Fuck it.

Hoseok bites his lip, “I- yeah.”

At that, Yoongi tilts his head – that’s all he needs to do – and their lips brush, lightly, barely a touch at first, before he kisses him, soft. It’s almost like how it was at that cold street under the red sky, except it’s not cold, and it’s quiet, and they’re not shaking.

Hoseok can just pretend that it’s all real, just for now.

He pretends that they kiss because they just want to kiss, that they touch just to be in each other’s hold. It suddenly becomes easier, and Hoseok smiles at Yoongi’s lips as he tilts his chin for more, and more, until Yoongi’s hands rest on Hoseok’s waist, and Hoseok reaches up to cup Yoongi’s cheeks.

It’s all so warm, this closeness. Hoseok flutters his eyes close and feels everything; Yoongi’s warm hands, Yoongi’s warm lips, his warm cheeks, all the warmth from simply the closeness and his presence, just the fact that Yoongi is here, closer than how Hoseok imagined him when he was stuck in that confining room, deep into the ocean. He’s physically here.

For a moment then, there’s no pain. None, physically and mentally. There’s no pain when Hoseok slowly falls back onto the sheets, none when their lips reconnect again after a short while apart. It doesn’t hurt when Yoongi’s lips drift and linger down his neck and up his cheek, Hoseok’s hand gripping his shoulders. Yoongi whispers in his ear, warm words and breath, “Stay the night?”

“Yeah, okay.” Hoseok answers, more breath than words before he tilts his chin up, a silent gesture to ask for another kiss, to which Yoongi smiles, chuckles lightly, and complies.

It feels like dreaming, but also suspiciously like an illusion. That’s what it is. But Hoseok can’t get himself to care, trying not to care, and holds onto this illusion of his for as long as he can.

Though, no illusion lasts for over.

Yoongi kisses Hoseok’s cheek again before he pulls away completely and shifts off of Hoseok. “That should- that should do it.”

Hoseok slowly sits up, “Y-Yeah.” He doesn’t even remember feeling any kind of pain.

“Do you want to go back down or…?” Yoongi asks as he starts to button up his shirt properly. “You can stay here if you want. It’s loud down there.”

“If you don't mind,” Hoseok rubs the back of his neck, looking down at his now unbruised hand.

“Not at all,” Yoongi smooths out his shirt as he stands up, “I just need to talk to my dad about a few things. Play with Holly, I haven’t played with him today. You can shower and whatever. I think you left some of your skincare stuff here from last time.”

“Ah, I probably did,” Hoseok runs a hand through his own hair. Did all that actually happen just now? “Hyung?”
“Mm?” Yoongi is already at the door, but he turns around at Hoseok’s call.

If it was an illusion, can he at least have one last taste of it?

“Can you kiss me again?”

Yoongi’s eyes widen, but he smiles, letting go of the door knob to make his way back to Hoseok again. With Hoseok’s cheeks in his hands, he bends down to brush their lips together, kissing him once, lingering there for a moment before he leaves a little peck and pulls away, hands still cupping Hoseok’s face. “Let me know if it hurts again, okay?”

Hoseok nods as Yoongi’s fingers slide down his jaw gradually, lingering still, until he turns to the door and leaves with a soft click.

It’s an illusion, the thought that they’re together, the lie he made up for himself just to satisfy his own greed. The lie that Yoongi likes Hoseok, that Hoseok likes Yoongi. But

But it’s not a lie.

The realization finally kicks in.

Hoseok likes Yoongi.

No.

Hoseok loves Yoongi.

Oh shit, Hoseok loves Yoongi.

Hoseok loves Yoongi, and probably has loved him this whole time.

Hoseok loves Yoongi despite finding so many reasons to hate him, so many chances to just leave.

Hoseok loves Yoongi, and he feels alive, like he can finally breathe again.

Hoseok loves Yoongi, despite their whole relationship being built up from a white lie.

Hoseok loves Yoongi, and for once it’s not a lie – not even a white lie.

...Hoseok loves Yoongi, and he doesn’t know what to do.

There’s a knock at the door, “Hoseok? Are you in here?” Namjoon.

“Yeah,” Hoseok says, weak.

The door clicks open, and Namjoon steps in to greet Holly. He’s only wearing his button up shirt on one side, the other sleeve hanging loosely behind him, and his undershirt is bunched up to
above his abdomen.

“Why do I hate you more every time I see your perfect body.” Hoseok deadpans.

“Stop that,” Namjoon ducks his head with a smile, “I have to ice my lower back, see?” He turns to show the ice pack he’s holding against his bruised back. “I didn’t expect Jimin to be that strong, like he really- are you okay?”

Something must’ve been a giveaway that Hoseok is, in fact, not okay. Maybe it’s the way he’s shaking, or perhaps it’s the way he’s red and sad, maybe it’s both. Fuck lies.

“I love him, Joon.” Hoseok lets it slip, no more restraints.

“What?”

Hoseok can feel his bottom lip trembling, “I love him.”

Namjoon is quiet for a while, “… congrats?”

“What do you mean congrats?” Hoseok frowns.

“I don’t know,” Namjoon panics, “what am I supposed to say? Why does that make you sad? Why are you sad?”

Hoseok doesn’t blame Namjoon for not understanding anything he’s saying. But Namjoon is still here, and he’s always here to listen.

“It’s fake,” Hoseok says.

Namjoon lifts an eyebrow, “What is?”

It’s difficult to say, but, “M- Me and Yoongi hyung. It’s all fake.”

His friend is still confused, “I’m not- what?”

“When I got back to work after the… incident, Yoongi hyung came to the station and asked me to just… pretend to be in a relationship with him so that the head chief doesn’t have to worry about him not being with his soulmate.” Hoseok explains. “We never had feelings for each other, at least he-” shit, why does it hurt to say? “He’s never had feelings for me.”

Namjoon leaves the ice pack on Yoongi’s side table as he pulls a chair over to sit across from Hoseok. “This is a lot but…okay, so it’s a fake relationship this whole time?” Hoseok nods, “Wow, right… and now you’re… you actually have feelings for him.” Hoseok bites his lips, nods again. “Right.”

“It’s fine if you don’t have anything to say,” Hoseok fills the silence, “I guess I just needed to let it out.”

“I understand,” Namjoon says softly, “you’ve been keeping it in for a long time. Wow.”

“You sound really surprised,” Hoseok lifts an eyebrow, “Jin hyung found out and he said he’s had some suspicions from the start.”

“Maybe that’s because he didn’t see what I saw,” Namjoon chuckles, “maybe I’m blind, but the idea that you two may have been faking it never crossed my mind.”
“Wait, what did you see?” Hoseok asks.

Namjoon smiles, “I saw him save your life.”

And so Namjoon, the only witness that night, tells Hoseok about what happened in that hospital room, of the mafioso who bent over to kiss the unconscious, barely alive, police officer that he shot, of the man who took his birth flower and bloomed another on a police badge before he left.

Hoseok’s face reddens at the retelling and he,

He really loves Yoongi.

“Oh god,” He groans into his hands, “this is the worst. How did I even…”

“I’m not surprised hyung never told you about it,” Namjoon chuckles again, “he acts like he doesn’t care when he’s probably the most caring person I know.”

“Yes, I get that,” Hoseok rubs his eyes, “I really, really get that.”

Namjoon sits back in his chair, but realizes that that’s not a good idea and sits up again, “He’s always been like that. Even when he helped me, he didn’t make it obvious.” He suddenly adopts a lower, slurred voice when he says, “This isn’t me showing you pity, I just think that the mafia needs someone like you.”

Hoseok lifts his head, “He said that?”

“Yeah,” Namjoon smiles at the memory, “it was really cool. He basically saved me from my parents.”

The memory strikes him, “Ah… your parents. I didn’t know it was him who helped you out.”

“Yeah… it was him.” Namjoon bites his lip. “I’m still grateful to this very day.”

Hoseok flops back onto the bed, “God damn it, I’m bound to get my heart broken like this.”

“Hey,” A warm hand rests on his knee, “what makes you think he doesn’t reciprocate?”

Hoseok peeks at Namjoon behind his hands, “What makes you think he does?”

“I can’t say for sure, but if I’ve been thinking that hyung’s got heart eyes for you this whole time, it can’t be a complete lie.” Namjoon says, “I really believe that he’ll come to terms with it eventually if he hasn’t yet, Hoseok. I don’t think you have anything to worry about.”

Hoseok slowly sits up, “Do you really think that or are you just saying it to lay me down nicely?”

Namjoon laughs, “Why would I do that? That’s horrible. I don’t think it’d be wrong for you to think that he feels for you as much as you do for him. The only difference from before is that you’re not pretending to like him anymore. Just enjoy it, Hoseok.”

Hoseok’s eyes widen, “You mean… you mean I can just take advantage of the situation and just pretend that he likes me?”

“If you put it that way, then nothing’s changed from before, has it?” Namjoon tilts his head, “It’s even better now, if anything. You don’t have to stress over it. Just live.”

Live.
“Okay,” Hoseok nods, mostly to himself but to Namjoon too, “I’ll do that.”

Namjoon reassures him again with a smile and a nod, “I’ll keep quiet for you too. It’ll be okay.”

“Joon…” Hoseok sobs, “you’re so perfect, what the fuck…” He leans over to hug his friend, a little too suddenly that they almost topple over in the chair.

Namjoon manages to pat his back a few times before he bends the wrong way and the pain kicks in, “Wait ow sh- my back, Hoseok my back, fu- ah.” he groans as he grabs for the ice pack.

Hoseok lets out a laugh and a few apologies. People were slowly filtering out of the mansion in little wounds and bandages.

The end of another work day for the mafia.

*

“Are you going out somewhere?” Yoongi calls to his father’s back.

The head chief turns around to his son, “A meeting. What do you need?”

“Do you know what Shin Doyoon was talking about?” Yoongi asks directly, “Do you know what Clear the Streets is?”

His father signs, “Of course I do, Yoongi.”

“What is it then?”

“It used to be our greatest enemy.” He says.

“Used to.”

*

The head chief hardly ever agrees to meet anyone outside of his office or mansion, but the individual in this particular situation is different, and he’d never had agreed to this meeting if it weren’t for his slowly mending viewpoint on police officers.

“Min Hongdo, what an honor.” The man says, only the lower half of his face is illuminated by the light. “As promised, no cops, no wires. Only us.”

“Let’s get this over quick,” Head chief Min says, “what do you want?”

“Oh, if you have plans after this, you might need to delay them,” The mouth grins, “this might take a while.”

“State your deal, Bang Sihyuk,” The head chief orders, “quickly.”

Bang Sihyuk leans closer to the table, his whole face visible now, “I’ve heard of the...mishap that
happened today regarding one of my officers.” He says, “I wanted to present a deal.”

The head chief furrows his brows, “What deal?”

“Peace.”

Chapter End Notes

*finger guns* i ate a cream puff but realized that it was expired halfway into the game so it was kinda tangy but it was still kinda good so i just kept going hope i die

my twitter.
my curiouscat
peace (the tipping point)

Chapter Summary

"The doctor said it was a miracle I survived, and I never really knew what happened, but it turns out that Yoongi hyung was the miracle."

Chapter Notes

omg hello it's me sorry this took so long :(

!! WARNINGS !!
- mentions of past domestic abuse
- really stupid weeaboo language (you'll know when it kicks in) check end notes if you don't understand some of the words i've compiled a dictionary for you there

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hoseok hasn’t seen Yoongi since the incident, which was a few days ago. Yoongi hasn’t visited the station, but occasionally sends a few messages every now and then. Hoseok doesn’t mind the sudden absence, is almost grateful for it actually; it gives him time to breathe and process everything, the changes that have altered the situation but also somehow remained to appear the same externally.

“I really believe that he’ll come to terms with it eventually if he hasn’t yet,” Namjoon had said, “Just live.”

If that’s true, then Hoseok just has to wait. The ball is in Yoongi’s court.

If it’s not true, then he’ll just spend a month at most nursing his broken heart, and that should be fine too.

For now, can’t he just enjoy it?

[12:46:24] hoseokie (☀️ ❖)♥️: hyung !! hello !!!
[12:46:30] hoseokie (☀️ ❖)♥️: i want jajangmyeon !!
[12:46:40] yoongi hyung ☺️: is your boss there today?
[12:46:42] hoseokie (☀️ ❖)♥️: nope !! he’s out today :>
[12:46:59] hoseokie (☀️ ❖)♥️: wait are u coming the station??
[12:47:02] yoongi hyung ☺️: yeah
Hoseok’s heart rate picks up at the last message. He’s suddenly conscious of everything; he didn’t bother doing his hair today, he had tea but does his breath smell bad? Are his dark circles visible? His face is kind of swollen today, he can feel it.

“Oh no, Taehyung!” Hoseok panics as he turns to Taehyung’s desk near him, “honest question, how do I look?”

Taehyung seems clueless for a moment before he smiles, “Handsome as always.”

Hoseok frowns, “Why don’t I believe you?”

“Hyung, you look fine,” Jungkook says from behind him, “not everyone can look cute with swollen faces like you.”

Jimin swats the boy, “Don’t be rude!”

“Oh no,” Hoseok groans into his hands, “Yoongi hyung is coming here and I look terrible.”

“Why are you panicking?” Jimin is still hitting Jungkook, “Yoongi hyung’s probably seen you in every declining state.”

Because I didn’t care about what he thought before, Hoseok wants to say.

“Yoongi hyung’s coming?” Jungkook’s eyes light up.

“Yeah,” Hoseok scrubs his eyes, “he’s bringing lunch.” The thought makes him smile too widely that he opts to covering his mouth with his hand. God. He slumps onto his desk, “Do you think my dark circles will fade if I sleep now? I have like fifteen minutes.”

“I don’t think that’s gonna make any- oh he’s here.” Jimin cuts himself off and Hoseok immediately springs up from his seat.

“Hyung! You-oh.” Hoseok has to pause every train of thought that was going through his head as soon as his eyes catch the sight of Yoongi.

Summer is approaching now that June has begun. The police uniforms are now short-sleeved and thinner, and the mafia seems to have the same regime, because, wow.

Trench coats are too thick for the warming weather, so Yoongi’s arms are now bared, gloveless. The black shirt is still there, but rolled up to the elbows, and gone is the tie and the top button. Even his hair, the usual slicked back look is now more subtle, side-parted and resting naturally on his forehead. One hand holding a particularly large bag of food and the other tapping through his phone, Min Yoongi almost looks like any other pedestrian.

“Hey,” Yoongi tucks his phone back once he spots Hoseok, handing out the bag to him, “noodles came faster than I thought.” He looks up at Hoseok, “You okay?”

Hoseok spent the past few days contemplating his feelings and getting used to everything. While Namjoon was certain that it’s mutual, he doesn’t want to rush into any conclusion that may possibly disappoint him.

The possibility that nothing will come out of it lingers, and Hoseok did fear that it will hurt when this agreement of theirs is over, and it’ll increase tenfold if Hoseok let’s himself go and just
indulge in what he has now.

It’s going to hurt.

It’s going to hurt, but Yoongi is here right now, and Hoseok loves Yoongi right now. Why can’t he just enjoy being Yoongi’s boyfriend right now?

“Hoseok?” Yoongi’s voice, calm with a certain edge, makes Hoseok bite back this huge smile before he steps closer to take Yoongi’s hand that’s holding the food into his and pull him closer to kiss him on the cheek. Right, he can do that. “Oh, hi.”

“Hi hyung,” Hoseok smiles as he drags Yoongi into the office by their hands, “thanks for this.”

“Hi hyung!” Jungkook runs up to hook both arm around Yoongi like a koala as soon as they’re at his desk, “Yoongi hyung’s here!” He announces.

“We all saw him walk in,” Jimin deadpans before he turns to smile at Yoongi, “hi hyung. Digging the new look.”

“Thanks, it’s still a work attire,” Yoongi remarks, “no more heavy trench coats for a few months.”

“Work attire, you say,” Jimin hums, “does that mean everyone in the mafia dresses like this now?”

Yoongi smirks, “Yeah, Namjoon hasn’t turned up yet though.”

Jimin’s expression shifts, not even acknowledging the fact he didn’t even mention Namjoon for Yoongi to catch on, “Wait, why not?”

“He’s taking a week off to recover.” Yoongi mutters under his breath, “It really had to be now too.”

Yoongi hasn’t been in the happiest mood since he came in. Hoseok makes a note to ask him about it later.

For now, he says instead, “Poor guy. You should’ve gone a bit easy on him, Jimin.”

Jimin jumps, “Wha- it was an accident!”

“What is?” Yoongi raises an eyebrow.

“Jimin beat the shit out of his crush.” Jungkook answers.

Jimin sputters, “I did not.”

Yoongi cocks his head to the side, “Who? Namjoon? That giant leg monster that’s like twice his size?”

“Yeah, broke his back with an aikido flip.” Taehyung adds as he starts digging through the bag of food.

“Wow…” Yoongi gapes, “is that what you call a tsundere?”

“No,” Taehyung objects “more like a dorodere.”

“What the fuck is a dorodere?” The mafioso furrows his brows.

Taehyung tuts, “Update your weeaboo vocabulary, hyung.”
“Isn’t it more like bakadere?” Jungkook speaks through his noodles. Hoseok didn't even notice when he got them from the bag.

“That’s what he wants you to think.”

“Oh my god, shut up!” Jimin throws a spare pen at the spontaneous conspiring triangle, but Yoongi manages to catch it with one hand.

Jungkook and Taehyung suddenly turn to each other with wide eyes as if they’ve reached an epiphany when they shout simultaneously, “Borodere.”

“Let's just eat,” Hoseok starts clearing his desk to make space for food, completely ignoring this meaningless discourse.

Yoongi looks around awkwardly, still standing, “Ah, there aren’t any spare chairs around here.”

Grinning, Hoseok reaches for Yoongi's hand, now warm from the growing summer heat, devoid of cold leather gloves. “Come sit with me, hyung,” he guides Yoongi closer until he's close enough for Hoseok to pull him into his lap. “Good.” He hugs him close and presses his cheek against his back. This feels great.

He can feel Yoongi chuckle from the vibration against his face, “Eat your food.”

“In a bit,” Hoseok nuzzles into Yoongi's shoulder. He has a new cologne on, and this one feels lighter, sweeter almost. He likes it.

A hand runs through Hoseok's hair, “What's up with you today, hm?”

“Missed you. That's all.” Hoseok murmurs against Yoongi’s shoulder.

He feels Yoongi chuckle again, “Since when did you get so cute?” A kiss plants itself on the side of his head and Hoseok almost squeals as he squeezes Yoongi tighter.

“Something smells and for once it's not the captain.” Jungkook fake coughs.

Taehyung is smiling at them as he mixes the sauce around in his noodles, “Give hyung a break. They haven't seen each other in a while.”

“Thank you, Tae.” Hoseok smiles back at the boy, “also, the captain's not here today, so,” he tilts his head to kiss Yoongi's cheek and a wave of fake, sickening lavender hits them.

Jungkook sets his handy febreze spray back down before he turns back to his food, ignoring Hoseok and Yoongi’s coughing, “Not when I’m eating, just, please.”

Taehyung whips his head up, “Wait, the captain's not here today?”

“Hm? Yeah,” Hoseok looks up too, “he went out for a meeting or something.”

Something seems to suddenly register in Jungkook too, because they both turn to look at each other.

“Food first?” Taehyung asks and Jungkook nods before they go back to stuffing their faces.

Jimin arches an eyebrow, “What's going on here?”

“Things,” Taehyung says simply, “opinions on what kind of dere Yoongi hyung is?”
“A thugdere of course.” Jungkook chimes in, “It’s obvious.”

“No no, you’re thinking too shallowly,” Taehyung warns him, “allow me to introduce you to: mayadere.”

Jungkook gasps, “You fucking genius.”

“You guys are digging into my past weebahoo phase in highschool and I don’t like it,” Jimin remarks.

“Oh trust me, it’s not a phase,” Taehyung says, “it’s a repressed thought.”

As the younger boys’ conversation drifts off into that sort of direction, Hoseok tightens his hold around Yoongi, hooking his chin over his shoulder, “Are you okay?”


“Work?”

“Yeah,” Warm hands come down to hold Hoseok’s, “it’s pretty stressful right now. Lots of disagreements and stuff, but my dad’s not listening.”

Hoseok hums, “Am I exhausting you even more with this?”

“No,” Yoongi sits back against Hoseok, “I’m recharging, actually.”

Hoseok snorts, “Cheesy.” He can feel a vibration against his right leg, and Yoongi breaks the hold to sit up and fish his phone out of his pocket.

He frowns when he sees the screen, “Speak of the devil,” he turns to Hoseok, “I’ll be back.”

As soon as Yoongi leaves the office, the three boys interrogate Hoseok.

“I know you guys are kinda like, disgustingly in love or whatever,” Jimin starts, “but what’s so special about today?”

“Yeah, the PDA is off the roof,” Jungkook grimaces.

“I think you two are cute together,” Taehyung offers.

Hoseok blushes, “Well… I guess I just realized how much I lo-like him?”

Taehyung’s eyes light up, “Really?” he shifts to rest his elbows on Hoseok’s desk, hands cupping his face as he listens, “What happened?”

“It wasn’t just one thing, it’s a lot,” Hoseok smiles as he recalls, “he was so worried about me, and he got really mad for my sake, and he was so caring afterwards and I just… wow,” he laughs, “Namjoon told me he saved my life when I was at the hospital.”

“He what?” Jungkook gapes.

Hoseok can’t seem to bite down his wide smile, “The doctor said it was a miracle I survived, and I never really knew what happened, but it turns out that Yoongi hyung was the miracle. He visited me at the hospital and kissed me.”

“He…” Jimin’s mouth is agape and his eyes are shiny. He never finished his sentence.
“I was wrong,” Jungkook wipes his eyes, “please make out all you want. Shit.”

“Might have to leave soon,” Yoongi re-enters the office with a frown, “gotta go back to more arguing and call it work. I-” The rest of his sentence is muffled by three physically grown men much larger than him and their gigantic arms. “...Okay?”

Yoongi is barely visible under the barricade of what is mostly Taehyung’s torso. Only the top of his head is sticking out from the tight hug and Hoseok, though smiling, is slightly concerned whether the guy is able to breathe or not.

“You’re the best,” Jungkook mumbles, “the absolute best.”

Hoseok can see Yoongi’s hand coming up to rub Jungkook’s back, fond.

“Taehyung,” Yoongi says once the embrace finally loosens, “I need to talk to you before I go.”

“Me?” Taehyung points at himself even though he heard Yoongi clearly, “Sure, hyung.”

Yoongi nods before he turns to Hoseok, “I’m off.”

Rising from his chair, Hoseok pulls Yoongi toward him to kiss the corner of his mouth, “Thanks for coming.”

With a smile so fond Hoseok almost swoons, Yoongi traces a hand up Hoseok's neck before pulling away from him, and walking out with Taehyung at his heels.

* 

“They did a pretty great job building this whole front part. It doesn’t look suspicious at all.” Seokjin remarks as he opens the barely attached glass door for Yoongi. “It’s been a while.”

“It has. Taehyung told me he only realized what it was because he saw Shin and his men standing around at the front.” Yoongi scrunches his nose as he takes a whiff of the store, “Smells like shit in here.”

“That’s what their imported stuff smells like. Apparently they had to store them in animal feces in order to ship them around as fertilizers.” Seokjin covers his nose with his pink handkerchief, “This is unbearable though.” He kicks a few pieces of broken chairs and dead wood out of the way for them to enter the backroom.

“So this was where they held Hoseok?” Yoongi drags a finger over a suspicious stain, sniffs it, and that turns out to be a huge mistake so he grabs Seokjin’s handkerchief to wipe his hand clean, ignoring the elder’s curse as he walks over to the back of the room. “Yup, that’s definitely your shitty drawing.”

“There it is,” Seokjin peeks over his shoulder, “I used a water base coloring pencil to draw it, so it can never be fully covered by paint.”

“The narcissus daffodil thing lives,” Yoongi comments, “I don’t think we ever settled on what it is.”

“I’ve always said it’s a narcissus, since that’s my birth flower. You just never came to understand
“my artistic vision.”

“Well I still believe that it’s a daffodil, and you drew it with the intention to flatter me.”

“Oh you wish.” They both laugh.

Seokjin traces a finger over the barely visible squiggles on the corroding wall, “This was the time I joined the mafia, wasn’t it?”

Yoongi nods, “It was the first time I visited your place too.” He looks around, “It feels so cramped now, I don’t understand how you managed to survive, sleeping and waking up to this everyday.”

Seokjin shrugs, “I get by. I didn’t have to deal with it too often since my mom would be the only one home while I go out to work.”

“Mrs. Kim Yoonah,” Yoongi recalls, “she wasn’t very happy about you vandalizing your wall.”

“She wasn’t. I remember regretting it and feeling really guilty,” Seokjin chuckles, “it serves as a good memento now though, after everything.”

Yoongi’s mouth quirk up into a half smile, “Sure.”

“Shut up.”

“I haven’t said anything.”

“Your face is saying enough,” Seokjin scolds, “I told you I’m poor and I live under the bridge. Don’t act like this is a surprise to you.”

Yoongi looks around the small room, confined and tucked away from the rest of the world, “Do you like living here?”

“Of course not, but you’ve already helped us out enough.”

“There’s no exact quantitative measure to how much I’ve helped you,” Yoongi counters, “I can help you get out of this.”

Seokjin scoffs, “And you’d do that because?”

“Because I know what it feels like to be someone’s last hope.”

“You’re fifteen years old, act like it.”

“You’re sixteen, like that’s any better.”

“You brat.”

“Hyung,” Yoongi says, “You can help your mother and extend your bloodline. It doesn’t have to end here.”

Seokjin sighs as he rests his head on the wall, hand gripping a stray coloring pencil on the ground before lightly scraping it against the flat surface.

“What are you drawing?”
“I’m making an indent to the world, to record that Kim Seokjin was here.”

“And what the fuck is that supposed to be? A daffodil?”

“It’s a narcissus of course, my birth flower.”

“It looks like a daffodil to me.”

“Well I’m the artist here.” Seokjin drops the pencil to the floor, “There, now I’m remembered.”

“By who?”

Seokjin hums, “You, I guess.”

“So you’ll be forgotten as soon as I die?”

“Guess I’ll have to settle with that. My family consists only of me and my mother.”

“You won’t be forgotten,” Yoongi says, “at least your mother won’t be.”

“And why is that?”

“I made them name the school after her.”

“You what!?”

“It’s called Kim Yoonah’s school for the blind. It’s real.”

“...You brat, I’ll owe you for the rest of my life like this.”

Yoongi smirks, “You can join the clan if you want. We need more manpower anyway, and we’ll take care of you and your mother.”

Seokjin chuckles, “Is this a life contract?”

Yoongi points at the confusing flower scribble on the wall, “This daffodil is the determinant.”

“It’s a narcissus.”

“What’s the difference anyway?” Seokjin says suddenly.

“There’s a difference but then again there’s no difference.” Yoongi shrugs. “I think generally daffodils are yellow and narcissuses are white.”

“I was thinking more about what difference does it make if this scribble is a daffodil or a narcissus, but sure.”

“I saw a daffodil when you showed it to me in the video.” Yoongi says.

“Well I saw a narcissus when I noticed it.” Seokjin counters, “It really doesn’t matter, huh.”

“No,” Yoongi agrees, “thank god for it though. We wouldn’t have found Hoseok otherwise.”

“Yeah,” Seokjin brushes a hand over the drawing before he parts with it, “thank god indeed.”
Not all mafiosi live in an expensive mansion feared by many. The lower ranks who live separately are quite easy to spot once you start looking. They are part of an organization that runs pretty much every huge business in the city, and it shows in the way they dress and the cars they own. Despite the illusion, however, a typical gang member can be found living in poor apartment complexes a few streets away from the mansion.

The floor of the corridor is worn out, with suspicious stains littered all over. Jimin fastens his grip on the grocery bag he’s holding before he wills himself to knock on the old wooden door that’s chipping away at the bottom.

It takes a minute for the door to creak open and Jimin gapes.

“Jimin?” Namjoon brushes his bangs out of his eyes, pushing his glasses up his nose. This giant, noodle of a man in casual clothes has to be the best thing to witness on planet Earth. Thank the Sun for summer, because those shorts rise every time Namjoon shifts, and his thin white shirt sits too nicely on his chest.

Jimin mentally slaps himself before he answers with a smile that should be cute enough, “Hi hyung.”


Namjoon quickly hides it behind the door with another laugh, “I didn’t expect any visitors. How did you know where I live?”

“Yoongi hyung gave me the address,” Jimin rubs his neck sheepishly, “are you busy?”

“Nope,” Namjoon steps to the side to let Jimin into the room, “my place isn’t the grandest though, if you don’t mind.”

The apartment complex of ace assistant Kim Namjoon has one room with a mattress and other living supplies cramped into the small space, and a door to the bathroom, presumably.

“Is this what the mafia supplied you with?” Jimin asks after a quick glance at everything.

Namjoon shakes his head, “Yoongi hyung wanted to get me a better place, but I insisted on living here. It’s simple, and the rent is cheap,” he shrugs, “and with how powerful the mafia is, I just wanted to live somewhere normal.” He turns back to Jimin with a smile, “Is there a reason why you wanted to see me?”

Jimin pulls himself out of those dimples, “Ah, yes,” he holds up his fabric shopping bag, “I got you a few cool pads and painkillers for you injury.”

“Ah,” Namjoon smiles, “you really didn’t have to.”

“I almost broke your back, hyung. Let me do this to make it up.” He starts digging through the bag, “Have you been icing the bruise?”
“Oh,” That doesn’t sound good, “... Not as much as I’d like to admit.”

“Hyung, how are you going to get better?” Jimin pouts, “Can I see?”

Namjoon awkwardly turns around and lifts his shirt up a little.

There’s a long scar that sits just above his lower back, spanning across his torso. Jimin forces — *forces* himself to focus on the dark purple bruise that spans across Namjoon’s lower back and hisses, “That doesn’t look good.”

Namjoon sputters, “I do try to ice it, I just keep forgetting.” Jimin looks up and the back of the older man’s neck is tinted red. He has a mole there similar to Jimin’s. Maybe if they were soulmates, things wouldn’t be so complicated. He snaps out of it as he pulls out a few cool pads, “This should help.”

He thinks back to the times he had seen Hoseok and Yoongi, soulmates, helping each other with their injuries. Just a touch and then it’s gone, not a trace left on their skin. Maybe if Jimin and Namjoon were made for each other, maybe if he could wipe away Namjoon’s pain just from his fingertips - maybe then, Namjoon would like him back.

He gently sets the cool pad on the dark bruise, careful not to push too hard and hurting Namjoon. “Does that feel better?”

Namjoon exhales, “Much better. Thank you.” He fixes his shirt back down before he turns to Jimin, “Have you just got off from work?”

Jimin looks down at his uniform, “Yeah, I kept worrying about you so I decided to come over.”

“I see,” Namjoon smiles again, “you can stay for a bit if you wish. I’m not that entertaining though.”

“Just looking at you is entertaining enough.” Jimin blurts out. *Shit.*

Namjoon’s eyes widen at that before he laughs, “Is my face that funny?”

“No! No,” Everything Jimin says at this point never went through any processing in his brain before he says it, “You’re really handsome! It’s a joy to look at!”

The older man goes quiet, and this is it, this is how Jimin goes.

“I’m-” Namjoon ducks his head, his face scrunching up into the widest of smiles before a hand comes up to hide it, “you’ve caught me off-guard with that.”

It strikes Jimin then, that Kim Namjoon is the cutest idiot of a dork the world has ever created, and he *loves* it.

“You’re really pretty, hyung,” Jimin smiles. “You’re so tall too, like a model.”

Namjoon snorts through his hands, “You’re just saying things now.”

“It’s true!” Jimin argues.

“God...” Namjoon rubs his face, cheeks now a vibrant scarlet, round and dewy. “Thank you...?”

“You’re very welcomed.” Jimin crosses his arms with pride.
“Moving on from uh, my face,” Namjoon tries to change the subject as he sits himself down on the floor next to a small coffee table, “how’s work?”

Jimin shrugs as he joins him, “Same as usual. The captain has been out a lot so we have to handle things ourselves and listen to Seojoon hyung boss us around, but it’s fine.” He looks up at Namjoon, “How about you, hyung?.... can I ask?”

Namjoon laughs, “Of course. I’m taking a break but I’m also still working on a few things. We’re looking to work with a few artists and I’m just compiling some names.”

“That’s interesting,” Jimin hums, “tell me more? If you can?”

“Well, after looking more into that...incident with Hoseok a few days ago, we found out that Shin Soobin managed to deceive Hoseok by making him believe that they were soulmates.”

Jimin’s eyes widen, “They did that?”

Namjoon nods, “They made a replica of his phone and crafted a fake birth flower onto it so it looks like it had bloomed from the phone like the soulmate touch. Apparently it looked really real though.” he grins, “So I’m tracking down the artist that did it to see if we can get them on our side.”

Jimin mirrors the grin, “That’s really clever.”

“Thank you.” The older man smiles sheepishly. “I heard that Yoongi hyung visited the station today?”

“He did,” Jimin confirms, resting his elbows in the table as he slumps onto his hands, “Hoseok hyung was all over him.”

“I can imagine,” Namjoon chuckles, “it must be nice to have someone you can just shamelessly love like that.”

Something tugs at Jimin’s chest at his words, and he tries to push down any negative thoughts that’ll haunt him later. “Yeah,” he says instead, “I wonder what it’s like to be in a relationship.”

Namjoon’s eyes widen, “What do you mean? You’ve never...?”

Shit.

“Ah, well, this sounds really lame, but yeah. I’ve never actually dated anyone.”

“How is that possible? You’re like,” Namjoon gestures to Jimin as a whole, “this doesn’t sound real.”

“Hyung,” Jimin coos to cover the fact that he’s all too embarrassed right now, “you’re flustering me for no reason.”

“What? I’m genuinely confused!” Namjoon retorts, “You’re really handsome, Jimin-ah, you’re the type of guy everyone flocks to at bars and stuff.”

“But that’s it, isn’t it?” Jimin smiles but it’s sad, “It’s for a few drinks, maybe a night, because I’m that type of guy,” he laughs dryly, “I’m never someone people want to ask out, no one ever chooses me when it comes to that.” The words slip out of his mouth, as if pent-up, too fast for him to stop it, “Shit, sorry, I’m oversharing.”

“It’s fine, I understand now,” Namjoon is quiet for a second and he has that guilty look on his face.
again, “I should be sorry for poking into something I shouldn’t. It’s bold of me to be like that when I’ve only been in one serious relationship my whole life.”

“With… Seokjin hyung?”

Namjoon nods, “I thought he was my soulmate because I’d get goosebumps when I see him, but then it went away after we started dating for a while. Turns out it was just nerves.” He shrugs, “We still tried though, for a few months. I really did care for him so I thought it’d be fine but it just… fizzled I guess.” He looks up suddenly, “Now I’m the one who’s oversharing. You don’t wanna hear this, sorry.”

Of course, Jimin didn’t hype himself up in the mirror for at least a minute to ask Yoongi for Namjoon’s address, and rejected Taehyung’s invitation to a Ghibli movie marathon just so he could come sit on Namjoon’s floor and listen to his crush talk about his old relationship. That doesn’t mean he’ll just leave, or tell Namjoon to talk about something else just because it’s not what he planned to hear though. The way the words slip past Namjoon so easily reminds Jimin of himself, and those nights where he’d just vent to Taehyung until late, all pent up and emotional, unable to stop once he had started. He remembers the relief that washes him the morning after, the sometimes faint but there feeling of resolve he’d get even if the issue itself hasn’t been resolved through the course of one night.

Maybe Namjoon needs to get out whatever it is that’s manifesting inside of him. Maybe then he’d feel better, and Jimin is more than happy to do that for him. He doesn’t want to hear Namjoon apologize anymore.

“Hyung,” Jimin reaches for his hands, and Namjoon makes no move to pull away, “no more apologies, okay?” Namjoon’s hands are warm beneath his palm and he revels in their hands’ size difference before he looks back up at the elder with a small smile, “I’m here to listen if you wanna talk. How did it just fizzled out?”

Namjoon clears his throat, “Honestly, I think I’ve always seen him as more like a brother anyway. I guess I was just lonely, for many reasons, and he was there, so it just happened.” He laughs, “Maybe it’s also because I wasn’t used to being in the mafia back then, what with the physical and mental stress that comes from adapting to the change.” Namjoon sighs, “I love hyung, but we’d see each other at work when we’re mafiosi, gang members, and it made it so that when I see him outside of work, I’d be reminded of all the horrors I’ve seen at work, and seeing him didn’t make me happy anymore. It sucks.”

“I’m sorry to hear that,” Jimin strokes over the back of Namjoon’s hand with his thumb, “you two are fine now, right?”

“Yeah,” Namjoon smiles, “I got over that feeling once I got used to the whole mafia regime, but we both agreed that the love we have for each other isn’t romantic. I’m really grateful for Jin hyung, he helped me out a lot when I was trying to get accustomed to this kind of life.”

“Please don’t take this the wrong way but,” Jimin’s hands come to a pause, “it...doesn’t really sound like you wanted to join the mafia at all?”

“Hah,” Namjoon makes a noise that supposedly sounds like a laugh, “I guess you’re wondering why I abandoned becoming a police sergeant?”

Jumin sputters, “Ah- well, you don’t have to tell me. I’m just curious. If it’s something personal then I’ll apologize profusely and pretend it didn’t happen.”
“Yeah it’s…it’s pretty personal.” Namjoon admits.

“Right,” Jimin starts to retract his hands, as much as he hates to, “I’m very sorry for sticking my nose into—”

“I’ll tell you if you’re here to listen,” Namjoon reaches for his hands before he could pull away completely, “it’s a lot though...so only if you want to.”

“I’m here.” Jimin assures him.

Namjoon clenches his jaw and furrows his brow, as if arranging his words mentally before he starts, “My parents weren’t the best parents. They weren’t stable people, and they’d hit me for whatever reason they can come up with. I would come home a bit late and they’d hit me, I would come home at the right time and they’d still hit me.” He ducks his head down, no longer meeting Jimin’s eye contact, “I know you saw the scar on my back. It was from when my dad hit me with a chair for ‘giving him paper with an attitude,’ or whatever.” He air quotes. “I hated living there.”

Namjoon is properly holding Jimin’s hand now, and Jimin would be flustered across universes if it’s for any other reason, but now the elder is gripping it so tight as he collects himself. “If it’s hard, then don’t have to say it, hyung.”

He shakes his head, “I...I think I really need to let it out.” He’s quiet for a moment before he continues, “Yoongi hyung had always been a savior of mine of some sorts. Whenever he’d come over to stay, my parents wouldn’t hit me. After I told him about the situation, he insisted on visiting every night, or even inviting me to stay over at his house, but my parents never let me.” The grip on Jimin’s hand loosens somewhat, “I wanted to become a police officer so that I could stop this from happening to someone else, put these people behind bars. I didn’t talk to Yoongi hyung as often when I started attending the police academy, but that was understandable.”

“Right,” Jimin acknowledges, “it must’ve been awkward for you, with the rivalry and all.”

“I met Hoseok at the police academy and I managed to make a living for myself, but I didn’t have enough money to move out, so I was still stuck there,” Namjoon frowns, “My dad punched me in the face as soon as I got home from taking the exam, and I just broke I guess. That was like the tipping point for me, and I suddenly decided that I couldn’t take it anymore. I didn’t know who to go to so I just went to Yoongi hyung, and that was when it happened.”

Jimin looks up at him, “What did?”

“You’d be a great help to the mafia,” Yoongi told him.

“Hyung, I don’t want you to feel sorry for me,” Namjoon said, “I appreciate the offer, but I really don’t want your pity.”

“This isn’t me showing you pity, I just think that the mafia needs someone like you.” said Yoongi. “It’s a plea, not an offer.”

“I didn’t have to see my parents again, the mafia left them a threat that was enough for them to let me go.” Namjoon says, “They got arrested for tax evasion and possession of illegal substances a week later. A full file of evidence was sent to the police by an anonymous party, but I could guess who it was. I’ve vowed to protect Yoongi hyung ever since.” He turns to smile at Jimin, “That’s
“I see,” Jimin returns the smile but it reduces to a sad little one, “I’m sorry to hear that you’ve been through something so traumatizing.”

“I’m fine now,” Namjoon pats Jimin’s hand, “thank you for listening to me, I owe you one.”

“You really don’t, hyung.”

“I do.”

“No you don’t,” Jimin squeezes Namjoon’s hand, “just… take it as a thank you for helping us find Hoseok hyung, I couldn’t have done it without you.”

“He’s my friend too,” Namjoon smiles, “I wouldn’t have known if you didn’t somehow manage to get my personal number and call me.”

“Ah, about that…” Jimin’s face suddenly heats up and he throws his free hand up in front of him, “I didn’t stalk you or something like that! Yoongi hyung used my phone to call you this one time so I still had it in my phone.” He rubs the back of his neck, “It’s really creepy, I’ll delete it if you-”

“I mean,” Namjoon interrupts him, “…you don’t have to.”

“What?”

“Well,” Namjoon sputters, “I wouldn’t mind uh, keeping in touch and stuff? Since we’re friends anyway and well are we friends? I’m assuming things again.”

Jimin needs a moment to gather himself. From this whole experience, he’s learned that Kim Namjoon is the biggest dork to ever grace the planet and Jimin is just too in love with this concept he’s about to scream.

“Yes, hyung,” Jimin tries to say without bursting and tackling Namjoon onto his back. He succeeds, “we’re friends.”

* 

“We’re going out to do some more police stuff,” Taehyung announces as he drags Jungkook up from his desk.

“It’s 8:30 am. Work barely started.” Hoseok deadpans, “What’s up with you two?”

“Nothing,” Jungkook says, “we’re just two diligent officers going out for a patrol to relive the good ol’ days.”

“Something’s definitely up,” Hoseok rises from his seat and makes his way towards them, “you two have been like this for a whole week, is there something…?” He gestures at Taehyung and Jungkook, emphasizing their linked hands.

Hoseok can see the panic in Taehyung’s eyes, but then the boy holds the locked hands up, “We’re dating.” He blurts out.
Hoseok chokes, “You’re what?!”

Jungkook chokes too, but then he seems to catch up “We’re!?- oh yeah, haha, definitely.” He grabs Taehyung’s face and kisses his cheek, “Love my bro.”

Hoseok is speechless.

“That’s what it is,” Taehyung laughs nervously, “we’re just, uh...we’re-

“Sneaking out to go do some secret lovers gay stuff!” Jungkook finishes.

“Yes!” Taehyung confirms, “That’s what I was gonna say, hah, see ya hyung.”

Hoseok awkwardly waves as he watches the two drag each other out of the station, “Have fun…?”

★

“No homo.” Jungkook repeats again.

“No homo.” Taehyung follows suit.

“No homo.”

“No homo.”

“I love you but like no homo.”

“Yeah, we’re both gay but like no homo.”

“Definitely none.”

“Do you think hyung was convinced?”

“Maybe.”

When they’ve reached Jungkook’s apartment, all the files are already spread out on the table.

“I woke up early today from the stress so I started putting things together before I had to leave for work,” Jungkook explains, “but I’m quite positive this will work.”

Taehyung stares down at the photographs and old case files, “We still have that voice recording, right?” Jungkook nods, “We’ll get him, then.”

Jungkook nods again to himself before he reaches for the files, “Now we just have to put everything in order and turn it in.”

“Right,” Taehyung reaches for an empty file and slips the printed photographs into it, watching as his captain’s dark face disappears under the brown envelope.

★
Things seem to be going okay.

Namjoon is back at work, according to Jimin, who is especially cheerful these days. Jungkook and Taehyung never really explained what is going on between them, but they seem much more relaxed and satisfied than the past few weeks.

The only things that don’t seem so good are the sudden downpour since early in the morning and Yoongi’s phone call.

Hoseok sees Yoongi’s figure just under the large roof of his umbrella. He doesn’t approach him like he did weeks ago at the station, doesn’t reach for him or kiss him because the atmosphere feels off. They’re standing in a quiet area of a park, as quiet as rain can be, and Yoongi’s face appears almost gloomier than the gray weather.

“Hey hyung,” Hoseok greets anyway, “wanted a change of scenery?”

Yoongi shakes his head, “I’m not going near your rat hole again.”

Hoseok frowns, “Are you mad?”

“Not at you, no.” Yoongi shifts closer to him, as close as their umbrellas would allow them. “At everything else, probably.”

“What’s wrong?”

“My father.” Yoongi answers simply, but bitter. “Shit happens when Namjoon isn’t here and this is a great fucking example of that.”

Hoseok’s heart drop, “What happened? Is the head chief okay?”

“Oh he’s absolutely kicking, especially after making such a great decision that affects everyone like that,” Yoongi’s sarcasm is clear.

“Hyung,” Hoseok reaches for Yoongi’s free hand and Yoongi lets him, “what did he do?”

Yoongi bites his lip and ducks his head down.

“It’s an alliance,” Captain Bang announces. “With this great agreement, we hope that the city’s crime rate will go down by almost a half.”

Hoseok isn’t really processing anything at this point. He still remembers Yoongi’s words from days ago, strained and solemn, and regretful. He doesn’t know how any of this is going to happen.

“Because of the bravery and determination both parties have shown in saving our officer Jung Hoseok, we’ve decided to set our past disagreements aside and start anew with peace.” The captain explains, “For the past few weeks, I’ve been meeting with the mafia to come up with the perfect contract. This police precinct will discontinue our investigations on the Min clan permanently, as they have agreed to utilize their brand new unit against any Chinese or Japanese infiltration into the city’s crime scene, which is believed to be in charge of over half the crime in our department.”

“So our crime rates would go down from the help of the mafia,” Someone mutters, “ironic.”
“There may be an us and a them, and that may never change,” the captain says, “but we will all do our share of making this city a better place.”

There’s a few applauds at the end of the captain’s speech, a lot of murmuring and questions before Hoseok notices Jungkook and Taehyung rise up from their seats, teeth gritted as they make their way to the front of the briefing room.

Catching the captain off-guard, Jungkook grabs his arms, locking his wrists with his handcuffs. It causes a loud outcry, a few people trying to stop him, but Taehyung seems to be doing his part of preventing anyone else from coming near them.

Jungkook says something then, to the captain, but it feels like an announcement or exposé meant for everyone to hear,

Hoseok hears it.

Hoseok registers it.

Hoseok doesn’t want to believe it.

Hoseok can’t believe it.

“Bang Sihyuk,” Jungkook says coldly, “you’re under arrest for the possession and trafficking of illegal substances, money laundering, and the murder of the Min and Jung family.”

This is the tipping point.

What was once barely held together break apart.

Flowers wilt, stars die.

Hoseok’s whole world is suddenly flooded with a wave so powerful he’s pushed to the very bottom.

Chapter End Notes

in case you don’t speak weeb:

- a tsundere is a character (typically women) that secretly likes someone but acts cold towards them
- a dorodere is a character that is sweet and lovable on the outside, but messed up and disturbed on the inside
- a bakadere is a character that is pretty much just stupidly in love
- a borodere is a character that lash out when they’re embarrassed
- a thugdere is a male tsundere who acts like a thug on the outside, but are actually very kind and caring on the inside
- a mayadere is a character that starts as the vicious and dangerous bad guy in the beginning, but once falls in love turns and switches sides.

im sorry. like really sorry.
my twitter,
my curiouscat
Even though his body hurts, he pinches himself, but he doesn’t wake up to a better reality.
It’s starting to sink in then, that this is his reality.

WARNINGS for:
- minor character death (NOT yoongi’s dad)
- violence

this is just really sad i’m so sorry

“What’s on your mind?”

Even though he’s exhausted, Yoongi looks up at his friend who seems to be spacing out. He does it a lot, Yoongi notices from the five years they’ve known each other for. Namjoon’s head is tipped up towards the sky, or perhaps the remnants of it with the sheet of thickening dark clouds that lay over it.

“The sky is looking a bit gray today,” Namjoon squints up through his glasses, fixing the bagpack strap on his shoulders, “feels like an omen.”

“I really don’t need that kind of energy right now,” Yoongi pants as they cross another street. Stopping to take a breather as he hunches over to rest on his knees, he grumbles, “How am I supposed to do this every morning?”

“Not just every morning, we have to walk home too,” Namjoon corrects him and Yoongi groans in response, “you’re the one who told your mom to stop dropping us off and picking us up at school, hyung.”

“I didn’t think it’d be this exhausting,” Yoongi mumbles, “my legs aren’t made for this.”

“It’s leg training,” Namjoon laughs even though he’s also sweating himself, “we’ll get used to it I guess. Maybe the rest of the day will be better.”

Yoongi looks up at the gray sky. Maybe.
“What time is it?”

“Let me check my phone,” Hoseok feels his mother say from the passenger seat, “Hoseok, can you hold Sunhee?”.

“Sure, hi Sunny.” Hoseok reaches forward to take his little sister into his arms. Sunhee’s teeth is starting to grow, and her little bites are edging into the pain category, but he doesn’t mind.

“It’s 7:32 am,” His mother says, frowning.

“You might be late,” His father grumbles as he squints toward the main road, “it looks like it’s going to rain soon.”

“I don’t mind,” Hoseok assures him, glancing at his backpack seated next to him.

His father snickers as he makes a turn, “Of course you don’t.”

“What’s wrong?”

Seokjin looks up from his feet and smiles weakly at the owner of the voice, “Nothing, ma’am. I’m fine.”

The chieftess frowns, “Well you don’t look it.” She strides closer to where Seokjin is standing in the hallway, “What’s the matter?”

There’s no way to escape the chieftess once she starts to pester, Seokjin knows that. He sighs and confesses, “I’m a bit worried about my mother.”

“I’m a bit worried about my mother.”

“Is she okay?” The chieftess suddenly looks concerned.

“That’s the point,” Seokjin says solemnly, “I don't know if she's okay. I haven't seen her in a while,” He mumbles, “Haven't gotten the chance to.”

“Is that Min Hongdo overworking you again?” She suddenly looks furious, simply enraged by the thought of her husband. “Just tell me if he is, I'll get it sorted.”

“Oh no, not at all.” Seokjin's hands shoot up in defense, “Work is fine. I understand that there’s a lot to do now, especially since we're starting a few new projects.”

“We need to get you more breaks,” The chieftess grumbles, her tone similar to Yoongi’s when he’s thinking. “You don't have to drive me today then. I'll drive myself.”

Seokjin's eyes widen, “The meeting in ten minutes? You really don't have to. I can drive you.”

“I can drive just fine,” She retorts, “if you don't want to test that then go visit your mother with your new free time.”

“Chieftess...I hate to keep owing you,” Seokjin frets, almost guilty. “You've done so much for me already.”
“You don’t owe me anything,” The chieftess argues, “this is my way of showing you gratitude for working so hard all the time, alright?” She pats his shoulders, “Don't worry about me.”

Seokjin watches her figure of daffodil prints on baby blue chiffon further itself away from him down the hallway. He worries, of course, but doesn't act upon it, thinks it's because of the fresh downfall of rain that's making him a bit antsy, and doesn't act upon it.

Maybe he should have.

★

“How long has it been since we left the house?”

It's starting to properly pour now, with clear beads of water hitting the car window as hard as pebbles before getting fluidly wiped away by the windshield wiper just for a new bead of rain to replace it.

“Almost twenty minutes,” Hoseok's mother says. Her eyebrows are now knitted together, with age lines folding on her forehead. “It’s raining hard today.”

“Right. The traffic's awful.” His father sits back into his seat helplessly, tapping on the steering wheel with an impatient tick. They've been stuck in this row of stale cars and red flashing lights for a while and everyone is starting to shift around uncomfortably.

Hoseok's mother sighs, “Accidents are bound to happen.”

★

“Where the fuck is she?”

“Just left the mansion. She's on the shortcut.”

“Is she going to pass through here?”

“She has to. It's the only way to get to the meeting place. Boss thought this through.”

“Right. Is she alone?”

“Yeah. No driver today.”

“Any minute now, then.”

★

“What are you doing?”
“Taking a shortcut.” Hoseok's father answers simply.

“If luck is on our side for the rest of the day, you might just be ten minutes late tops, Hoseok.” His mother turns back to smile at him before turning back to watch the road clear.

“That's great,” Hoseok smiles even though his parents aren't looking, just to push all the uneasiness away.

Luck is on their side.

Luck should be on their side.

Can luck please be on their side?

❀

“Are we close?”

“We're standing right in front of the gate, hyung.” Namjoon checks the time on his phone and whoops victoriously, “*and* we're not late.”

“Thank fuck,” Yoongi wipes the sweat off his forehead, “looks like luck is on our side today.”

“Yeah,” Namjoon smiles.

Luck is on their side.

Luck should be on their side.

Can luck *please* be on their side?

❀

“Is that her?”

“The black car at the corner, yeah.”

“There's two of them. Maybe she has backup.”

“Well we're taking care of that too, then. Is the truck ready?”

“Yeah.”

“Tell everyone to be on standby. Go get into your positions.”

“She's going down.”
“Are you okay?”

Yoongi doesn't realize he had been spacing out until he sees Namjoon's concerned face, “Yeah,” he says, “why?”

“You're looking kinda pale.”

“I'm fine,” Yoongi insists, “when does break start?”

“Ten. We're only twenty minutes into first period, hyung.”

Yoongi stares at the clock with a sigh. Something about today makes him feel uneasy.

Simple conversations start with a question followed by a response. It could be out of genuine curiosity or just something to past time. It's so easy to come up with questions; How are you? What time is it? What are you thinking about? Easy questions, perhaps even easier answers.

It's these little things in life that you'd never even think to appreciate. Not until your questions aren't followed by a response, as simple and easy as they may be.

You don't realize how loud the world is until it's dead silent.

It's silent — Dead silent, when Hoseok's eyes creak open a silver to fat raindrops on his face. All he sees is gray, like something is shielding him from the rest of the world. It's probably the sky. He sees the faintest figures of his parents just in front of him. The droplets fall into his eyes and he squeezes them shut.

He hears it then, the sound of crying, of wailing — Sunhee's — so distinctly her's. But it's so distant and small, like background noise that he can never physically reach out to grab.

He hears too — words — soft and comforting ones. Little shushing noises trying to calm Sunhee down. Like someone is holding her in their arms like how his mother would when she’d cry loud into the night.

He hears then — words — loud murmurs that thrum against the rain like thunder,

“I think that’s all of them,” It says.

“You sure?” Comes another voice, accompanied by the faintest clicks of boots on gravel.
“Oh wait,” The clickings come to a halt, “looks like there are a few left here.”

The shushing little words go quiet as Sunhee screeches and screams into the sky.

“Take care of it then,” One of the voices commands, low and hollow.

“Roger.”

Hoseok creaks his eyes open when hears a sound of thunder — or two. He doesn't have enough time to determine what it is.

‘Clear the streets’ He sees the words somewhere, perhaps printed onto the back of a jacket in bold white font. It’s the last thing Hoseok sees before he's suddenly falling back to sleep.


The nurse’s office is filled with loud panting and Yoongi's pained little sobs as he curls into himself in bed, the sheets following the motion into crescents of waves behind him.

Two strong painkillers later and he's still in the same state he was at the beginning of his sudden painful migraine in class.

Namjoon had carried him as he ran out of class and down the hallways, his head pounding not with pain but adrenaline as he tried not to fall over with how fast he was sprinting. He ignored the calls of the teacher behind him.

He sits there on the stool staring helplessly at his friend. He's never seen Yoongi like this and it's almost terrifying. The nurse seems just as confused, not sure whether to send him to the hospital even though it's just a migraine.

Just as the teacher comes to drag Namjoon back to class, telling him that he's not the one who's injured, Seokjin is at the door.

“I've come to pick Yoongi up,” He says solemnly. Solemnly. Namjoon already knows something has happened.


Hoseok wakes up to blue sheets, weird chemical bleach smells, and the biggest headache he's ever had.

He looks down at his gauzed arm, then to his gauzed leg and his whole face hurts when he breathes. He's barricaded by blue curtains, a blank wall at the foot of his bed. He's alone, and he suddenly panics, breathing faster, more pain but he can't seem to calm down.

Where are his parents?

Where is Sunhee?
What happened?
No answer.

Yoongi is thinking simultaneously about everything and nothing, trying so desperately not to let his mind go into a panic as he sits there on the uncomfortable seat in the waiting room, hands clenched on his knees in a grip vice enough for his knuckles to turn white against his black trousers.

Why is he here?
Where is his mother?
What happened?
No answer.

Loss doesn’t feel real.
It’s nothing new, yet nothing about it makes sense. Not when it’s you who’s experiencing it.

Hoseok feels helpless, like he isn’t alive himself, detached and astral projected to a different universe where none of this is happening. He soon learns of course that said universe is just his brain’s strong refusal to accept the reality and the way things are.

It’s not his fault that he can’t come around to accept, and doesn’t want to. One minute he was sitting in their car, Sunhee in his lap and his parents grumbling about time, and now he’s alone in the hospital bed.

Even though his body hurts, he pinches himself, but he doesn’t wake up to a better reality.

It’s starting to sink in then, that this is his reality.

His reality is his broken arm and leg, the barricade of the hospital bed and the high blue curtains, the waxed floors.

His reality is the stinging smell of bleach and sterilized walls, of rubbing alcohol and smells he can’t name.

His reality is the sound of footsteps and wheels clicking and squeaking unpleasantly against the floors, beeping monitors, and loud, thrumming machines, of coughing and grumbling and mumbling and fumbling. There’s a loud commotion outside the room; shouts of enraged men that vibrate through the walls.

His reality is the salty taste of his tears, the stinging of his eyes where they started slipping before
he could stop them, the painful burn when it slides into his wounds, the cuts and bruises on his face that he can only imagine what they look like.

He clings to his mother at times like this, talks to his father when he feels suffocated with feelings. His body remembers too, habitually reaching out his unbandaged hand, cut and scabbed along the forearm, mouth starting to murmur words he can’t make out but understands — I don’t know what’s happening, I don’t know what to do. What am I supposed to do?

He knows that he’s reaching out to nothing and talking to no one. No mother, no father, no baby sister to make him laugh through his tears — no family.

Hoseok stands in dry land alone, isolated with no one near in the vast grounds that his voice fails to reach no matter how loud he shouts and screams.

Hoseok sobs into himself and his reality, the one he feels like he can never process.

He never did.

❀

Yoongi is mad.

He feels so stubbornly furious for the most reasonable and unreasonable things.

He’s mad that no one would tell him anything, that Seokjin didn’t say anything other than sorry, sorry, and I’m so sorry.

He’s mad that there are so many people it’s irritating him, that he can’t calm down because it’s so loud and messy and cluttered.

He’s so mad that he has to find out what happened through the news anchor on the flat screen television in the waiting room. The bold flashing headline of “Female mafia boss dies from road accident.” too vivid and sudden.

It hits him all at once. The throbbing pain in his head intensifying as his heart thumps painfully in his chest until he’s heaving in his seat, curling into his front as if he’s trying to make himself as small as possible.

It’s the first time Yoongi has ever felt this kind of intensity and he loathes it. He hates the way he’s so confused and clueless, like everything has turned and shielded itself away from him, like he doesn’t actually deserve to know what had happened.

He feels himself drop into the sky, through the clouds and out of the exosphere into the vacuum of space. He’s fallen out of earth, and into somewhere no one can ever see him. He floats through the infinite expanse of the galaxy, though he can’t see any celestial bodies. No pulsars, no clouds of nebulae to guide him. He’s stranded in the middle of the void, where no being can ever hear him no matter how much he shouts. He’ll cry and see the floating dollops of his tears contaminating the universe. Perhaps this is why no one would tell him anything, and this is his punishment for not being good enough.

Yoongi feels like he’ll be stuck floating through space for eternity and longer.
“Yoongi,” He feels his brother say, “are you okay?”

“Fuck you.”

* 

Hoseok doesn’t remember much of the funeral, just the fact that people came and told him they were sorry, that his aunt said that he’ll be coming home with her and his cousin that he didn’t see very often before this.

He looks at the three urns set in front of him. The smallest one had four little buds of roses engraved on it — one for each year.

* 

It makes Yoongi sick every time he looks down at the urn in his arms and remembering what it holds, or what its contents used to be. He swallows his spit and tears as he walks to set it into its place in front of the whole clan. It’s his duty as the true heir, but it makes him sick to have to do this in the first place.

The whole mansion is sullen and stale and Yoongi feels sick. He went through several different doctors but no one could find a cure for his random bursts of migraine, saying that it’s from the trauma and is permanent.

His dad goes ill too after the incident, like half of his life has dissolved and rotted and it feels a shadow of illness and isolation is following him at his heels, ready to get rid of anyone it wants.

It got to Namjoon when he tells him his plans of becoming a police officer and it feels like he’s leaving and Yoongi feels sick, like everyone is going to eventually fade away from him if they haven’t just disappeared in the blink of an eye like his mother did.

And one day he’ll disappear too, pieces of his bone and flesh disintegrating into the galaxy, like ashes and corpses of dead stars that will always remain yet unseen.

* 

Hoseok learns then to not mention the incident since that’s what everybody seems to be doing. He keeps everything stuffed behind clenched teeth that he learns to fake as a smile if he turns the corners of his mouth up high enough. He’s still open and friendly to people, new friends and old ones. He sits like an open book, where anyone can read the two pages where it is opened, but the rest of the book is glued shut. No ending, no beginning.

He doesn’t see it as him changing, but rather him becoming more cautious and careful as to not get hurt.
Yoongi learns then to not mention the incident since that’s what everybody seems to be doing. He keeps everything stuffed behind clenched teeth as his father regains full power over the clan and everything deteriorates into the same mess that he had created before his mother came and took charge. He’s still as reserved as he was before and had managed to stop Seokjin from blaming himself all the time for not being there for his mother. It wasn’t his fault, and Yoongi doesn’t want to hear anymore about it.

Yoongi hasn’t changed, at least not dramatically — there’s just a more deeply rooted reason behind his silence now. He doesn’t see it as him changing, but rather him becoming more cautious and careful as to not get hurt.

Taehyung and Jungkook had spent a month gathering evidence for the case against Bang Sihyuk.

Suspicions arose long before the two of them had walked into a second-hand store with a familiar stench. They investigated allegations against Min Yoongi on drug traffickings that he had denied ever being associated to, and traced back to a farm in China who buried the illegal substances in pig manure in order to pass the delivery off as fertilizers.

Bang Sihyuk kept part of the produce in a drawer under his desk in his office. It was a strict rules that no one was to enter the captain’s office without his permission, not even maids or cleaners.

The evidence include photos and audio recordings of meetings that are held in the storage room of the second-hand store, which was deliberately designed to be unappealing in order to ensure that no outsider would enter all the while avoiding suspicion by the authorities. The people identified from the evidence are drug lord Shin Doyoon and his subordinates, who had previously partnered with the mafia but stopped due to a sudden breach in the contract.

When they were listening back through the recordings, they’ve found another unexpected crime the two have committed.

Bang Sihyuk and Shin Doyoon reminisced to their old days when they partnered together to create “Clear the Streets,” a task force created to take down the mafia and in turn lower the precinct’s crime rate.

On the topic of the late mafia chieftess, Kim Jaehwa, Shin Doyoon used to be one of the suppliers for her. He arranged a meeting with the late chieftess which required her to drive through a specific road that they closed off and sent their men to standby with a truck in order to stage a motor accident. Coincidentally, the Jung family, including Hoseok, his parents, and his baby sister, were also driving through that street with a similar car and were mistaken for subordinates.

The truck drove right into the two cars. The victims were rushed to the hospital, but only Hoseok survived out of the five.
With enough evidence against him, the two of them arrested their captain right after an agreement between the police and mafia was announced.

Bang Sihyuk had confessed that the aim of the agreement was so that his unit would be able to operate more effectively while the Min clan are busy working on the task force against Chinese and Japanese infiltration into the city’s crime scene.

A few days after Bang Sihyuk had been proven guilty, a press conference was held where the two officers explained to the public about how they investigated against and arrested their superior, and that was how news of the captain with shit in his desk broke out.

Hoseok looks at the captain with so many questions in his mind. It’s odd to see him out of uniform and in his handcuffs, as a criminal. He turns to look at Yoongi who’s sitting next to him, eyes focused on the now criminal in front of them.

“Go on then,” Yoongi urges him, “I want names.”

“Bang Sihyuk.” The captain, no—man, murmurs.

Yoongi scowls, “Don’t act cute, I want the name of the bastard who killed my mother.”

He looks up from his cuffed hands and repeats himself, “Bang Sihyuk.”

A snap sounds in the room. Either that, or Hoseok is just imagining it from Yoongi’s reaction.

“You said it yourself that you weren’t the one driving the damn bus,” Yoongi grits his teeth, “don’t play with me.”

“I’m not,” Bang Sihyuk says simply, “the truck didn’t kill them. I did.”

“...You did what?”

“Oh poor Min Yoongi,” A smirk plays at Bang Sihyuk’s lips, “they haven’t told you anything at all, have they?”

Yoongi is quiet.

“Your mother didn’t die from the truck, she’s like a pesky fly,” He starts, “she managed to get out of the car, grab a baby and tried to run away. She didn’t, of course. I shot her.”

Yoongi is quiet.

“Wait, a baby?” Hoseok’s eyes widen, his heart suddenly throbbing in his chest.

“A mother and a crying baby in her arms,” Bang Sihyuk says, “it took a measly two bullets.”

Yoongi suddenly rises from his chair to strike a punch across Bang Sihyuk’s face, and guards start piling into the room to pull him back, but not before he lands his fist into the other side of the bastard’s face.

Hoseok is sinking and spiralling into his memories once again, numb and too shocked to properly digest.

They shot Yoongi’s mother.

They shot Sunny.
It was murder.

✿

“You told me it was a fucking accident!” Yoongi shouts even though they’re alone, red hot anger coursing through his veins, “You didn’t even let me see her! You made me wait outside and made me believe it was a fucking accident!”

“It doesn’t matter anymore what I told you,” His father says, calmer, “Bang Sihyuk is lower than scum. The mafia takes pride in loyalty, and we’ve even gone as far as keeping Hoseok and his friends under our protection. This so-called police captain however has betrayed his whole squad.”

Yoongi scoffs, “You’re gonna talk about loyalty when you’ve just been lying to me all these years?”

“You were too young to understand.”

“That my mother was murdered?” Yoongi barks, “You actually thought you could keep this from me forever?”

His father sighs, “It was a bad past decision. I was arrogant.”

Yoongi almost laughs at that, “Was? You’ve been secretly meeting the guy who shot your wife and formed an alliance with him. Everyone was against the idea but you weren’t listening.”

“I didn’t know it was Bang Sihyuk who shot Jaehwa.”

“You don’t even deserve to say her name with that disgusting mouth of yours.” Yoongi growls. His hands are shaking and as soon as he feels that he’s had enough of this, he storms out of the room and towards the staircase.

Everyone is still downstairs as Yoongi makes his slow languid steps ascending, tracing the wall with his hand. Everything feels too heavy.

The hallways are lit, but Yoongi can’t seem to make sense of anything. The walls feel like they’re closing in on him and the air squeezes his head so tightly that he can’t breathe. He can still hear voices and movement downstairs, just faint background noises but prominent. He could call for help somehow, but then realizes that they won't be able to help and he'd just end up worrying them. It’s a shock; they're going through a lot themselves. Yoongi shouldn't add to it.

This migraine seems worse than usual. It's more than a sting or an inconvenience. Yoongi can't ignore the way it squeezes his head mercilessly, demanding to be felt. It hits deep into his brain that he eventually gives in and collapses into one of the walls his fingers have been skimming. His knees knock together as he slowly slides down onto the floor.

He runs a shaky hand through his hair as he tries to breathe, tries to treat it like any other occurrence, tries to pay no mind to it, but he can't. His breathing gets sharper and shallower and his lungs don't feel like they're functioning properly as he wheezes. The hand in his hair tightens until it stings and he folds his legs close to his chest, his toes curling.

He can't even hear anymore, the pain clogs up all of his senses like thunder and rainstorm and
damp air and it's restricting. The raindrops hit the window too loud and this,

This was exactly what it was like the day Yoongi lost his mother.

The thought sends another throbbing pain to his head and he makes this garbled noise that he can't seem to make out himself.

Yoongi doesn't know when he gave up and just let the pain consume him. Stinging, acidic pain coursing through his body and everything numbs.

Everything is numb and clogged and Yoongi can't bring himself to care anymore. He just sits there.

"Hyung?" A sound cuts through his haze, almost miraculously.

"Hyung!" It repeats itself, more surprised and desperate, but Yoongi can't will himself to turn to look.

It isn't until a familiar warmth encloses his wrist and gently pulls his hand away from his hair. A hand, much more delicate and thin replaces it, lightly rubbing his scalp as if trying to soothe the pain Yoongi has caused himself earlier.

Another hand rests at the back of his neck as it lightly pushes on the back of his skull, expertly massaging it until he feels nerves run to his brain and the numbness goes away. Then the air gets lighter and everything seems to come into place again just from the touch alone.

"Are you okay?" The voice whispers, hesitant yet the hands don't stop their work.

Yoongi takes the chance to breathe in as deep as he can, letting air fill his lungs after being squeezed for so long and the way it expands feels almost foreign.

He opens his eyes, not even recalling ever closing them, but Hoseok is crouching in front of him, panic scribbling the features of his face.

Hoseok's eyebrows are pushed together, forming a line or two on his forehead and temple. His doe eyes mend their shape to follow the motion of his eyebrows with he way it's slanted. His mouth is gaping, and he probably hasn't even noticed. His vision is still blurred at the frames, but it puts Hoseok's face into focus and he's

He's beautiful, Yoongi thinks. Yoongi knows.

His hand still feels wobbly and new but he lifts it to graze the younger boy's cheek ever so lightly, yet the way Hoseok's warmth seeps through his fingers is pure magic and he suddenly feels alive again.

Before Yoongi even think too much of it, he holds Hoseok by his chin and draws him closer until there's no more space between their lips.

Yoongi likes it. He likes how Hoseok seems to always be soft and warm no matter the circumstances, and his lips are no exception to that. Yoongi likes the way it feels against his as he kisses him and breathes him in.

Hoseok makes a surprised noise but then he presses into it, nuzzling in when Yoongi makes a motion of pulling away, bringing his hand down to cup his cheek as he tilts his head before pressing in further.
Yoongi likes the way Hoseok crawls onto his lap as soon as he straightens his legs beneath him, likes the way Hoseok's breath stutters when he runs his hand through his hair. His breath fans over Hoseok's cheek as his lips trail up to his temple, lingering there, breathing him in once again before shifting back to his lips. Yoongi can feel himself pout when Hoseok pulls away but he keeps his hands on the younger boy's waist.

“They uh,” Hoseok clears his throat, ducking his head to hide a blush but Yoongi can see how red the tips of his ears are. He can feel his own pout stretch into an endeared smile at the sight.

“They want you to go downstairs. To talk.” Hoseok finishes.

“No,” Yoongi mumbles and frowns again, hands tightening on Hoseok’s waist, “I don’t want to.”

“Hyung…” Hoseok’s hands are resting on the nape of Yoongi’s neck. He sounds worried, worried for Yoongi even though he has every right to be as upset as Yoongi is right now.

Yoongi isn’t trying to avoid reality like he’s always done, but he’s not ready to go downstairs and face the people who have lied to him, betrayed him and kept it secret for years.

“Please,” Yoongi feels himself murmur, “I don’t want to go.” He pulls Hoseok closer until his head can rest on Hoseok’s chest, “I’m not going down there.”

He can feel Hoseok sigh, a puff of air brushing across the top of his head before Hoseok gives in, “Alright.”

“Holly is at my aunt’s place today. The girls wanted to play with him.” Yoongi answers before Hoseok could even ask. His room is properly quiet now, void of the usual soft patting of little paws.

He slumps onto his bed, folding his legs up as he runs his fingers through his hair. He knows Hoseok has joined him from the way the bed dips next to him.

“People expected me to move on so easily,” Yoongi says after a few minutes of silent sniffling and is surprised by how broken and weak he sounds. “Maybe that’s part of the reason why I never did.”

He looks up to see Hoseok looking at him, solemn on his face. He doesn’t like this look on Hoseok.

“I just-” Yoongi’s words are caught in his throat, “I’ve been avoiding it and pushing it away for years, and everything I’ve kept away for so long are all just coming at me at the same time and I can’t- I don’t know how to handle it.” His voice breaks at the end, his whole body feels broken.

“I tend to do that too,” Hoseok whispers, “sometimes I just pretend it never happened, but now… I think I’ve known what happened all along,” he sighs, “my mind just didn’t want to accept that part.”

“It makes me question if I’m just made up of lies.”

It’s quiet.

“Yeah,” Hoseok whispers again, “me too. Maybe I’ve been lying to myself my whole life.”
“All this, it just-” Yoongi shakes, “it’s making me relive that part of my life that I hate so much.”
“Yeah,” Hoseok is also shaking, “me too.”

Yoongi feels tears at the corner of his eyes and he bites his lip, “Hoseok-ah.”
The younger boy turns to him, just as broken, “Yes?”

“Can you hold me?”

They tangle their legs together under the sheets and Yoongi sighs into Hoseok’s chest. For a moment there, he doesn’t think about anything else. He curls his arms around Hoseok’s back, warm.

“It’s weird,” Yoongi murmurs, “this is...this is the truth. It’s supposed to be an answer to everything, but I,” he clenches his hand on the back of Hoseok’s shirt, “I still feel so confused, like I’m lost.” The tears are threatening to fall yet again and Yoongi lets it, lets it leak and pour and stream down his cheeks. He’s sobbing now, “I don’t understand anything.”

Yoongi feels Hoseok’s hand on his back tighten and shake. He looks up to find that Hoseok is crying as well, splotches of red on his face barely visible in the dim light. Pulling him closer, Hoseok buries his sobs into Yoongi’s shoulder.

They’re both broken, stung with the kind of pain that they both can’t cure.

They pull each other close because no one else would understand.

They pull each other close because pain is so easy to inflict yet so difficult to cure.

Two boys cry into each other’s arms until they’re too exhausted to go on and sleep because they don’t know what else to do, tangled in each other and their unanswered questions that will never be answered.

For once though, the both of them aren’t lying.

✿

At the prisoner visitation, the world beyond that glass border is grey and mono-toned. Hoseok shifts around in his chair, his warped hands tapping the cold steel counter, reflecting bright white lights from the ceiling above, all wobbly and blurred just like everything else here. His fingers come up to reach the border sometimes, maybe even sink through it a little, but he doesn’t go through it, doesn’t want to. On the other side, the chair is still empty, the telephones still hung up in their respective places. Hoseok glances at the black borders at his sides that separate him from the other visitors, and beyond it to see warped, faceless people, murmuring in languages he doesn’t recognize.

Hoseok has had this dream before.
Something pops then, suddenly, and everything goes quiet.

“Od yojd ejsy upi esmyrf?” Yoongi’s mouth garbles.

What?

“Is this what you wanted?”

“No.” Hoseok answers. “No.”

He reaches forward to Yoongi on the other side, and his fingers sink through once again. He doesn’t back off this time though, for Yoongi is only a reach away and Hoseok isn’t going to let him go again.

His whole body sinks through the border to get to Yoongi.

Chapter End Notes

i’m trying to finish the fic by april so that i can spend my time studying for exams with ease hhh i won’t go crazy (AHHH GO STUPID) and update everyday though jhdsjgh it’ll still be (at least) weekly but all the chapters are already written

my twitter,
my curiouscat
closure (a week apart)

Chapter Summary

"He makes me want to live."

"He makes me happy."

Chapter Notes

a little more sad tingz this chapter but it's also soft :( thank u to gill and sham for being my lovely betas once again !!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Od yojd ejsy upi esmyrf?” Yoongi’s mouth garbles.

What?

“Is this what you wanted?”

Yoongi sits there in his blue jumpsuit, hair a clump and a bruise on his cheek that hints at something that happened in the cells. His handcuffs look too tight, digging into his wrists and leaving angry red bands on his pale skin.

“Is this what you wanted?”

“No.” Hoseok answers. “No.” He doesn’t want Yoongi in jail. He doesn’t want Yoongi hurt.

He reaches forward to Yoongi on the other side, and his fingers sink through once again. He doesn’t back off this time though, for Yoongi is only a reach away and Hoseok isn’t going to let him go again.

His whole body sinks through the border to get to Yoongi.

Everything goes white, almost blinding, but his arms brush past something warm.

Hoseok wakes up to Yoongi still curled in his arms.

His head hurts and his jaw aches from holding back tears that he later let loose. It feels vaguely like the first morning when he woke up alone after he had lost his family.

Hoseok understands what it’s like to lose someone so quick, so suddenly. He wanted to be the one who comforts Yoongi, the one who takes care of him after he had learned the truth about the most difficult part of his life. He really wanted to, so he tried not to cry, to stay quiet and listen to what Yoongi had to say and murmur little reassurances until he cheers up — but he couldn’t.
He couldn’t because he understands, knows, that it hurts, that it makes everything else feel dull and it makes you want to hurt yourself by sinking further and deeper into it until just breathing feels like gargling needles. He couldn’t because he was also going through it all again too.

He couldn’t make Yoongi’s pain go away because he was in just as much pain, if not more from trying to hold it all back like he used to, but it suddenly became so difficult. An old wound has reopened and Hoseok realized that they can’t do anything for each other other than be there. The thought that at least someone else is holding him and he’s holding someone through this turmoil is enough — The pain from loss doesn’t fade or cure, but it can be treated.

Yoongi is still asleep, brows furrowed like something had managed to slip into his subconsciousness and disturb him there too. Hoseok’s heart aches at the sight, and he ducks his head down to kiss the top of Yoongi’s head, then his forehead until his furrow smooths out.

“If someone comes in tell them to fuck off,” Yoongi murmurs, voice still heavy with sleep. There’s a knock at the door right after and Hoseok jolts in surprise. Yoongi groans, “Nevermind, I’ll do it myself.” He pulls Hoseok against his chest. “Fuck off.”

“It’s me, hyung,” Namjoon’s voice is muffled by the door.

Giving in almost immediately, Yoongi sighs as he cards a hand through Hoseok’s hair, “Come in.”

The door clicks open, “Hey, you look kinda sick- oh, hi Hoseok.”

Before Hoseok can turn to greet his friend, Yoongi pulls him closer to his chest until his nose is buried there and slides an arm around his back. He feels Yoongi’s hand lift briefly.

“Hyung,” Hoseok speaks into Yoongi’s shirt, “are you flipping him off?”

“He is,” Namjoon assures him, “I was just being honest. Also, you should really rest today.”

“I still have shit to do,” Yoongi murmurs, “the shit in question is the trail of my dad’s shit that I have to clean up after.”

Namjoon sighs, “You’re right, but you should rest, hyung. You look tired. Hoseok,” he calls, “tell Yoongi he looks tired and he should rest.”

“You look tired and you should rest,” Hoseok mumbles against Yoongi’s chest.

“Fine,” Yoongi gives in, hand resting on the nape of Hoseok’s neck, “I’m staying in bed all day then.”

“Yeah, that’s not it,” Namjoon grumbles, “you need to get up and eat.”

“You’d be fooling yourself if you think I’m gonna go and face the people down there.” Yoongi deadpans.

Namjoon groans, “I’ll bring something up to you then. You still have water in here, right? I’ll pour you a glass before I go down.”

“You really don’t have to do any of that.” Yoongi deadpans. “That’s not your job.”

“Just let me do it, hyung.” Namjoon insists, “I was also there when it all happened. We were all confused.” He turns to Yoongi, “Let me do this for you.”

“...Thanks,” Yoongi mumbles. As Namjoon’s footsteps travel around the room to get water,
Yoongi pulls away from Hoseok slightly to face him, “We both look like shit, huh.”

Yoongi’s eyes are still red, as if he hadn’t stopped crying since last night. His eyebags are red and swollen and his whole face is puffy. He looks tired, but Hoseok isn’t sure if it’s all because of last night or the recent events that had exhausted him.

“I can only imagine,” Hoseok says as Yoongi thumbs his eyebags gently, as if trying to soothe the swelling. His hand rests there on Hoseok’s cheek when he’s finished and the aching from earlier subsides slightly.

“I’m gonna be a bit busy after this,” Yoongi murmurs, “the task force against foreign infiltration was my idea and they decided to use it, so now I have to overlook the whole thing.”

At the change of topic, Hoseok notes that Yoongi is starting to recover from last night, and he finds himself smiling a little. “How long will you be gone?”

“A week at the very least. Not really looking forward to that.” Yoongi grumbles.

Hoseok hums, “Why not?”

At the question, Yoongi looks at Hoseok directly before he answers, “Not having you around for a week is going to be so boring.”

Hoseok snorts, “Sap.” He tilts his head to peck Yoongi’s cheek and Yoongi lets him. Hoseok isn’t sure how much this is helping Yoongi, but he hopes it at least helps to distract him from last night for a little. Yoongi flutters his eyes close and shifts closer until their noses brush, but he makes no move to do anything more, so Hoseok settles with that as well. It’s peaceful, at least for a moment then, with the sound of Yoongi’s slow exhales and the warmth from being so close. Hoseok wants to tilt his head up so that their lips brush, but remembers belatedly that Namjoon is still in the room.

Well, on the other hand, it’s just Namjoon.

“Well this is… very awkward for me,” Namjoon sets the glasses of water down on the nightstand.

“Can’t you let me be in love for a bit after the mindfuck that went on yesterday?” Yoongi grumbles, and Hoseok doesn’t breathe.

In love, Yoongi said. Hoseok feels his heart thumps faster, more insistent, yet it’s nothing like last night. There’s no pain, no loathe, just shock, and that flusteredness that leaves him not knowing what to do. He feels his whole face heat up and he scrubs a hand across his face. Fuck. In love.

It’s fake, he knows, but just hearing the word itself in the color of Yoongi’s voice, decorated with the fact that he’s referring to Hoseok is overwhelming. A lie that Hoseok doesn’t mind hearing.

He can hear Namjoon’s huffed sigh, “I’ll go get something for you to eat.”

“Give everyone the stink eye for me,” Yoongi calls after him. He can hear Namjoon's little laugh before a confirmation.

Yoongi pulls away as soon as the door closes and reaches for a glass of water. It's a harsh reminder for Hoseok that his little make-pretend scenario of the day has come to an end, and he tries not to pout.

In love, Yoong said.
I love you. Hoseok imagined himself saying last night, but it wasn’t the right time.

*I love you, hyung.* Hoseok wants to say now to Yoongi, his hair mussed from sleep and nose tinged red, but this isn’t the right time either. There’s never a good chance to tell him — perhaps there never will be.

“Thank you.” He says instead to Yoongi’s back. He can just make out the shapes of the tattoos under his shirt from memory, the trail of kisses he once left on the floral expanse of his skin.

“For what?” Yoongi turns, handing him another glass of water.

“For...just being with me through it.” Hoseok says as he sits up against the headboard and accepts the drink.

Yoongi chuckles, “I was the one making you do everything. I’m usually never like that. If anything, *I* should be thanking you.” He grumbles as he slumps back against the headboard before he finishes, “I think we both needed it.”

“Yeah,” Hoseok nods, “you’re right.”

*I love you,* Hoseok thinks.

*I love you, hyung.* Hoseok doesn’t say.

♫

It takes a while for Yoongi to give in. Holly came back to him an hour later and while his mood has lifted tremendously, he insisted that Hoseok stays for a while more. Hoseok had to call off work for the day, but it’s also partly for his own sake. He feels like he needs a mental break before getting back to everything again.

Hours later, he seems better, calmer and well-rested, to Hoseok’s relief. He gets to see Yoongi for a bit before he has to leave, now in his black mafia getup, face still puffy but it’ll go away. Yoongi sneaks in a small kiss when Donghyuk tells them to say their goodbyes but not too gross or he’ll puke. ‘You’re just jealous that you lost that flavor in your relationship,’ Yoongi says in response to his brother’s gagging.

“You’re not mad at your brother and the others anymore, yeah?” Hoseok asks him just as Yoongi is about to leave.

Yoongi shrugs, “I’ll have to get over it eventually. Holding a grudge makes you fat.”

Hoseok snorts and swats Yoongi’s arm, “You’ve said that before.”

“By the way,” Yoongi says, “I have contact with a few people in the cells where Bang Sihyuk is held if there’s anything you want, specifically.”

Hoseok sighs when he realizes what Yoongi is implying, “No hyung, I don’t want you to pay the inmates to beat him up.” He deadpans, “Just let whatever happens happen.” His hand brushes Yoongi’s, and the mafioso immediately holds it. “I just don’t want to think about it anymore, you know?”
“Yeah,” Yoongi murmurs as he swipes a thumb over the back of Hoseok’s hand, “you’re right. I’ll leave it.”

“Thank you,” Hoseok says, and he glances behind Yoongi to see Donghyuk standing a few feet away. “Your brother is still watching us.”

“Fuckin’ creep,” Yoongi frowns and Hoseok laughs. He leans in close to Hoseok’s ear before he whispers, “If you kiss me now, he’ll be completely grossed out and it’ll be very amusing.”

Hoseok giggles “Just say you want a kiss, you dummy.” He pulls Yoongi closer by the waist and tilts his head until their lips brush. Hoseok kisses him once, twice, one more for good measure until he can hear Donghyuk’s shout.

Hoseok breaks the kiss with a startled laugh muffled into Yoongi’s shaking shoulder. He pulls back to see Yoongi’s amused smile, his neat row of teeth and gum in full display, cheeks crinkling the corners of his eyes. The sight pulls at Hoseok’s heart and he can’t imagine not seeing it for a whole week.

“Hyung,” He pats Yoongi’s waist to get his attention and tilts his chin up. Yoongi chuckles when he gets the hint and leans in again, brushing their lips together until Donghyuck’s groan sounds from behind them.

“I- You two are fucking disgusting! I’m gonna go wait by the car.” Hoseok grins when he hears Donghyuk’s shout.

Yoongi laughs against Hoseok’s lips, lingering there — like he always does — before he pulls away.

“Nicely done, Jung.”

“I’ll miss you too, babe.” Hoseok laughs, though he still can’t help but worry. “Hey...are you okay?”

Yoongi clenches his jaw, “I will be. Soon.” He turns his head to kiss Hoseok’s cheek once more before they part.

《

The week without Yoongi isn’t as bad as he expected. He thought about visiting the head chief at the mansion since he hadn’t gone with Yoongi, but his invitation was always politely rejected due to a ‘health reason’ that Hoseok is slightly concerned about. Jungkook left for a trip back to Busan as soon as his and Taehyung’s hectic schedules were finished. Just before he left, the whole precinct celebrated by letting Jungkook enter the old captain’s office and ceremoniously spray his lavender Febreze all around it. It was kind of ridiculous. Jungkook held up the spray bottle like he was initiating a shoot-off. He and Taehyung became known as the precinct’s best officers.

“I did it all for you, hyung.” Taehyung says when Hoseok called him by the new title.

Hoseok snorts, “What do you mean?”
“I wanted to make it up to you,” Taehyung explains, “it was because of me that we couldn’t find you sooner when you were kidnapped. Everyone had a panic because I messed up.” He looks apologetic, too sad, “I really needed to find a way to make it up to you.”

“Tae…” Hoseok frowns, “it wasn’t your fault.”

“It was,” Taehyung insists. “I’m satisfied now, though. I hope you’re proud of me.”

Hoseok coos as he pulls Taehyung into a hug, “Oh, you- of course I’m proud of you, Tae!” He kisses the top of Taehyung’s head, “You’re also the one who changed head chief Min’s perspective on the police, didn’t you? You peacemaker.”

“Ah, yeah,” Taehyung smiles sheepishly, “He took me to this really fancy place for dinner this one time, and apparently he’s paying my electricity bills now? It’s amazing, almost ridiculous really.”

“But you saved his life, didn’t you?” Hoseok smiles down at him. “You did,” He answers for him, “as expected of the precinct’s best officer.”

“Well I mean honestly, Jin hyung did all the work.” Taehyung counters with a laugh.

“Oh, Jin hyung helped you?” Hoseok asks.

“He gave us old records and files about the Shin clan, so it made it a lot easier for us to crack down the case.” Taehyung says, “He and Jungkook kept bickering around sometimes, but it’s all good.”

Hoseok nods awkwardly, “Interesting…” he’s suddenly reminded of something, “so you and Jungkook aren’t actually dating, are you?”

Taehyung grins, “Who knows?”

Hoseok sputters, “Are you really!?”

“You’re the relationship expert here, hyung.” Taehyung retorts, “How many months has it been now? Six? Seven?”

Hoseok is defeated, scooting back to his desk with a blush he tries desperately to contain. “Almost seven.”

* *

Perhaps it’s the picking of old scars that convinced him to scroll to that specific contact on his phone. It’s been a month, maybe more, since he’s called, and he feels guilty for it.

The call picks up of course, “…Oppa?”

“Hey,” It feels all too nostalgic to hear her voice after so long. Maybe this is the best time to see her again.

Hoseok is quite surprised that she agreed to meet, especially at the columbarium where the ashes are kept. The last time he’s been here was almost a decade ago, probably. He has considered visiting, several times, but every time he even goes near it, memories would resurface and clog his throat and he’d feel too sick to go in any further.
But that was when he was quite young, too. Too weak to move on, to be at peace. He still hasn’t moved on, hasn’t been at peace, he thinks, but he’s not as weak as he was before.

Still, he calls her after selfishly being quiet for so long when she doesn’t deserve that. It was because her face, or just the idea of her reminded him of those days when he was hurt and confused, when he couldn’t think of anything else but him and what had happened, when he was something he so greatly hates now— selfish and mean.

He’s changed, he knows that because he called her. He called her and apologized for everything he could think of, until she told him to stop apologizing, that she missed him and she’ll come down to see him.

Hoseok feels bad that he has to drag her into this, that he’s still not strong enough to go in by himself, but he needs her. He needs her here with him for him to be able to move on, a piece of his past to hold onto as he makes peace with it all.

Just standing outside the entrance already makes him feel queasy, like the door to something he’s been avoiding for so long. Hands gripping the three little bouquets, he doesn’t go in straight away, just stares at the rain (when did it start raining?) and waits until he sees her familiar figure, more mature now, walk up to him.

She’s bleached her hair, Hoseok notices, but the way her face lights up from under the umbrella when she sees him at the entrance pulls him years back for the brief moment that they look at each other. She smiles, and no matter how depressing this place is or how long it’s been since he’s seen her last, Hoseok can’t help the wide smile that plays on his own lips.

“Hoseok oppa,” She says once she reaches him, dropping her umbrella. Her arms open wide for a hug.

“Jinsoul-ah,” Hoseok accepts the hug, holding onto one of the few pieces of his past. “It’s been too long.”

Though they’re cousins, living with Jinsoul then really felt like he had a little sister.

It’s almost odd, but in a good way, how different she is from before. When they first met, Jinsoul was six and Hoseok was nine, but they’ve only interacted briefly every few months when Hoseok’s aunt would come to visit. It wasn’t until years later, when Jinsoul was twelve and Hoseok was fifteen that they actually got to know each other. Hoseok moved in with his aunt right after he was discharged from the hospital, still a mess and refusing to talk to anyone. It wasn’t until Jinsoul, after a week of being ignored, shouting to get Hoseok’s attention, and attempts to make jokes that always remained attempts as she’d begin laughing too hard before she’d even finish the joke, that Hoseok finally opened up to her.

They were siblings, in a way, the Jungs. They were both loud, and had the tendency to laugh at anything remotely funny. Jinsoul was the first person Hoseok came out to, and their roles reversed a few years later when Jinsoul blurted out that she had a crush on a girl. It was sad to have to part with her for university and the police academy in the city, but Hoseok was already happy and fine again after being with her for the years they spent together. She was, is, a part of his healing process.

“I was so surprised when you called me,” Jinsoul says when they’ve pulled away, “I had to double check that it was actually you.”

“Really?” Hoseok laughs before it dilutes into a sad smile, “I’m sorry I haven’t really been in
touch.”

Jinsoul shakes her head, “I already told you it’s fine. You look healthier.”

“So do you, I like the blonde hair,” Hoseok smiles, “how is Aunt Seoyeon?”

Jinsoul shrugs, “Mom’s still kicking.”

Hoseok snorts, “She’s not that old.”

After a few laughs together, Hoseok belatedly realizes that it’s time to go inside. He freezes just before the border between inside and outside.

He feels something brush the back of his hand.

“We used to hold hands whenever something difficult happens,” Jinsoul says when Hoseok turns to look at her. She nudges his hand with hers again, “do you want to?”

Jinsoul held Hoseok’s hand when he used to burst into tears somewhat randomly, whenever a memory resurfaces, the wound still fresh and open then. She held his hand when he had to maneuver around with his broken arm and leg, so much that it became a habit long after Hoseok had recovered. Jinsoul held Hoseok’s hand when he told her about how he kissed a guy and didn’t regret it, and Hoseok held Jinsoul’s hand when she told him about having a crush on her friend.

They held hands through the difficult things they faced as kids, Hoseok reminisces briefly as he takes her hand into his and they start to walk into the columbarium.

It feels like Jinsoul is guiding him, though her hand is small in Hoseok’s. It’s odd, Hoseok thinks, but didn’t realize until he thinks of Yoongi, and the way Yoongi’s large hand encloses his when he reaches for it. Yoongi tends to reach for Hoseok’s hand whenever they’re near or he’s feeling nervous, his knobby hands and warm palms.

Distracted by the thought, embarrassingly, Hoseok realizes belatedly that they’ve reached the particular shelf he has spent a decade avoiding.

Jinsoul is the first to react as she bows, “Hello auntie, hello uncle, hello Sunny.”

“Hello,” Hoseok bows as soon as it registers. “It’s been a while. I’m sorry I haven’t visited much.” He’s quiet again, not knowing what to say, where to start. Jinsoul keeps the air light as she begins to talk about her day, her mother, and her girlfriend.

She pokes at Hoseok’s side, “Tell them about what happened,” she whispers as if Hoseok’s family could hear them conspiring, “that’s what you’re here for, right?”

Hoseok nods, and Jinsoul takes a few steps back for him to walk up to the three urns. It hurts a little to see their faces, the framed photos with him in the middle, his father’s watch and Sunhee’s favorite toy.

“Recently, well, yesterday,” Hoseok chuckles as he corrects himself, “I learned the truth about what happened, and it just kind of broke me.” He lets out a shaky exhale before he makes himself say it.

“Bang Sihyuk shot Sunny. You were murdered.” Hoseok chokes on the last few words but he tries to breathe. A hand comes up to rub his back in soothing circles and he turns to smile at Jinsoul briefly before turning back to his family, “I think I’ve always known what happened, deep down. I
just never came to terms with it. When I found out… It felt like reliving that time again when I just didn’t want to accept things the way they were. I still don’t.” He draws out a long sigh, shaky, but holding on. “I don’t want to accept it, but I know I can’t do anything about it.” He tries to smile, “Maybe I’d like it more if you’re still here with me, but I quite like how things are right now too.” He feels Jinsoul draw her hand back, like she knows somehow that he’s calmed down. “I’m happy. I have a good job, great friends, brothers, and—"

_Yoongi._

“I found my soulmate,” He smiles as he hears Jinsoul’s gasp, “I found my soulmate and… and I love him.” He bites his lip at the words, almost too giddy all of a sudden. “I… I don’t know if he feels the same, but he makes me happy. We met…” He breaks off into a laugh at the realization, “We met in the worst way possible, but just the fact that I almost forgot all about it made me realize that my love for him overpowers any kind of hate I might have against him. My life has made so many turns since I’ve met him. He…” He whispers the last part, “He makes me want to live.”

He smiles to himself for a short while, just thinking about how everything led to here and now, and the soft beating of his heart at just the thought of Yoongi. “With him, I’ve done so many things I would never expect myself to do. It’s liberating.” His eyes shift to the framed photo of them when he says, “I couldn’t make peace with what happened. I just kept suppressing it my whole life. But now I feel like I’m on a journey to come to be at peace with it all, now that Yoongi hyung is here with me.” He sighs, though he’s smiling, “I hope you can see me live and enjoy life, from wherever you are.”

The urns don’t talk back. Hoseok doesn’t know if he expected them to talk back, but they don’t. His eyes shift between the three of them, his father, his mother, and Sunhee, the smallest one.

He’s suddenly reminded of the flowers in his hands, and he rests them on the shelf near the urns. A marigold for his father, a carnation for his mother, and a rose for Sunhee.

It looks nice like this, better. The fresh flowers give them life, and it aches, though only a little, that this is the reality that he’s in. He’s in a reality where they left him, but he isn’t alone. He knows that now.

He turns to Jinsoul after a while, “Shall we say our goodbyes?”

After they’ve bid Hoseok’s family farewell, Hoseok takes Jinsoul around town, then to dinner at that bibimbap place Yoongi took him.

“Since we have a lot of catching up to do,” Jinsoul sets her spoon down as she pulls out her phone, “I made a list.”

“Oh god,” Hoseok takes a sip of his water, “let’s hear it then.”

“Do you have friends?” Jinsoul reads from the notes app on her phone.

Hoseok laughs, “I do. I love them, they’re great people.”

“I bet they’re like,” Jinsoul takes a moment to conspire, “in their early twenties at least, but you baby them around because you’re older.”

“That’s oddly accurate,” She smiles at his confirmation.
“Next,” she looks back at her list, “do you live alone or with someone else?”

“Are all the questions going to be about my relationships?” Hoseok asks, suspicious.

Jinsoul grins, “You’ll have to find out.”

“I lived alone in an apartment, but I’ve been crashing at Jimin’s place for a while now.” Hoseok answers.

“And why is that?” Jinsoul prods.

“...Because my apartment got raided by the mafia?” Hoseok doesn’t know why that sounds like a question.

Jinsoul is gaping, and Hoseok takes the chance to stick a piece of vegetable into her mouth with a laugh.

“You’re kidding, right?” Jinsoul says as she chews, grimacing at the vegetable, “you better be kidding or I’m going to get very upset that you didn’t tell me something so cool and flavorful happened in your life.”

“I’m not kidding, I kinda wish I was,” Hoseok says, “they’re still fixing it up even though it’s been months. A few things happened.” He turns back to his sister, didn’t realize that he looked away, “Next question?”

After questions about Hoseok’s hygiene, his job, and beta fish for some reason, Jinsoul sets her phone down. Though, just before Hoseok thinks this Q&A session has come to an end, Jinsoul asks,

“So you’ve found your soulmate?”

Hoseok smiles, “I did.”

“And why am I not introduced to him? Where is he?” Jinsoul frowns.

“He’s out on a…” Hoseok scratches his head, “I guess you could call it a business trip?”

“Show me a picture,” Jinsoul demands, and zooms in on Yoongi’s face as soon as Hoseok hands her his phone. “Aw, he’s a goth witch.” She coos, “What’s his name?”

“Min Yoongi,” Hoseok bites down his smile.

“I like him, I approve,” Jinsoul determines just from seeing a photo, “I bet he wears black all the time.”

“Well, yeah,” Hoseok hesitates before he says, “he’s a uh...a mafia boss.”

“Hoseok-ah,” Jinsoul says in the cockiest tone as she sets his phone down on the table, “respect is earned, and I don’t think you joking around with me is very respectful.”

Hoseok winces at the sudden change of honorifics, but sighs, “I know, it’s crazy. My life sounds like the biggest bullshit right now.”

Jinsoul’s expression changes, “Wait, you’re actually-? How did you guys meet? Don’t tell me- oh no, please don’t tell me-”
“We met when the mafia raided my apartment,” Hoseok says, giving in, “he shot me.”

The waiter is called over and Jinsoul orders second servings of everything.

“So,” Jinsoul says as she stacks her fifth empty plate onto each other and drops her utensils on top after what felt like hours of Hoseok telling her everything, from the lying to the pretending to the not-so-pretending to the confusion that is now, “you two are soulmates, and basically everything that had happened in both of your lives are connected to each other.”

“Why, yes” Hoseok is surprised, “I never really thought of it that way before.”

“What sealed the deal for you then, oppa?” Jinsoul asks, “What made you fall in love with him? Was it because he’s your soulmate?”

“No,” Hoseok shakes his head, “It’s not that. I hated him because he was my soulmate. It was like some sick joke that I got dragged into such a situation.” He sighs, resting his elbows on the table, “I was so sure that I won’t even like him one bit, but well,” he chuckles lightly, “Yoongi hyung likes to surprise people with how caring he actually is. He looks like this angry criminal, but he’s just soft and warm and gentle and- wow.”

“Yeah, you’ve fallen deep,” Jinsoul agrees, “real deep.”


“Yeah,” Jinsoul agrees again.

Hoseok frowns, “You’re supposed to justify it and say it’s not ridiculous.”

“You fell in love with the guy who almost killed you, oppa,” Jinsoul deadpans, “it’s ridiculous.”

“God, you’re right,” Hoseok groans as he slumps onto the table, “you’re absolutely right.”

“I know I am,” Jinsoul wiggles her eyebrows, “I support you though, as ridiculous as it is.”

Hoseok lifts his head a little to look at her, “You do? You don’t think I’m weird?”

“No, you are,” Jinsoul assures him, “but if you’re happy with this, then does anything else really matter? You smile like crazy when you think of him and you’re happy in this make-pretend police and mafia forbidden love situation you’re in. You’re living.”

The statement makes Hoseok smile, “Yeah,” he ducks his head, “I’m living.”

The day seems to have come to an end so quickly. One moment, Jinsoul is doing her ridiculous penguin impression that has Hoseok slapping his own knee as he laughs, and now he’s dropping her off at the train station.

“Would you consider coming up to visit sometimes?” Jinsoul asks him as they wait for the train.

“Of course,” Hoseok says too determinedly that she laughs. “Introduce me to your girlfriend when I do.”

Jinsoul grins, “Sure, I can’t guarantee that Jungeunie will like you though,” she leans closer to him and whispers, “she hates men.”

Hoseok laughs at that, a little too loudly, but then Jinsoul’s laugh is soon overpowering him as she
throws her head back at the impact. “Come on, I’m your sweet older brother.”

“Of course you are,” Jinsoul smiles, her blonde hair scattering off her shoulders as the train slides up to the platform behind her. “It’s really nice to see you again, oppa.” She offers him another hug which Hoseok returns very willingly.

“Thank you again for coming down here to see me.” Hoseok holds her tight for a minute before letting go.

Jinsoul turns to wave at him every few steps and he waves back, a little more dramatically. She’s suddenly putting up a fight, flailing her arms more wildly and Hoseok follows suit. They try to top each other off until Hoseok is jumping on his spot and waving his arms with all his might as if he’s doing sloppy star jumps. Jinsoul accepts defeat as the train fills up and there’s not enough space to pull off a move more ridiculous than Hoseok. He can see her trying desperately not to laugh from where she’s standing in a crowd of people in the train, waving sheepishly as it begins to take off from the station.

Hoseok walks home with a full heart, a clearer head, and a peace of mind.

“...You are?” His brother looks surprised, “Whatever Hoseok’s done to you, I’m liking it.”

Yoongi shrugs, “Why’d you assume it’s Hoseok?”

“Well, other than the fact that you kept him cooped up in your room for a good ten-hour period today, you’re head over heels for him, aren’t you?”

Yoongi ducks his head, “You could say that.”

“It’s been, what, six months since you’ve met him.” Donghyuk points out. “You look a lot better than before.”

“Well I steal a bit of Hoseok’s skincare stuff from time to time since they’re in my bathroom.”
Yoongi says, ignoring the implication of what Donghyuk is saying.

“Not that, you little shit. Well, a little bit, but that’s not my point.” His brother explains, “You look happier. Even dad noticed.”

Yoongi snorts, “And since when has dad ever cared about how happy I am?”

“You’d be surprised actually.” Donghyuk hums, “Sometimes he looks at you without you noticing.”

“Yeah, that’s really fucking creepy,” Yoongi grumbles as he begins to turn his office chair away again.

“Are you going to marry him?”

Yoongi choked on nothing and abruptly turns to face his brother, “The fuck did you just ask me?”

“It’s a fair question,” Donghyuk says, “he’s your soulmate. You’re marrying him, right?”

“I’ll have to see what Hoseok has to say,” Yoongi lies. “It’s a bit quick, don’t you think?”

“I married Jihye a week after we’ve met and now we have two kids.” His brother points out, “It’s not too bad.”

“Well you’re weird,” Yoongi retorts.

“Oh fuck you,” Though there’s no anger behind the statement, “consider it though, dad would like that. You should do something for him every once in a while.”

Yoongi snorts at how ridiculous the whole thing is. The whole arrangement with Hoseok is for Yoongi’s father.

Is.

Was.

“I’m going to only say this once, but I like Hoseok. I think he’s good for you.” Donghyuck is leaning on his desk, eyes focused on Yoongi. “He makes you happy, doesn’t he?”

Yoongi considers the lie and the truth in his head for a while, but then he realizes that his supposed lie is the truth, and has been for a while now.

“Yeah,” He says, “he makes me happy.”

Chapter End Notes

it’s a mainly minjoon chapter next uwu !!!

loonarmys say hi

my curiouscat

my curiouscat
Jimin now has a different go-to place he visits after work every day.

It’s the perfect place, he thinks. Not only is it a place of leisure (even though it’s pretty cramped), he’s also revising for his sergeant exam next year. It’s great, although it can prove to be a little distracting.

“Let’s say that Halsey is walking to work one morning before she’s approached by Jason Derulo and Hozier,” Namjoon starts, and Jimin lets out a snort at the names.

“It’s a fake situation.” Namjoon says in acknowledgement of Jimin's reaction before he continues, “Anyways, Jason Derulo tells Halsey that they won’t hurt her as long as she gives them her bag, and Halsey said no, so Jason Derulo grabs her and holds a knife to her throat while Hozier tries to snatch her bag.” This is where Jimin absolutely loses it.

“The names are making this ridiculous!” He says as he throws himself back onto the floor, clutching his stomach as he laughs.

“Come on,” Namjoon whines even though he’s laughing himself, poking at Jimin until he squirms and grabs Namjoon’s hands to still it.

“Sorry, sorry.” Jimin makes a show of wiping his tears as he pushes himself back up, gaining a laugh from Namjoon. He doesn’t let go of Namjoon’s hand. “I’m listening. Continue.”

“As I was saying,” Namjoon clears his throat, “Halsey fights back and begins to run away as soon as she breaks free. But as Jason Derulo and Hozier chase her, she trips and bangs her head on the pavement. She’s taken to a hospital before she later dies from head trauma.”

“Morbid,” Jimin murmurs.

“Indeed,” Namjoon agrees, “as a police sergeant, which option is correct?” He holds up a finger, “A, Hozier cannot be held accountable for the death of Halsey, as he simply tried to take her bag,” he holds up another finger, “B, Hozier and Jason Derulo will be charged with attempted robbery, but not in the death of Halsey. C, Hozier and Jason Derulo could be considered liable for the death of Halsey, or D, Halsey’s death cannot be blamed on Jason Derulo and Hozier, as it was her choice to run away.”

“Well, it’s definitely not D,” Jimin hums, “C?”

Namjoon smiles, “Correct. Do you want another question, Sergeant Park?”

Jimin blushes and swats Namjoon’s hand, “Stop it. And another question would be nice.”
“Alright,” It takes Namjoon a moment to think before he starts, “Let’s say that you, Officer Park, are on patrol one evening, and a man called Ed Sheeran-”

“Yeah, you know what,” Jimin cuts him off as he stretches his arms up above his head and yawns, “I’m feeling kinda tired. We’ve been going at this all night.”

Namjoon laughs, “Is Ed Sheeran that bad?”

“You were probably going to make him a witness or something.” Jimin says.

“You’re right, I was. How did you know?” Namjoon looks genuinely surprised.

Jimin grins, “Do I get a prize? I got so many questions right.”

Namjoon lets out a soft chuckle and sits back on his hands. Jimin tries not to stare at his legs for too long, “You want a prize? What do you want?”

*Your stupid long legs and your stupid cute face,* Jimin doesn’t say.

“Just give me that Ed Sheeran question,” He says instead.

Namjoon smiles, “Sure, so Ed Sheeran-” He’s cut off by his loud, beeping ringtone and he squawks in surprise before he answers it, “Hyung? Right now? Okay,” He sets his phone down on the coffee table with a sigh, “They’re calling me in, I’m sorry.”

“It’s fine, hyung. Maybe another day,” Jimin reaches out to pat Namjoon’s shoulders, “Don’t overwork yourself though.”

Namjoon laughs, “I won’t.”

“Promise me that,” Jimin says as he holds up a pinky.

Namjoon smiles at that, almost endeared as he reaches forward to hook his pinky with Jimin’s, “Promise. I don’t overwork myself that often anyway.” He says as he pulls away, “I’m not like a workaholic.”

“Are you sure about that?” Jimin grabs his hand before it can slip away from his hold.

“What?”

“I’ve seen you work in here, Joon hyung,” Jimin starts, “you’re always like this,” he furrows his brows and juts out his chin the way Namjoon does whenever he’s concentrating on something and puts on an overly dramatic low pitched voice to mimic him, “I’m gonna be an overachiever and skip lunch so I can work on things I don’t even need to work on because I’m Kim Namjoon and I think break is just a verb.”

Namjoon throws his head back with a laugh that edges onto a cackle. The hand held by Jimin’s is still in place, with no intention to pull away. “Jimin-ah,” he manages through his laughing fit, “you’re so cute today.” He reaches out another hand to caress Jimin’s jutted out chin, ignoring the fact that it’s being used to mock him and his work ethic.

Jimin’s eyes widen at that, his expression shifting from mocking Namjoon’s to one of surprise. The large, warm hand still persists to stay in its place on Jimin’s chin.

The blinds are closed, but Jimin can see the thin rays of warm yellow sunset slip past the cracks and onto Namjoon’s face, distorting itself to plant on his features. Namjoon’s eyes are wandering
from his hold on Jimin’s chin up to meet his gaze. Jimin traces the silhouette of Namjoon’s face with his eyes, the dim glow of sunlight behind his head framing him like a halo.

Namjoon isn’t sure if it’s Namjoon pulling him in, or him pushing forward, that he leans closer and closer to Namjoon’s face. He finds that it doesn’t really matter when Namjoon leans closer too, his eyes closing beyond his round spectacles. Jimin closes his eyes when their noses brush, the rush in his body going crazy as he waits for that warm sensation to brush his lips.

Just as he thinks he might feel it though, everything goes absent.

Namjoon stares at the floor, hands tucked into himself like he’s done something wrong. “Sorry.”

“...What?”

“It was uh,” Namjoon clears his throat, “I can’t even explain myself. I’m really sorry.”

“Hyung, why are you apologizing?”

Namjoon is covering his face with his hands as he groans, “God, this is so embarrassing.”

“I-” Jimin isn’t really catching on anymore, “What- so what was that?”

Namjoon peeks through his own hands, “...I almost kissed you?”

“And you didn’t because...?”

“...You might not want to?”

Jimin is stumped, “...You think I don’t want to?” Why is everything a question? Are they in that segment of Whose Line Is It Anyway?

“Well I mean-” Namjoon is sputtering. Jimin has never seen him rambling like this before, “Why are you asking this? Like does that mean you want to or did I read the signals wrong? I don’t know, it’s been a while-”

“Namjoon hyung,” Namjoon’s mouth snap shut at the mention of his name, “I’m really confused right now.”


This doesn’t feel real to Jimin. At all. “Hyung, you’re kidding me right?”

Namjoon pauses his journey to another blubbering mess, “What?”

“Hyung,” Jimin groans, and it’s his turn to hide his face in his hands. Fuck it. “I have the biggest, most obvious crush on you. Just- wow, don’t tell me you didn’t know?”

Namjoon is gaping, silent for a second as he processes Jimin’s words. His blush deepens once he’s done, “You do?”

“Oh my god, you know what,” Having had enough of this bullshit, Jimin pulls the collar of Namjoon’s shirt closer until their lips brush, ignoring Namjoon’s squeak of surprise.

_Fucking finally_, Jimin thinks to himself as he brushes his lips over Namjoon’s, resting a hand at the
back of his head to hold him close. Namjoon freezes for a split second before he pushes back into the kiss. His hands come to rest at Jimin’s waist and for a second then Jimin is very convinced that he’s dreaming, that his mind is making this whole thing up via wishful thinking.

“Finally,” Jimin groans once they’ve pulled away. “I thought I’d have to wait another century for this.” Namjoon’s flustered expression makes it so damn difficult to resist leaning in to kiss him again, but Jimin’s good at restraint.

“I’m sorry for not getting the hint.” Namjoon is staring down at the floor with a little embarrassed smile on his face and the reddest cheeks. "I guess I'm just really bad at identifying context clues."

“Hyung,” Jimin crosses his arms, “you apologize too much.”

“You’re right, sor-” Namjoon catches himself in time, eyes wide, “...You make a very good point.”

“You’re a dork,” Jimin reaches out to poke Namjoon’s cheeks, “The biggest dork I’ve ever met! How are you even real?”

Namjoon laughs, his dimples forming slightly. Jimin pokes his finger into them and he laughs harder. “What am I supposed to say to that?” He tries to push Jimin’s hands away from his face.

Jimin cups his cheeks instead, “Just kiss me again.”

Namjoon obliges.

If they were to be like any cheesy couple, yellow would be their color, Jimin thinks. Yellow looks good on Namjoon’s golden skin, and it warms up the room whenever they’re together.

“Jimin,” Yellow light makes Namjoon’s lips glow, tracing its roundness. Jimin likes it when Namjoon says his name, the way his lips part at Ji, and how they smack together before parting again at min. There’s a magic to it, perhaps not one by the universe considering that they’re not soulmates, but one by Namjoon himself, and how he manages to draw Jimin in just from the way he says his name. “Jimin-ah.”

“Yes?” Jimin’s eyes focus back to Namjoon’s through his glasses, a bit crooked on his nose but he doesn’t seem to notice. “Are you finally asking me out?”

Namjoon’s face warms up in color, as if the room can’t get any warmer. Jimin has it all memorised — his cheeks would glow red, his eyes would widen before his whole face would scrunch up and he’d duck his head down, maybe even cover it with his hands. It’s amusing to see it all unfold before him.

“God,” Namjoon groans, “am I really that predictable?”

Jimin chuckles, “I’m just really good at reading you.” He reaches out to not-so-gently swat Namjoon’s hands away from his face so he can cup them with his own instead, and tilt it up so they’re looking at each other again. He leans closer so he can nose Namjoon’s glasses away and kiss him, ignoring Namjoon’s flustered chuckle. “Yes, by the way.”
“Sorry?” Namjoon’s hands rest on Jimin’s waist.

“About you asking me out,” Jimin pokes his boyfriend(sure)’s cheeks, “In case you needed an answer.”

It’s been a week or two since they first kissed, the memory still leaving a funny tingle to Jimin’s lips. There are a lot of complications to it, he thinks, based on their jobs, but he’s willing to wait for Namjoon to make his decision.

Jimin wants to see how it will go with Namjoon. It’s not the same case as Hoseok and Yoongi, but there must be a reason why he has come back after giving up, and he’s willing to see the outcome of it all.

“I know that our circumstances are really different, and this is going to be difficult to maintain,” Namjoon’s hands slide from Jimin’s waist to hold Jimin’s hands, “but I wouldn’t mind trying… for you.”

“For me?” Jimin smiles so wide his cheeks hurt. At Namjoon’s nod, he coos and pulls him closer, “Hyung, I’d try for you too.”

“That’s good,” Namjoon chuckles and Jimin feels it on his lips. He’s irresistible, really. Jimin tilts his head so that their lips brush once more, soft and warm like their afternoons together.

“Help me study again tomorrow?” Jimin asks when they part.

“Of course- ah wait,” Namjoon’s face falls, “I’m not gonna be here for a week or so. I have to go overlook the new task force with Yoongi hyung.”

“Ah, really? I see.” Jimin tries not to sound too disappointed. A whole week.

A hand comes up to ruffle Jimin’s hair, “I’ll be back. It’s not like I’m going to disappear forever, Jimin-ah, stop pouting.”

Jimin doesn’t realize when he started pouting, but he pouts harder, jutting his lower lip out until Namjoon laughs and kisses him again.

A mafioso and a police officer — the idea of it sounds difficult, but Jimin doesn’t feel like he’s struggling at all.


Yellow light washes over the keypads on the door and Jimin sighs as he enters the code into his apartment. He almost went to Namjoon’s apartment again today, but recalled just in time the week long absence.

The door clicks open and as Jimin drags his feet inside, he can see Hoseok occupying the whole couch.

“Hey,” Hoseok lifts his head to smile at him, “how was work?”

“Same old,” Jimin kicks his shoes off, “how was your day off, hyung?”
“It went a lot better than I expected,” Hoseok sits up on the couch to make space for Jimin, “I regret not reaching out to Jinsoul more.”

Jimin hums, “Do you feel better now?”

Hoseok shrugs, “I’m getting there. I kinda miss Kook.”

“He’s only just left to Busan this morning though.” Jimin says.

“Well I already miss him.” Hoseok retorts.

“Understandable,” Jimin laughs, “I wanted to go with him, but he said he wanted to go alone.”

Hoseok makes a noise, tipping his head back to stare up at the ceiling, “That’s weird. He’s usually not like that. Maybe he’s sick of us.”

“Mm. Maybe.” Jimin agrees.

He wants to ask Hoseok if he's okay, if he still needs a moment to himself or if he's fine now. He feels like it's no place for him to intrude in such things, and that Hoseok would say it himself if he needs any kind of consolation from him. But he seems relatively cheerful despite visiting his family for the first time in years after what had happened, so Jimin figures that he's alright, that he will be if he's not, but he doesn't need Jimin coddling him over it.

Despite the both of them having had quite a long a day, none of them are tired, and they end up watching West Side Story until late.

“Wow,” Hoseok says as he stares at the screen. Tony is holding Maria in a close embrace as they sing, “this is kinda like forbidden love, huh. Their families are rivals but they're in love.”

“It’s just like you and Yoongi hyung,” Jimin teases.

Hoseok snorts, “Shut up,” he shoves Jimin lightly, “We’re...soulmates. It’s not really like that.”

Jimin looks back up at the screen too. Tony and Maria had no good reason to fall in love with each other.

“Hyung,”

“Yeah?”

“What do you think of couples like this? Like, forbidden love.”

“I mean, they’re pretty cute,” Hoseok says, “but these stories always end in a tragedy. It’s kinda inevitable.”

“Oh,” is all Jimin says. “...Why do you think so?”

“Well,” Hoseok’s brows furrows as he tries to come up with an answer, sitting back on his hands, “it’s probably because of how different they are? It’s like it never really works out in the end.”

“Oh…”

It’s silent, save for the singing coming from the screen.

“Hyung,”
“Mm?”

“Me and Namjoon hyung are dating.”

Maria’s voice comes to an abrupt pause.

Hoseok sets the remote down, “Wait, really!?” He looks genuinely excited, eyes bright and smile wide.

Jimin can’t seem to bite his own smile back either as he nods, “He asked me out a few days ago though, so it’s still really new.”

“Ah, that’s so cute!” Hoseok coos as he pulls Jimin into a hug, “You guys are the ultimate forbidden lo- oh.”

Jimin sighs as he feels Hoseok go still at the realization, “Yeah.”

“I mean, it’s just fiction,” Hoseok gestures to the TV screen, “they just die at the end for dramatic flavor, but that’s not how it is in real life, you know?”

“I know, but,” Jimin shrugs, “we’re fine right now, but it’s not going to always be so easy. We’re enemies.”

“That doesn’t have to be the case,” Hoseok tries, “I used to think that too, but the considering the things that have been happening... it’s difficult to tell these days who’s the enemy and who’s not.” A sudden frown briefly brushes across his face before it smooths back out, “My point is that you shouldn’t try to predict the outcome when it comes to things like this. It’s usually the last thing you’d expect to happen.” He stares off somewhere, like he’s in his own head thinking about someone and he smiles, a small little one for himself before he turns back to Jimin, “Don’t worry about it, just enjoy what you have. Live.”

“Live?”

“Yeah!” Hoseok pats both of Jimin’s shoulders roughly, “You’re always so uptight and worried, loosen up! Live in the present! Have fun! Be reckless!” He pokes Jimin until he laughs.

Jimin falls back onto Hoseok’s lap with a little giggle and Hoseok pinches his cheeks.

“Okay, hyung,” Jimin says, brushing Hoseok's hands off, “I’ll do that.”

“Yeah?” Hoseok smiles down at him as he retracts his hands.

“Yeah,” Jimin assures him, “I’ll live.”

✿

“Does anyone have a free hand?” Yoongi calls behind him.

“I do,” Seokjin raises one hand.

“Namjoon?” Yoongi tries.
“I’m...kinda occupied at the moment.” Namjoon has one of the guys in a headlock.

Yoongi sighs, “Guess I’ll text him myself then.”

“Yoongi, you’re on top of a guy,” Seokjin points out, and he isn’t wrong. Yoongi has one of the guys on the floor. What was his name? Ishida? Ueyama? He doesn’t recall, but Yoongi is pushing his arms down with his foot and the other with his hand around his wrist. “Who do you need to text right now?”

“Hoseok,” Yoongi answers, putting more pressure into his foot when he feels the guy twitch, “which is exactly why there’s no way you’re doing it. You’re gonna go through my chat history or something.”

Seokjin huffs, “You said it, not me.”

“My hands are free.”

Yoongi turns to the voice in question, assesses it for a while before he nods nonchalantly. “Tell him this is probably going to take longer than a week.” He says as he unlocks his phone with his free hand and hands it to Jungkook.

“Hyung, do you use emojis?” The boy asks as he types into Yoongi’s phone.

“Do I look like I use emojis?” Yoongi grumbles.

“You have a point,” Jungkook nods, “you’re more of a kaomoji person.”

“Jungkook, if you add kaomojis-”

“Done,” Jungkook grins.

[22:32:16] yoongi hyung ☾: work is taking longer than i expected (¬_¬ לפת)
[22:32:20] yoongi hyung ☾: might not be back by this week (╥﹏╥)
[22:32:23] yoongi hyung ☾: miss u already ♥♥♥

Yoongi glares at his phone screen, “You fucking-” It suddenly vibrates in Jungkook’s hand. There’s a heart where the caller ID should be.

“Wait shit,” Jungkook is suddenly holding Yoongi’s phone flimsily like he’s playing hot potato, “do I answer or- wait no I can’t, he doesn’t know I’m here-”

“Fuck’s sake,” Yoongi groans, fastening his grip on the guy beneath him before he grabs his phone from Jungkook’s hand, “pull shit like this again and I’ll send you back to that rat hole,” he hisses before he answers the phone, “hey babe.” He ignores Jungkook’s loud snort when Hoseok’s voice comes up.

“Oh, hi hyung,” Hoseok chuckles, “I kinda called you out of nowhere. Are you busy?”

Yoongi stares down at the guy he’s tackled down about ten minutes ago. When are the others
coming to take care of this? “Not really. You okay?”

“Ah, well,” Hoseok is sputtering a little. It’s cute. “... Are you alone?”

“No,” Yoongi answers.

“Oh…” Hoseok sounds slightly disappointed, but then he clears his throat, “I just uh...missed you, that’s all! It’s been what, five days? That’s pretty long.”

“Yeah,” Yoongi grins, “it’s been a while.”

合....連衡” Yoongi can barely hear the words, but looks down to find that the guy he’s been sitting on, who probably has a broken wrist by now, is talking to him.

“What?” Yoongi murmurs.

“What?” Hoseok asks.

“Not you babe, one sec,” Yoongi lifts the phone away from his ear and asks in English, “What are you saying?”

“....連衡” The man whispers.

“Is the translator here yet?” Yoongi shouts to the room.

“He’s late,” Namjoon answers.

Groaning, Yoongi speaks into his phone with a frown, “Hoseok-ah, you learned Japanese, didn’t you?”

“It’s been a while,” Hoseok says, “why?”

Yoongi puts the call on speaker phone and hovers it near the guys mouth, gesturing him to repeat himself. He takes his phone back once he’s managed to murmur something, “What’d he say?”

“...Something to do with apples?” Hoseok says, hesitant.

Yoongi lifts a brow at the guy beneath his feet and he furiously shakes his head.

“Thought so,” Yoongi murmurs and holds his phone near the guy’s mouth again, “try again?”

He speaks clearly this time, “合従連衡”

“Oh!” Hoseok’s enlightened voice sounds from the phone, “He’s saying alliance!”

“Is he now?” Yoongi mumbles.

“Just got word from Donghyuk,” Seokjin speaks up, “he’s coming up with his squad. He’s on the third floor right now.”

At that, Yoongi turns back to his phone, “Hoseok-ah, do one more thing for me while you’re here.”

“Yes?” Hoseok asks.

“Tell him no in Japanese, and that we’re wiping them out if they’re seen in this territory again.”

“Hyung,” Hoseok sounds worried, “what’s happening right now?”
“Come on,” Yoongi tries, “do this for hyung.” He holds his phone forward again.

Whatever Hoseok said in the end, it caused the Ueyama group quite a scare. Donghyuk’s squad finally comes up to put an end to the hassle, and the infiltrating group are let off with a fairly serious warning.

“By the way,” Yoongi switches off the speaker phone, “I miss you too.”

Hoseok is quiet for a moment before he says, “Bye hyung. Good luck with work.”

“I don’t think a cop should be saying that, but thanks,” Yoongi teases, “I’ll see you soon. Hopefully.” He thinks he can hear the faintest chuckle from the other end before Hoseok hangs up.

He walks up to Donghyuk, “Hyung, how long are we staying here for?”

“Probably another week or so. There’s more of them than we thought,” Donghyuk answers, “missing someone already?”

Yoongi ducks his head and speeds up past him to the car, “Shut up.”

✿

“Stop that,” Jimin scolds Namjoon through the webcam.

Namjoon jolts and straightens up, “Stop what?”

“Stop doing that pout thing!” Jimin whines. His face on the monitor is scattered into small pixels, but Namjoon can just make out the cute little features that is very uniquely Jimin’s. “It makes me want to kiss you and I can’t because you’re a screen!”

“Ah,” Namjoon laughs, “should I turn the camera off? Maybe it’s distracting you.”

“Don’t you dare,” Jimin threatens.

There’s suddenly a knock on the door.

“It’s probably Yoongi hyung at the door,” Namjoon says to his laptop, “I’ll be back.”

To his surprise, it’s Jungkook who’s standing in front of his door.

“Joon hyung,” The boy says, “are you busy?”

“Jungkook,” Namjoon greets, a bit flustered as he looks back at his laptop on the bed, “Right now? Uh, sort of.”

“Ah,” Jungkook sounds disappointed. There’s a sad gleam in his eyes that Namjoon doesn’t recognize, “nevermind then.”

Just as he’s about to turn back to his room, Namjoon calls him, “Give me five minutes, okay?”

He feels slightly relieved when the boy’s face lights up. He watches Jungkook make his way back to his room before retreating back into his own and to the bed.
“Hey, sorry, Ju-” Wait, maybe Jungkook didn’t tell anyone that he’s here, “I need to talk to someone, it seems important.”

Jimin smiles from the small little screen, “That’s fine, we’ve been talking for three hours already.” He crosses his arms, “I guess I’ll let you go. Next Thursday, right?”

“Ah, the great Jimin-ssi,” Namjoon praises, “I am ever so grateful. And yes, Thursday.”

“Hyung,” Jimin calls, smiling when he sees Namjoon turn back to face him in the monitor. He blows him a kiss, kissing his little palm and pursing his lips as he blows, “goodnight~”

“You…” Namjoon gapes, and Jimin giggles. “You’re evil.” Jimin winks at the webcam and it’s Namjoon’s turn to laugh. “Jimin-ah,” On the monitor, Namjoon holds up a little finger heart. “Goodnight.”

Jimin is speechless. It seems like he’s actually forgotten how to talk for ten seconds, “Hyung!”

Namjoon has used up all his confidence into that one finger heart, and he buries his face in his hands, blindly moving his cursor around until he sees the red button, “Bye.”

“Bye, hyung,” Jimin’s smiling face disappears from the screen.

Namjoon spends a moment in silence as he slumps back onto his headboard with a sigh. He’s way too far gone.

Jungkook comes knocking again after a while and Namjoon lets him in.

“So what’s up?” Namjoon asks as Jungkook sits down on the bed beside him.

“I guess I just need some advice,” Jungkook says, staring down at his feet. “It’s my fifth day here, and I’m really grateful for the opportunity, but it’s just…”

“It’s different,” Namjoon says it for him, “I understand.”

“Thought you would,” Jungkook smiles, “I heard from Hoseok hyung that you were training to become a police officer before you changed your mind.”

“Yeah, that happened,” Namjoon admits, “It was a weird transition, but I got used to it. It’s fine if you don’t like it at first-”

“No, actually,” Jungkook immediately says, “I… I really like it so far.”

Namjoon’s eyes widen, “Really?”

He didn’t really agree at first when Yoongi said that Jungkook was coming with them, but apparently the boy had begged the mafioso until he gave in.

He’s strong, Namjoon knows that, he saw him break into the headquarters and took down the mafia’s finest guards in the panic to save his brother with his own eyes. He has potential, but he also has potential to be a good police officer.

“I guess it’s weird,” Jungkook scratches the back of his head, “I’ve been a police officer for almost five years. I didn’t really enjoy it at first, but it got more bearable over time I guess, and naturally I just found the things I like about it. But this,” He makes a weird gesture around everything, “It’s been so long since I’ve felt so excited. I just feel…so in my element when I’m doing this.” He turns to Namjoon, “I’ve never felt anything like this when I’m at work, hyung.”
“What gave you the idea to try this out in the first place? Joining the mafia.” Namjoon asks instead.

“It’s mostly you and Yoongi hyung,” Jungkook smiles, “that night when we worked together to save Hoseok, and you and the others were fighting the Shin clan, I’ve never witnessed anything like that before.”

“How so?” Namjoon tilts his head.

“The way the mafia fights,” Jungkook takes a moment to find his words, “it just seems so free? There’s no hesitation before you do things, and everything feels spontaneous but effective.” He explains, “It’s nothing like how I was trained at the academy.”

“Yeah, it’s really different,” Namjoon recalls his time with Hoseok, getting scolded for not assessing a situation carefully before taking action, or having incorrect posture when shooting. It’s nothing like the mafia, where the outcome is vital, no matter the procedure.

“I really, really like it, hyung,” Jungkook says, “these past five days have been way better than the five years I’ve spent being a cop.”

Namjoon knows the implications of Jungkook’s words, “...Are you sure about this?”

Jungkook throws himself back onto the mattress, stretching above his head, “I know that it’s really sudden, considering that I’ve been doing this for five years, and I’m going to abandon it to do the complete opposite.

“You were also recently rewarded for it too, weren’t you?” Namjoon tries, “It might not be the best to throw it all away.”

“I’m not throwing anything away,” Jungkook turns to him with a smile, “I’m still Jungkook, but maybe happier.” He turns back to look up at the ceiling, “You know that feeling when you feel like you’re just in your element? That you could be doing this forever? That’s how I felt.”

That feeling, Namjoon knows it too. He felt it when he was sitting next to Hoseok at his desk, looking at all the citizens and officers entering and leaving the precinct, old and new case files and computers.

For the first time in a while, Namjoon reflects on his life thus far. It seems like Jungkook has put him into a loop, contemplating what he really wants.

“Yeah,” Namjoon murmurs, “if it’s what you really want, I don’t see why you can’t just go for it.”

Jungkook seems happy to hear that, but to be honest, Namjoon isn’t sure if he was saying that to Jungkook or to himself.

✿

Silence.

It’s getting uncomfortable, so Yoongi breaks it.

“Out with it then,” He says to Donghyuk, “what’s the verdict?”
Silence.

“You’re gonna have to tell me eventually.” Yoongi deadpans.

“One month,” Donghyuk breaks.

That wasn’t what he expected.

“Well, shit,” Yoongi runs a hand through his hair.

“They’ve been trying to keep him alive for a while.” Donghyuk murmurs, “It’s inevitable.”

“Yeah, I know,” Yoongi pulls at the roots of his hair until it hurts, “at least I can see it coming this time.”

* 

“You’re not wearing glasses,” Jimin points out from across the table. It’s starting to get cold again, and he’s wearing a tight knit brown sweater that matches the color of his eyes.

It’s Thursday, finally. He was promised a day off on Thursday and he got it, took the chance to take a quick ride back to see his boyfriend. They met up at a nice little cafe in the evening, sitting near the window, out of their uniforms, the warm yellow light of the cafe spreading over them.

“Ah yeah,” Namjoon chuckles as he rubs his eyes, “I’m wearing contacts today.”

“Oh, did your glasses break or something?” Jimin suddenly looks concerned, “What happened?”

“Well I just-” Namjoon sputters, “I just thought it’d look nice.” shrugs, pulling at the sleeves of his light blue sweater, suddenly conscious of the way he has probably spent too long deciding what to wear, and it shows.

Jimin still looks confused before it clicks and his eyes widen, “You wore contacts for me?”

Namjoon nods sheepishly, “Do you like it? I brought my glasses too if you prefer-”

“Hyung,” Jimin leans in closer and cups his hands around his mouth before he whispers, “if we’re alone right now, I guarantee you I’d be kissing all over your stupid face.”

Namjoon laughs at that. He finds that he does that a lot around Jimin. When he looks at Jimin, he’d be laughing too, or maybe a bit calmer, just smiling fondly over him with the kind of glint that warms Namjoon up.

“This is nice,” He comments, fingers tapping on the table as he looks around.

“Yeah,” Jimin reaches out to cover Namjoon’s hand with his, grinning too widely when Namjoon turns to hold it properly.

They’re both blushing at the little contact. For once, it’s in public, and they’re just any ordinary couple.

Namjoon thinks back again to Jungkook’s words, about what he wants.
He imagines for a brief second what it’d be like right now if he were to pursue his path of becoming a police officer. Maybe he’d be with Jimin sooner, know him for longer. Maybe this wouldn’t be their first date, but maybe fifth, or fifteenth, even.

“This is really nice,” Namjoon says to the thought. Jimin seems to agree.


A few days before they officially go back, Namjoon is told to return first.

“Did something happen?” He asks.

“Not yet,” Yoongi answers, “but it will soon.”

“What do you mean- oh, is it…”

Yoongi nods.

Namjoon nods.

“One month,” Yoongi says.

Namjoon nods.

Yoongi nods.

“I’ll quickly pack up and make my way back to the mansion,” Namjoon says, “...Are you going to stay here?”

Yoongi is biting his nails, a habit Namjoon hasn’t seen much of ever since Hoseok came around, “I’ll go when I’m ready.”

“Yeah,” Namjoon nods, “okay.”

Yoongi nods.

Namjoon nods.

Namjoon leaves.

“If you want to do it but you’re worried, then you should do it.”

Namjoon looks up from his book, “I’m sorry, sir?”

“I know what you’re worrying about, Namjoon,” Head chief Min says. His face is pale, and he’s slowly blending into the bed sheets. “You don’t really hide much of what you’re stressing about.”
At that, Namjoon chuckles in defeat as he sets his book down on his lap, “It’s not that easy, sir.”

“I know it’s not, or else you wouldn’t be stressing over it,” The head chief says, “It’s your life, so don’t let your past control your future.”

“But—”

“Namjoon,” The way his name is spoken is soft though strict, yet affectionate, “you’ve done more than enough for me. I wouldn’t mind letting you go, if that’s what you need to hear.” He smiles, “I give you my full permission, so make your choice.”

Namjoon’s choice.

It feels oddly like this is what he’s wanted all along, and not something he’s thought of doing spontaneously.

Sure, fuck it.

He has the head chief’s permission and blessings, he wants this. He can always come back if it all falls apart. Just fuck it.

Unexpectedly, it was Hoseok who opened the door, hair sticking out in little tufts like he just got out of bed. He probably did, it’s way too late to be doing this, but Namjoon needs to get it out.

“Hey, Hoseok, sorry,” Namjoon tries to be as sweet as possible, “is Jimin here?”

Jimin drags himself to the door a few minutes later, looking just as sleep-addled.

“Hyung,” He yawns into his hands, eyes scrunching a few droplets of tears. Namjoon wants this.

“I choose you.” He says.

“Sorry?” Jimin asks through another yawn.

“I choose you.”

“Hyung- what?” Jimin rubs his eyes, “It’s almost three in the morning.”

“Jimin,” Namjoon says it determinedly, “I choose you.”

* 

The expected happens.

Of course it does, there’s no surprise to it.

It was going to happen, and now it happens, Yoongi gets to see it coming from a mile away.

It’s happening.

It’s going to end.
But why does he feel so affected by this ending?

Chapter End Notes

**as a bit of context about west side story, it's basically a modern version of romeo and juliet, but with gangs!
also !! not that you need to know but in japanese the words alliance (合従連衡) [gasshōrengō] and apple (林檎) [ringo] have similar pronunciations at the end so hoseok mistook the two kjhsjfhisd

woah a super duper early update what is this ?? who is she ?? sounds like someone who's trying to finish all her procrastination resources before exams

my twitter, my curiouscat
The expected happens.

As expected, Yoongi’s father is rushed to the hospital. They had the room made and fixed to all his requirements days prior because they knew it was going to happen.

As expected, he demands to be sent back home as soon as he can be discharged, though it doesn’t happen easily.

As expected, Namjoon finds a way, and he’s back on his bed in the mansion.

Unexpectedly, however, Yoongi can’t seem to calm down.

He feels the tension at the back of his head every step of the way, from when he’s called to the hospital to the trip back to the mansion.

It gets more difficult when he catches a glimpse of his father, appearing almost translucent against the sheets. He feels sick himself, though not with worry because he’s not, doesn’t need to, because he already knows the outcome of all this, has known months prior.

You learn something new every time something unexpected happens. Today, Yoongi learned that you can predict a storm months before its visit and do everything in your power to prepare, but that doesn't guarantee that you'll be safe from the impact.

“Yoongi,” He hears a voice, Seokjin’s “you okay?”

Yoongi waves him off, “Fuck how I feel, you’re supposed to focus on him.” He nods towards the door to his father’s bedroom.

“There’s not much that we can do right now,” Seokjin admits, “Hara-ssi and the girls are still on their way here from Daegu.”

That is as expected too. Yoongi nods.
He can hear Seokjin’s sigh, “What can I do to help you?”

“I’m fine,” He’s not.

“No, you’re not.” Seokjin says. “You don’t have to stay here, I’ll call you in if he wants to see you.”

“Are you kicking me out now?” Yoongi lifts an eyebrow.

“If sitting here is only making you anxious and stressed then yes,” Seokjin confirms, “I’m kicking you out.”

As Yoongi pushes himself up to make his way out with a grumble, Seokjin calls for him again, “Also, someone’s waiting for you at the entrance.”


“And what did you drag him here for?” Is the first thing Yoongi says when he sees Hoseok.

“He’s here to hold your hand,” Donghyuk says too matter-of-factly.

“If you actually dragged Hoseok out of his work just because you think I need to hold his hand I’ll fucking punch you.”

“Hyung, it’s fine,” Hoseok tries, “I’d be too worried to focus on work anyway.”

It’s true, though it may sound like a lie. Donghyuk came up to the station in his full getup demanding to talk to Hoseok while not bearing anyone else a glance.

“Yoongi needs you,” He said.

Hoseok ignored the sudden pang in his chest, “Is hyung okay?”

“Our dad isn’t,” Donghyuk said simply, “so naturally Yoongi isn’t either.”

“What? You mean the head chief…?” It didn’t have to be said for Donghyuk to know what he was talking about, because he nodded.

“Just,” Donghyuk muttered, “just go hold his hand through it or something. He doesn’t look like he knows how to calm down right now, so go remind him.” He looked at Hoseok in the eye, “You can do that for him, can’t you?”

Of course he can.

“Of course,” Hoseok said.

Yoongi does look stressed, and maybe even a bit mad after Donghyuk had left them, rubbing absentmindedly at his jaw before his fingers drift to his lips and he starts chewing at his nails.

It’s a habit Hoseok doesn’t see much of, definitely not recently. He does notice from time to time how misshapen and brittle some of Yoongi’s nails are, but he never really commented on it, never dared to.
He doesn’t like that this is how they see each other again after weeks apart, hates that Yoongi seems worse than he was when Hoseok saw him deep in the aftershocks of the news of his mother. His eyebrows are knitted tight, lips dry against his pale fingers, and dark circles sit smudged beneath his lifeless eyes.

“Hyung,” He calls, but Yoongi doesn’t stop, doesn’t look at him, like Hoseok’s voice hasn’t even registered. “Yoongi hyung,” He tries again, no different.

He reaches for Yoongi’s hand then, curling his fingers around his wrist and gently pulling them away from his lips. Yoongi resists at first, but lets loose as if he’s given in.

The skin around his nails are cut and bleeding. Hoseok’s heart drops at the sight, bringing them up to his lips and kissing each of them. The faintest taste of blood touches his tongue, but he doesn’t mind, just holds Yoongi’s hand with both of his, and kisses his fingers, down to his knuckles until the bleeding stops.

Yoongi is looking down at the floor when Hoseok lifts his head up to face him. His hand is still shaking, and Hoseok can see him bite his bottom lip, swipes his tongue across it before biting it again.

Hoseok wants to kiss him, but now doesn’t feel right.

There are a few other people in the hallway, but they’re all crowding around the door to the head chief’s room.

Hoseok had noticed long before Donghyuk had explicitly pointed it out, the way Yoongi almost unconsciously reaches for Hoseok’s hand every time their fingers brush even slightly. He searches for Hoseok’s hand like he’s searching for an anchor to keep still and in place.

So Hoseok holds his hand as they wait. Yoongi doesn’t say anything, neither does Hoseok.

Hoseok forgets for a moment then that their arrangement is coming to an end very soon.

✿

As expected, they eventually get called in.

Unexpectedly, (though perhaps it is expected), Yoongi holds onto Hoseok’s hand and laces their fingers together before they enter the room.

“Hoseok-ssi.” A dry voice calls him.

Hoseok smiles down at the head chief, “Hello, sir.”

“I hope you understand now why I have refused to see you a few weeks ago.” Head chief Min’s hands are still on the bed, and they look suspiciously like they’re tinted purple. “By no means was I repulsed by the idea of seeing you, though I really appreciate that you wanted to visit.”

“It’s fine, sir,” Hoseok assures him, “I understand.”

“Yoongi,” The slight shift of his father’s head indicates that he’s talking to his son now, “I have a lot to say. Sit down.”
Noticing the sudden change of his tone, Hoseok knows now that this is a conversation he has no part in.

Just as he makes a gesture to stand up and leave, however, Yoongi’s grip tightens on his hand. When he turns to look, Yoongi is looking away at his father, but his hand is gripping Hoseok’s hard enough that his knuckles are white.

Stay, the gesture whispers, stay with me.

So Hoseok stays, even if he has no place to be here, interrupting a moment he shouldn’t be seeing because Yoongi wants him here.

The head chief doesn’t seem to mind Hoseok’s presence, or perhaps he no longer cares.

“I regret to say that there are a lot of things I wished I could have done differently throughout my life,” He starts, “I don’t dwell on them, but they’re all coming back to me now in my final moments.”

The words make Hoseok’s gut swoops. He can’t imagine what it’s like to know that you won’t be here for much longer, that death is just at the foot of your bed. How can you just lie there and wait? Where’s the fear?

“Whatever it is you need to get out,” Yoongi says, “whatever you need to say to me, good or bad, anything that will hurt my feelings or won’t, just do it now, yeah?” The grip on Hoseok’s hand relaxes somewhat, “Do what you must.”

“I’m sorry, Yoongi.” The head chief whispers.

Silence.

Hoseok can’t quite believe what he’s hearing himself.

“What are you saying?” Yoongi scowls.

The mafioso utters the words he swore to never say in his final moments, as if futility has overtaken him and such things do not matter.

“I know I was never a good father, or even a good leader, I’m sorry.” He says, “I’m sorry I never loved your mother, that I never tried. I feel like I couldn’t, but you,” He looks at Yoongi, the sincerity in his eyes so clear, “I still remember the day I held you in my arms like it was yesterday. I knew I would put all the hate I have for anyone aside just for you to stay with me.”

“Dad,” Yoongi whispers, shaky and wet, “what the fuck is this?”

“It’s a good bye, Yoongi.” He says, “You deserve one.”

Hoseok can feel it in the way Yoongi’s hand squeezes and loosens Hoseok’s almost at a rhythm, the memory of his mother, the confusion from the spontaneity of everything, the final parting that never came with a farewell, or any kind of indication.
“I regret that I have kept quiet for so long that I must be saying all this at my last moments,” The head chief continues, “but I really do love you, son. I know you’ll prosper further than I ever can.” He smiles up at Yoongi, “You have your mother’s intelligence.”

Hoseok feels something wet drop on his hand, and Yoongi sniffs as he wipes his tears away with his free hand.

The head chief, with half a life left, turns to Hoseok with a smile, “Please look after my son, Hoseok-ssi.”

Hoseok wants to say yes, of course he will, but perhaps that would be a lie.

This is the end of it, technically. This is where it all ends.

He won’t be anything to Yoongi after this.

But he can’t lie, physically, he can’t. So instead, he smiles, and hopes that the gesture is enough of an answer, one that he doesn’t know himself.

“Yoongi,” The head chief says, “I never loved your mother, but I hope things are different for you. A soulmate’s love, it’s a magic in this world that I’ve never gotten to experience.”

It hurts Hoseok just to be sitting here and listening to all this. He can’t even imagine how difficult it is for Yoongi to admit to his father, to tell him the truth about this… arrangement, because there’s no way he can lie. It’s impossible to lie, they realize now, even through gritted teeth. But,

“Things are different,” Yoongi says, and holds Hoseok’s hand with both of his. Hoseok’s head suddenly snaps to look at him, wide eyes and struck by the shock he’s never felt before. How can Yoongi lie like this?

“I love him.” Yoongi says to his father like it’s the truth.

Hoseok doesn’t breathe, doesn’t say anything at all. These words, they wouldn’t hurt if it were any other situation, because Hoseok liked the lie in a way, when it was just for him to savor in his unrequited feelings. But not now, never now, not when Yoongi’s father is slowly disintegrating in front of them and Yoongi is still insisting on lying.

“Hyung…” Hoseok whispers.

“That’s good,” The head chief lies back down, his furrow smoothing out and the faintest, sated little smile plays at his lips, “I can rest easy knowing that.”

That’s the sentence that fuelled the very reason this all started, the very beginning of Yoongi obnoxiously striding into the police station and proposing to Hoseok, to them settling on this agreement. Just for the sake of the head chief’s peace of mind, the very words Yoongi had wanted are presented to him.

There’s a knock on the door, and Namjoon sticks his head in, “Hara-ssi has arrived.”

“Bring her in,” The head chief says as he rests his head back onto his pillow and closes his eyes, as if he’s assuming his final position.

Yoongi lets go of Hoseok’s hand to stand up and make his way out, with Hoseok following him gingerly from behind.
“Hyung,” Hoseok whispers harshly as soon as they’re out of the room, “I know that was like, the whole point of this thing,” he tries not to sound too angry, since he’s not, more like so extremely confused and baffled, “but how could you lie to him like that?”

Silence.

“Yoongi hyung,” Hoseok insists, desperate for an answer or some kind of explanation to this.

“It’s not a lie.” Yoongi murmurs, staring off somewhere.

Hoseok isn’t functioning anymore, “I- what?”

Yoongi turns back to look at him, eyes glassy as he gazes directly to meets Hoseok’s, and he says again, “That wasn’t a lie, Hoseok.”

Silence.

The whole thing was built from walls of lies, pretending, and convincing, but what the both of them have never seem to realize is that none of them have been lying for quite a while.

Before Hoseok can ask another question, before he can beg Yoongi to clarify what it is he just said, that it was truth that left his lips, before anything can be resolved, it ends.

“Yoongi!” Donghyuk’s shout directs Yoongi to turn back, “Get in here now!”

It’s happening, the expected.

As expected, all the mafiosi rush into the room.

As expected, Yoongi leaves.

As expected, Hoseok lets him go.

It all goes as planned, yet Hoseok freezes in place like he never expected it to happen, that this is some kind of surprise even though he planned it, they both planned it together.

This is what was meant to happen, so why does Hoseok feel so against it now?

Hoseok grits his teeth and clenches his jaw as he lets the image of a tired, gloomy Yoongi slip further and further away from him, like grains of sand blown away by the summer wind. He lets Yoongi go, because this was what was meant to happen.

He’s left alone in the hallway surrounded by Yoongi’s words, echoing along the walls of his mind, and confusion, so much of it clogging his lungs until he feels like he can collapse.

_That wasn’t a lie._

※
“We can talk about this later, hyung,” Namjoon says, “I know now’s not a really-”

“When are you planning to leave?” Yoongi cuts to the chase. They’ll have to talk about it eventually.

Namjoon is quiet for a while before he replies, “...I was planning to work for another week to get everything wrapped up so it’s not messy when I leave, but following the...incident, I’ll stay until your transition to leader is completed.”

“Right, that’s happening,” Yoongi realizes. That’s good, he’ll distract himself with work. “I’ll start working on the statement.”

“Right away?” Namjoon sounds surprised, “It’s fine if you pause everything for now-”

“I’ll work on it,” Yoongi turns to his desk, “what happened is nothing to worry over. We all saw it coming. We prepared for it.”

“Yoongi-”

“Have you checked that all the funeral invitations are sent out yet?” Yoongi stares at his screen. He can hear Namjoon sigh, “No. I’ll do that right now.”

Silence.

“You know,” Yoongi says after a while, “you’d make a good police captain.”

Namjoon looks up from his tablet, mouth parting as if he’s about to say something, but doesn’t. Instead, he smiles and gets back to work.

“Oh right,” Namjoon breaks the silence again, and Yoongi looks up at him this time. “I forgot to tell you, but Hoseok’s apartment is fixed now.”

Silence.

“Oh okay.”


Things don’t go back to the way they were, unexpectedly.

It is, though to an extent.

It’s the end to a lot of things.

It’s the end to Hoseok and Jimin’s roommate days, and it takes them both a while to finally part.

He’s still thinking of Yoongi.

Hoseok is back to work, so is Taehyung and Jimin.
It’s the end to Jungkook’s days as a police officer.

They argued with Jungkook. Got into a heated fight that didn’t seem to have ended — if it did, then it didn’t end well.

Taehyung and Jimin were mad that Jungkook lied, that he decided on this huge decision so spontaneously, that he essentially joined the enemy just because he was bored.

Hoseok doesn’t say anything. He’s been lying too.

“I love him.”

Jungkook was mad that Taehyung and Jimin didn’t try to understand him, that they never noticed how unhappy he was to be controlled by a system that had ridiculed him for the most ridiculous things, that they called the mafia enemies despite working with them before and knowing who they are — hell, despite Jimin dating one of them.

Jungkook and Taehyung were mad that Jimin never told them about his relationship with Namjoon, like he didn’t trust them enough to tell them something so important.

Jimin argued that they wouldn’t understand.

Taehyung argued that he would.

Hoseok watches years of friendship burst into flames over something that he brought into their lives the moment he agreed to help Yoongi.

It’s the end to some of the things he never wanted to end.

Things aren’t going back to normal like it should, which should be unexpected, though deep down, Hoseok saw it coming.

It feels like the end to a lot more things than they expected, and he feels so dissociated from everything that it seems to not have fully sunk in yet what is happening, or not happening, not anymore.

That stage that borders between the end and, well — not the end; that’s where Hoseok is. He stays there for a while until he’s inevitably pushed into the one he doesn’t quite like — the end.

“That wasn’t a lie, Hoseok.”

He was pushed to the end when he received the invitation to Min Hongdo’s funeral.

A mafia funeral appears to be like any other funeral, except perhaps more elevated in the nature that everyone appeared identical when Hoseok first arrived, in their white shirts, black ties, and trench coats.
He slowly distinguishes each one of them, most of which he’s seen or interacted with before, a few that he isn’t sure if he’s met before. None of them know how they should approach Hoseok, it seems. Everyone he’s made eye contact with either nods a little, or just pretends that they don’t recognize him.

They all wear a little badge on their heart, a gold one encrusted with diamonds that appear to be a water lily. It’s the head chief’s birth flower, Hoseok figures. He’s seen it on Yoongi’s shoulder. Hoseok has neither of those things. He doesn’t have a badge, and he’s in his one black suit, though it stands out among the crowd of identical men. Hoseok stands there alienated, like he has no place to be standing here among the people that so explicitly show their loyalty to the head chief. He guesses it’s fair.

He spots Namjoon after a while in the same attire as everyone else’s, standing still near the corner of the hall, overlooking everything.

He sees Jungkook too. It still feels odd to see him there in the same getup as if he’s always been there, like he belongs. Hoseok still doesn’t know how he feels about it all, but seeing how upset Jungkook got that Jimin and Taehyung didn’t approve of his decision, he just decided to step back and see how it plays out.

He sees how packed the columbarium is, and regrets coming alone, though he wouldn’t know who he could even invite to accompany him. It’s slightly lonely like this, standing around awkwardly since he doesn’t know how differently things work here.

He sees the crowd separate at the sound of a gayageum playing out fluttering notes that fill the room until the chatter dies into silence.

He sees a walkway directed by a long black carpet that stretches from the entrance to a narrow well of water that borders an empty shelf at the end of the room.

He sees Yoongi then.

Yoongi enters the room in a black suit that is laced at the collar and tie. In his arms is the urn of his father, made of fine black porcelain with hand-painted water lilies decorating the rim, and a matching one on the end of the lid covering it.

It hits then, like it hasn’t hit before, that the contents of the urn is what was once the head chief. A shiver runs up his spine yet he feels like he’s heating up at the sudden realization. He realizes then too, that no one can ever be prepared for death, and the grieving that ensues.

He hears someone sob near him, like it just hit them too the purpose of this evening. Someone whispers to another about how sad Yoongi looks.

Yoongi looks tired still, the looming smudge of his dark circles and his dry lips appearing more prominent than Hoseok remembers. His expression is muted, but his jaw is clenched the same way it did a month ago when he cried in front of Hoseok. Every step he takes is matched by a note plucked on the gayageum, rhythmic and constant to form a melody, joined by accompanying notes and escalating harmonies the closer he is to the shelf. It seems as if the music and the notes strummed are his father, who’s now being carried by his pure soul son for he can no longer move himself. The son carries the melody of his father through his steps, taking him to his resting place. Following him is Donghyuk with a tray full of water lilies, white and lilac and green. Another woman, who he doesn’t recognize, follows with a tray of incense and candles.
A chord is strummed when Yoongi stops at the edge of the black carpet that rests just before the well beneath his feet. It’s complete silence when Yoongi reaches over the well and up to rest the urn on the shelf, the bottom of it touching the wooden surface with a soft knock.

With bare hands, he turns to the woman with the tray and reaches for the incense and candles, resting them in their places on the shelf before taking his time to light them up. He steps back once he’s done and stares at it for what seems longer than it is intended. Donghyuk looks concerned, brows furrowed suddenly before Yoongi seems to come back to life and continue with the ceremony.

A note is plucked on the gayageum when Yoongi’s knees touch the floor in a kneeling position just at the edge of the floor before the well. He turns to Donghyuk and reaches for a water lily, the gayageum starts playing again as soon as the first one rests on the surface of the water. The melody it plays is the same one as the one that the soles of Yoongi’s feet had created earlier, though now with a clearer rhythm and phrasing. It plays for as long as Yoongi sets down the water lilies onto the well, filling it to the rim. Hoseok realizes belatedly that each water lily represents each year of the late chief’s life.

Once the last lily touches the water and floats away, Yoongi stands back up, taking a step back before he kneels down once more. He then ducks down until his forehead touches the ground, hands resting flat on either side of his head in a bow. The rest of the room seems to follow suit, bowing with their heads turned toward the urn, paying their respects to their leader one last time for as long as the gayageum plays the sad little melody.

It all played out like a performance of some kind with the music and the flowers and the lines of smoke from the incense. There’s a beauty to it, in the way the mafia celebrate and part with the dead.

Hoseok watches as people filter out the entrance in lines as their vehicles come to pick them up. Namjoon had told him, for the very brief moment that they walked past each other, that a vehicle has been arranged to take him home. Jungkook doesn’t talk to him.

After what feels like an hour into waiting, something brushes Hoseok’s right shoulder from behind him. He turns to see the woman that was holding the tray of candles for Yoongi during the ceremony, and bows with a polite smile.

“You must be Jung Hoseok,” She says. Her face is hidden under a thin black veil, though Hoseok can make out a bit of her features. She seems fairly young, save for traces of aging on her skin.

“I am,” Hoseok answers.

“The invite is usually only for members of the clan, but I thought you’d make a good exception, so I told them to send you one.” She smiles at him, “Thank you for coming.”

“Thank you for including me in your exclusive ceremony.” Hoseok says, “Though I’m not quite sure if I deserved a place, I am very grateful.”

“You’re very polite,” The woman comments, then she seems to realize, “You must not know who I am.” She straightens up, “I’m Song Jihye, Min Donghyuk’s wife.”

Hoseok has heard the name before from his embarrassing mistake months ago when he accused
Yoongi of sex trafficking and belatedly realizing that he was in fact, very wrong.

Pushing his embarrassment aside, he bows once more, “It’s nice to finally meet you in person.”

Song Jihye seems pleased by Hoseok’s attitude from her smile, “I hope my children grow up with manners like yours. Yoongi sure is a lucky guy.”

Hoseok jolts at the name, “I’m sorry?”

“You’re Yoongi’s soulmate, aren’t you?” Jihye tilts her head, “That’s what Donghyuk said.”

Hoseok doesn’t know what to say, “Well, yes-”

“That Yoongi can be such a stubborn guy sometimes,” Jihye continues, “he seemed a lot happier, maybe even healthier ever since he started talking about this Jung Hoseok.” She looks at him, “You’ve worked wonders on him, haven’t you?”

Hoseok tries to push the aching in his chest away before his brain can catch up on what’s happening. He smiles again instead, wider, “I can’t take all the credit.”

“Oh sure you can,” Jihye waves him off, “Yoongi used to be so reckless, and he didn’t care about anything!” She tuts, “So tell me, what are you two waiting for?”

Hoseok smiles wider, “Excuse me?”

“Marriage!” She says like it’s the most obvious thing ever, “I understand that a few couples need a bit of time, but Donghyuk said you two have been dating for months now, so I don’t see why-”

“Noona,” A low voice grumbles, one Hoseok knows too well, “the car’s ready.”

Hoseok freezes in his place.

“Why, speak of the devil!” Jihye turns around to a particularly stressed Yoongi. He’s frowning at her, unamused, but it all clears to wide eyes when he catches Hoseok’s gaze.

“Hoseok,” Is all Yoongi says, more breath than words.

Jihye looks between them, “Oh, did you not know that I invited him?”

“No,” Yoongi’s face molds back into a frown, “I did not.”

“You two need to communicate more!” Jihye tuts, “I hope he knows you’ll be busy for the whole month.”

“He is?” Hoseok feels himself ask, and Yoongi’s eyes shoot back at him.

“Yoongi will be busy meeting with all of our shareholders as the new leader,” Jihye explains, “we’re a pretty big organization, so it’ll take a while.”

“I see,” Hoseok nods robotically.

Jihye suddenly turns to Yoongi, “Does this mean you haven’t told him?” She gasps, “You better quickly say your goodbyes then since we’re leaving right away.” She pushes Yoongi towards Hoseok like they’re children, “Kiss him goodbye. It’ll be a while until you see him again.”

“This is unnecessary,” Yoongi turns to glare at her.
“Say that again when you’re a whole city away and being all lovesick moping about how much you miss him,” Jihye glares back. “We’re not leaving until you kiss him goodbye.”

Hoseok doesn’t really feel like he has a say in any of this, and he finds himself standing awkwardly as Yoongi scowls at his sister-in-law, and it—

it hurts, in a way. Yoongi used to kiss him so easily, so gently like he wanted to kiss Hoseok. Yoongi kept urging Hoseok to kiss him, and stayed so close to him, touched him so naturally like it was second nature to him. But now it returns to how things were before, where Yoongi doesn’t touch Hoseok, refuses to, as he’s turned away, scowling at his sister-in-law like it’d work somehow.

It goes on for a while until Yoongi sighs, long and painful as he turns to look at Hoseok.

There’s something in Yoongi’s gaze that pains him so much, something in his touch when he pulls Hoseok closer by his waist before his lips brush Hoseok’s cheek bone, kissing him there.

It hurts now. It didn’t before, but it’s so painful now that Hoseok knows for sure that it’s fake, that he won’t have this ever again.

What makes it worse is that Yoongi lingers. He fucking lingers like he used to, with his lips staying pressed to Hoseok’s cheek and his sighs fanning Hoseok’s face. It hurts every second it goes on, and then Yoongi’s lips drift to his ear.

Hoseok stares at the empty street in front of him past Yoongi’s shoulder like it would help, like looking at the street poles and puddles on pavements is going to distract him from Yoongi’s touch. It hurts, it hurts that it feels good because of the aching knowledge that he’ll never get this again once Yoongi pulls away.

He’s jolted back to the present when Yoongi whispers, voice going directly into his ear and amplifying in his mind. It’s not something he expects at all, and he tumbles into the deepest depth of the ocean as indescribable feelings choke him.

“I’m sorry,” Yoongi whispers before he pulls away.

Hoseok doesn’t get a chance to think or make sure that he didn’t hear it wrong.

He doesn’t get a chance to think.

Yoongi is walking away again, so far and sudden that Hoseok fails to move as if he’s stuck in place, like there’s an ocean between them, the level too high for Hoseok to wade.

Hoseok looks at Yoongi’s hands, and it hurts because he used to hold them, and they used to hold Hoseok’s every time they’re near.

He looks at Yoongi’s back, and it hurts because he’s touched the bare skin with his fingers and his lips, traced the blooming flowers until he remembers exactly where each one of them are.

He looks at Yoongi and it fucking hurts, because the memories he’s left linger with him like a light scarf that’s slowly closing in and choking him, pulling him down until he’s far from the surface and it’s dark and everything is cold and abysmal.
Hoseok suddenly misses pretending.

Things aren’t the same as before. They can never be; not when Hoseok wishes to go back to when he was sick with guilt from lying, the only thing keeping him up is the thought that it wasn’t permanent, and he’ll go back to the way things were. He wishes to go back to when he strained himself trying to push away his feelings because at least then, as fake as they pretended it was, he still had Yoongi.

Things aren’t the same as before.

*I love you—* Hoseok doesn’t say

*I love you, hyung.*— Hoseok realizes that he’ll never say.


“*Od yojd ejsy upi esmyrf?*”

Yoongi jolts, lifting his head from his hand. They’re on the highway now.

“What?” Yoongi asks as he rubs his eyes, “Did someone say something?”

“I told you he was asleep,” Namjoon says to Seokjin from the passenger seat.

“Oh well,” Seokjin shrugs, eyes on the road, “free practice I guess.”

Yoongi sits up in his seat, loosening his tie, “What were you saying?”

“He was asking you something,” Namjoon says.

“What did you ask me then?”

“Is this what you wanted?” Seokjin asks.

Silence.

Yoongi scoffs, “What are you talking about?” He asks, even though he knows.

The three of them in the car, they all know.

“Hoseok,” Seokjin says anyway, “is this what you wanted?”

Silence.

“That doesn’t matter,” Yoongi grumbles, “there was a purpose to the arrangement and now it’s done.”
“Let me rephrase this then,” Seokjin says, “is this what you want?”

“That’s basically the same question,” Yoongi deadpans.

“It’s not,” Seokjin argues, “at first, you wanted it to be a contract of some kind with a start and an end where you leave Hoseok, but now you’ve actually left Hoseok, as in you just physically pulled away from him and left, what are you feeling right now? Do you want this?”

“He’s better off without me.” Yoongi grumbles.

“That’s not what I asked.” Seokjin says flatly.

Silence.

“You proposed to him,” Namjoon speaks up.

“That you did,” Seokjin confirms, “you even made a proposal speech.”

**Jung Hoseok, I have yet to love you,**

Yoongi groans at the memory, “Don’t remind me.”

“Set the deal straight then, Yoongi” Seokjin demands, “you shot this cop then you saved him and proposed to him but then you got into this weird fake relationship, lost your head trying to save him when he got kidnapped, and now that it’s over, you’re still thinking about him. You think things are the same after all that? You think you’re gonna go back to living perfectly fine like you did before this because it’s over?”

“Fuck you, no.” Yoongi snaps.

“Glad we’re on the same page then!” Seokjin says ridiculously, “so tell me Yoongi, now that things are not the same as before, is this what you want?”

Silence.

Things didn’t go as planned at all.

The white lie has come to an end, but so has everything else. If there is a way to start over somehow, Yoongi would entertain the option.

“**Is this what you wanted?**”

*No.*
Fuck no.

Jung Hoseok,

I have yet to love you, and our start may be the worst start to any story, but it sounds like an exciting one.

I want to learn what it takes for you to cry, to snap or laugh. I want to see if spring changes you like the trees— if you could change me like spring changes the trees. I want to learn what makes you laugh and what doesn’t— what would bring your mood down, and what would bring it back up again.

— I want to learn how I will fall in love with you.

There’s a possibility that we’ll both regret it, but there’s also the possibility that I’ll fall for you, and you’ll fall for me— The way just the thought of it makes me feel is enough for me to want to try.

My dear soulmate— would you want to fall in love with me?

Chapter End Notes

rip head chief min :(

my twitter,
my curiouscat
Yoongi isn’t incredibly familiar with love. His relationship with his family is different from others. Love, to Yoongi's understanding as a child, was something one has to feel for their family, though Yoongi never really enjoyed being around his family all that much. It wasn’t that he hated it either; it was just living day-to-day with the same people and getting used to it. Coexistence.

Yoongi didn’t really understand love because there was no good example of it throughout his life. His father didn’t love his mother, and his brother never really showed any kind of affection to him or anyone else.

Donghyuk once got a girlfriend he was fairly serious with despite them not being soulmates.

“There’s because I love her,” Donghyuk said so easily, “those fossils in there don’t know what love is.”

His brother wasn’t completely wrong, Yoongi thought. It was almost like an arranged marriage in a way. All the elders were married to their soulmates, but none of them seemed happy. Perhaps the whole idea of soulmates loving each other was just a myth.

Yoongi still didn’t understand Donghyuk though.

He realized a little too belatedly, or rather, extremely belatedly, what love was really like.

He realized so when he accidentally called for his mother as he stepped towards her office. It didn’t register that she was gone until he opened the door to silence.

Yoongi didn’t know that love hurt, and was angry at himself for not learning sooner what love was, that he loved someone, until a permanent hole was left in his heart.

“It’s fine,” Yoongi thought. He’ll learn from his mistakes. He won’t let it happen again.

What a load of bullshit.

“One loan sharking? What an old-fashioned idea!” One of the men in the table grimaces at Yoongi’s words.
This is the fourth out of the five meetings he has to attend as the new head chief presenting his scheme. None of the people around really liked him all that much, he was never obedient, never really listened to what anyone had to say when he was still at his father's side.

“Loan sharking has been around for years. There’s a reason the business still hasn’t died down. It’s one of the easiest ways to make bank,” Yoongi says simply, “this will be the fastest way to pay off all the debt the late head chief has left.”

“The debt, you say?” Another man speaks up, “Like the ones from fixing up an apartment and paying for some cop’s rent? The ones from forming a new task force just to please those rats?”

“Yes, and a lot of medical procedures,” Yoongi admits. “There’s no point wallowing over what the money was used for. I’m only focusing on how to clean up all this mess before making any further advancements as head chief.”

“You want us to look past the fact that Min Hongdo played around with the enemy?” The man from the far end of the table glares, its sharpness reaching Yoongi’s, but he doesn’t back down. He’s been trained for this his whole life.

“Yes,” Yoongi says easily, and quickly follows up before a ruckus can ensue, “a very old-fashioned way of thinking is assuming that the police are our enemies when several alliances has been formed between other clans and the authorities in order to operate more easily.” He looks pointedly at the man opposite to him, “Not to mention the fact that the police has saved the late head chief’s life, and we would technically still be in debt to them too if it weren’t for him trying to make up for it with money.”

“So you’re saying the police is not our enemy?”

“The Shin clan who were supplying stocks for us literally betrayed our trust a few months back,” Yoongi points out, “I think the police isn’t something we should fuss over so much.”

A dry laugh sounds from somewhere distant, “He’s only saying this because he’s engaged to a cop.”

Yoongi freezes.

“Please refrain from discussing things that don’t have anything to do with Min Yoongi’s new position as the head chief.” Seokjin speaks up suddenly.

“I don’t see how this is unrelated.” The man says, “I’m pointing out that there’s a clear bias in what he was saying. Defending the enemy because he fucks one-”

“I am not and have never been engaged to a cop,” Yoongi says coldly.

“We all heard about it, Min Yoongi. News here spread fast.” The man grins, “You shot a cop who turned out to be your soulmate and that made you switch. You could’ve brought him over to this meeting too if you dared. Hell, you can even bring him to the final meeting next month!”

“We’re no longer in contact with each other,” Yoongi murmurs, “and this has nothing to do with what we’ve been discussing. I’ve just now presented you all the facts. The police has helped to defeat the Shin clan after their betrayal, they’ve saved the late head chief’s life, one of them has even joined us.” He gestures blankly to Jungkook standing to his left. “None of these are based on my opinion or judgements. They’re all facts.”

The room falls silent until a man tuts.
“It’s such a shame,” He says sadly, “the only thing acceptable about you as a leader now is your all-black appearance.”

“Would’ve been your work strategies too if it weren’t for that loan sharking idea.” Someone near him says, and laughter breaks out throughout the whole room, though it’s complete silence on Yoongi’s end.


“It was fake.”

Silence.

None of them say anything for a while. The wind blows Hoseok’s curtains into a live thing, howling into shapes like some cosmic entity is trying to break into the fabrics of this reality and fix everything back up. They all stare at it for a while as if expecting something, none of them getting up to shut the window to keep the cold air out.

It was supposed to be some sort of housewarming get-together, even though Hoseok is just back in his fixed apartment, even though Jimin and Taehyung have been avoiding each other, even though Jungkook doesn’t answer their calls. They let the cold air slip through the open window and surround them as they soak in it.

The universe seems to have desperately done everything in its power to prevent this from happening, but they go against its words anyway.

Taehyung is the first to speak, “What?”

Hoseok isn’t sure if the words slipped from his mouth, or if the futility has finally made him give in and expose himself.

Nothing matters anymore at this point, right?

“It was fake,” Hoseok says again, “Yoongi hyung and I only got together to ease the head chief’s mind, and I could get insider’s information on the mafia for the captain.”

Silence.

“That’s impossible,” Jimin says, “you two were so-” Hoseok shakes his head.

Silence.
It still hurts. It’s like the ache in his chest has prolonged its effects for days as it stays deep under his skin like an awful bruise. He doesn’t know how to cure it.

“We weren’t actually together,” Hoseok whispers, “I’m sorry.”

“Hyung, I-” Jimin pauses to recalculate his words, “why us though? If it was only for the head chief, then why’d you have to lie to us too?”

Jimin looks upset. He looks genuinely upset. His brows are furrowed in a way that doesn’t mask his confusion and— and betrayal.

“Do you not trust us, hyung?” Taehyung asks, the tremble in his voice doesn’t go unnoticed and it’s breaking Hoseok.

“You know I do,” Hoseok quickly refutes him, “I’ve known you all for years and I trust you so much, I just-” he chokes, “I know you would definitely not approve of me getting myself into trouble like that.”

“You’re right,” Jimin looks up at him from the floor, “we wouldn’t.”

It’s the second time tonight that Jimin acknowledges Taehyung’s presence, the first being a quick nod as they both enter Hoseok’s apartment. It’s petty, in a way, but Hoseok can’t really blame them. The whole situation is a messy flood, and Hoseok is the one who brought the waves.

“It was messy, I know that. That’s why I didn’t want to drag you all into it,” Hoseok bites down on his trembling lip, “I kept building up this lie that got so huge that I know it’ll all rain down on me if I tell you guys about it so I didn’t. And now-” He pauses abruptly to breathe, “now it is raining down on me anyway.”

Silence.

Hoseok sighs, “It’s fine if you’re mad at me. I deserve it. I’m sorry.”

“I didn’t say I was mad,” Jimin rebuts him. “I’m still deciding.”

“Yeah, I-” Taehyung draws out a long exhale, “I don’t know how I feel about it.”

“I ruined everything.” Hoseok breaks into whispers like his mind just knows that he’ll just crumble into tears if he’s any louder, “I- I just wanted to help everyone, and I thought it was going to be temporary.” He’s trying to hold his sobs back but his voice is already gone, “Everything is supposed to go back to the way they were before but it isn’t. It’s not- everything is just fucked up now and it’s because of me-”

“Hyung,” Jimin murmurs against his shoulder. Hoseok didn’t even notice when the two younger boys had come up to hug him, “it’s okay.”

“We didn’t even know how much you were going through by yourself…” Taehyung murmurs from his other side.

Hoseok blinks away his tears and sniffles as he holds the two boys close to him.
He remembers the time Namjoon texted him, saying that his place is back in order.

The apartment was fully furnished, with a few, or most actually, new pieces of furniture. A new kitchen, a new bathroom, clean and unbroken.

Things are not the same as before.

Hoseok sat alone in his new old apartment and thought about Yoongi, and how everything felt so fucked up now that it's all straightened out like a drawing on crumpled paper.

“Is it weird to say that I’m gonna miss Yoongi hyung?” Hoseok jolts when Taehyung mentions him, less than an hour after the intense conversation.

“He was kind,” Jimin admits, “Jungkook will be fine with him, honestly.”

“Ah, Kook,” Hoseok sighs, “I know what the Min clan is like, but I can’t help but worry.”

“A lot of people at the station were saying that he got lured into it,” Jimin recalls, “but I can’t even think of a single moment where Yoongi hyung has ever suggested that he should join the mafia. It’s more like he opened his eyes. Jungkook never really liked being an officer anyway.”

“I miss them, it’s been over a month,” Taehyung sulks, “I miss Yoongi hyung, and Jungkook, and Jin hyung, Donghyuk hyung, and the head chief, Namjoon hyung…”

“I miss them too,” Jimin leans over to rest his head on Taehyung’s shoulder like a peace offering, “I’m meeting with Namjoon hyung in a few days. Come with me.”

“Sure,” Taehyung clings to Jimin in return, a gesture of resolution. He catches Hoseok at the corner of his eye before they suddenly widen and he turns to him, “Hyung? No, no, why are you crying?”

“Hm?” Hoseok looks up, though he doesn’t even remember looking down in the first place. He suddenly feels the ache behind his eyes and the wet streaks of tears on his cheeks, “Oh, I’m crying?” He wipes a hand across his face and stares at his wet palms, “I am crying. Hah.”

“Hyung…” Jimin looks like he’s tearing up as well when he reaches for a towel to wipe Hoseok’s wet cheeks.

“I love him.”

The sudden confession catches the two of them by surprise, and they both pull away to look at him with wide eyes.
“I love Yoongi hyung,” Hoseok chokes out. It hurts to say now too, when before this it never did.

Yoongi’s last words to Hoseok was an apology. For the first time in their months together, after clearly establishing that it’s in his pride to never directly apologize, Yoongi directly apologized. Hoseok doesn’t know though what the apology was for— he never got the chance to find out.

… He never will.

★

“So what’s it gonna be, Kang?” Yoongi prods, hands gently tapping the thick envelope under his hand, enclosed by a warm brown leather glove, “Will thirty days be enough or not?”

His client seems quite agitated, shifting around uncomfortably in his chair opposite to Yoongi. He already seem surprised enough when he stepped into an office full of men in brown, gray, and white suits, “You know damn well it’s not.”

Yoongi sighs, running his hand through his blonde hair, “Forty days then, it’s either this or you get your ass off my chair.”

“What- Forty days for 23 million won!?”

Yoongi lifts an eyebrow, “You heard me. You know what's coming if you ditch.”

“Not if you fucking die,” The man suddenly whips out his gun and aims at Yoongi. His suddenly pale face when faced with several ones aimed at him in response almost immediately is slightly comical.

“You know,” Yoongi looks past the barrel of the gun inches away from his face to his pale client, “the last time I did this to someone, I fell in love with them.” Noticing the man's weak grip on the pistol, Yoongi reaches over and easily flicks it off from his hands, ignoring the loud clutter sound it makes against the table. Seokjin quickly reaches over to take it. “Good. You wouldn't want to fall in love with me.”

Jungkook still hasn’t lowered his gun when Kang sat back down. He’s been doing awfully well for a new kid. He said that he wanted to take over Namjoon’s place after he had left even though Yoongi warned him that it was no easy job. And just as Yoongi had thought, he was overly ambitious, and Seokjin had to take over instead.

“Go on then,” Yoongi gestures with his hand like he’s shooing away a dog, “this kid here’s gonna start shooting if you're not out of this office in ten seconds.” He jerks his head towards Jungkook.

His client shakily lifts himself up from the chair.

“Ten,” Yoongi starts counting, and the man jolts up straight.

“Nine,”
“Eight,”

“Seven,” He’s still not at the door.

“One,” Yoongi says anyway and grabs Jungkook’s gun from his hand, firing three shots just above the door where the walls are bulletproof, making his ex-client dance his way out of the office and slam the door shut.

“We might’ve had it if you were a bit more flexible,” Seokjin comments from behind him, “Mr. Loan shark.”

“Just by the looks of that guy, he’s probably going to take at least three years to pay back all of what he asked for,” Yoongi says. “We still have a few more to go through tomorrow. It’s fine.”

“I sure hope so,” Seokjin grimaces, “Now, break.” He drags Jungkook to the door.

“I need you again at nine tomorrow. Don’t forget.” Yoongi calls after them.

“I won’t,” Seokjin calls back.

“I was talking to Jungkook.” Yoongi calls again.

“He won’t,” Seokjin says before he drags Jungkook out of the door.

The room is suddenly dead again; still, compared to all that has happened just a few seconds ago. Yoongi slumps back into his chair once the door closes, letting out a helpless sigh.

Slowly, he slips his glove off of his right hand as his fingers drift up to his lips, but he doesn't bite down on his nails like he used to, not anymore.

Instead, he drags the tips of his fingers along his bottom lip, tracing the shape of his mouth absentmindedly as he flutters his eyes shut.

“You're doing it again,” Yoongi startles when Donghyuk suddenly appears before him.

“Fucking christ,” He curses, “hang a little bell around your neck or something if you're going to keep coming in without knocking. It’s fucking creepy.”

“You say that when you were literally touching your lips and smelling your hand a second ago,” Donghyuk deadpans, “does it have some nice maiden scent or something?”

Yoongi groans, “What do you want?”

“To ask a question,” Donghyuk answers. “Can I ask you a question?”

“Sure.”

“What happened with you and Hoseok?”

Silence.

“Okay.”
“What?” Donghyuk frowns.

Yoongi shrugs, “I didn't say I was going to answer.”

“Oh you cocky bitch, cut me some slack will you?” His brother bites, “First you gave the whole clan a Queer Eye makeover with this *anything*-but-black uniform system and turned up like that to the final shareholders meeting with your hair dyed blonde like some lesbian going through a mental breakdown, *then* you went through with the loan shark idea when literally no one but you agreed to it,” Donghyuk glares at him. “And now you’re not even going to answer my question?”

“God you’re loud,” Yoongi makes a show of plugging his ears, “why d’you want to be so nosy in the first place?”

“What, being worried about the state of your relationship is nosy?”

“Yes,” Yoongi answers simply, “I can't believe I have to tell you that. On second thought, I should've expected it.”

Just as he thought Donghyuk is finally going to walk away, his brother suddenly says, “Fine, I’m nosy then,” he huffs, “I’m not leaving this room until you tell me what happened.”

Yoongi sighs, “It’s over. Is that what you wanted to hear?”

“And why exactly is it over?” Donghyuk raises an eyebrow.

“Because the contract is over.”

“What contract?”

“It was fake.”

Yoongi used to find it amusing, the way his brother twitches and shakes as he holds back and tries to calm down.

“What are you saying?” He asks.

“My relationship with Hoseok,” Yoongi explains, “it was fake.”

“Did you two get into a fight? What’s with this bullshit?” Donghyuk doesn’t seem to believe him. Yoongi can’t really blame him.

“I did it because I didn’t want dad to die worrying about me, and Hoseok agreed,” Yoongi says, “it was all an act from the very beginning.”

Donghyuk looks up towards the ceiling “Did Seokjin and Namjoon know about this?”

Yoongi shrugs, “They found out.”

Silence.
Donghyuk barks out a laugh, sudden and dry, “You must be so pleased with yourself, huh, Yoongi? I must look like a clown to you.”

Yoongi sits back on the couch, staring out at the evening sky that slips through the blinds as he thinks of a way to escape from this situation. He doesn’t want to have this conversation.

“I guess I’m the idiot in every situation then? Just like you said,” Donghyuk grumbles, “it’s probably just some sick fucking joke for you, isn’t it? Hearing me ask you about marrying him, seeing me bring him to you when you’re stressed out. You’ve just been sitting back and enjoying this monkey show we’ve put up for you!” He spits.

Yoongi can’t seem to tune out Donghyuk’s voice as well as he used to, like it’s somehow breaking through the walls this time, demanding to be heard. He feels a dull ache at the back of his skull that he knows will start growing soon.

At his silence, Donghyuk scoffs, “Just when I thought you’ve changed, you’re the same brat that you’ve always been.” His tone suddenly shifts then, “I’m actually so fucking disappointed, Yoongi.”

Closing his eyes feels like a better option. Everything feels less chaotic this way. Yoongi takes a deep breath as he ducks his head down, trying to soothe the pain. He can hear Donghyuk's sigh and footsteps retreating until the door closes carelessly, and his fingers come back up to drag across his lips.

✿

Hoseok goes on with his life relatively well. There are instances where a certain moment would catch him in surprise and he’d find himself in bed staring up at the ceiling and remembering; reminiscing.

He remembers the night the view above him was Yoongi’s eyes staring back down, the story he once tried to understand. He thinks he did then, that night. There was meaning behind Yoongi’s lingering gaze, the way his eyes scrunched up as he chuckled when Hoseok asked for more kisses and complied even though they were alone, even though they didn't have to, when Yoongi asked him to stay the night in the faintest whisper that made Hoseok shiver from how real it felt then.

He wonders for a moment how things turned out the way they did, how the realization that there was something mutual between the both of them had driven them the furthest away from each other, a sudden change of currents that rearranged the sunken land he was in, leaving him stranded and drowning once again.

He wonders for a moment what he's done wrong, but finds himself wandering deeper into insecurities and the things he usually doesn't wallow in.

It gets harder to sleep knowing that there used to be company. Company that he loathed but so dearly misses now.
“This is such a great idea,” Taehyung says happily as he snuggles into Hoseok's back, “we should do this every night.”

“What, me spending half my salary to take the train to your place so we can cuddle?” Hoseok smiles.

“You making a very good investment in receiving physical and emotional comfort from your favorite cute dongsaeng,” Taehyung hums.

Hoseok laughs, “How nice.”

“I just know I'm a better cuddler than Jimin.”

“Jimin lives closer to me but I can't even count the number of times I've visited and Namjoon is there.”

“He's happy with his long bean sprout boy toy and that's valid.”

“Tae!” Hoseok snorts and lifts his arm to blindly swat at Taehyung behind him, “he's gonna kill you if you say that in front of him.”

Taehyung hooks a leg over Hoseok, efficiently clinging to him like a squid, “I said it's valid.”

“Ah, it's nice to see them so happy. It's cute.” Hoseok smiles, but he sighs, “It's so cute.”

“Hyung,” Taehyung's tone shifts to a quieter one like they're whispering in a crowded room even though it's just them and Taehyung's pillow pets, “are you still thinking about him?”

Hoseok laughs in defeat, “I shouldn't be. It's been like three months since then.”

“It doesn't matter,” Taehyung pulls him closer, “breakups are hard.”

“I can't even call it a break up.” Hoseok laughs again but it's loud and fake in his ears, “It's not, because we were never-”

“Hyung,” Taehyung snuggles closer, “It doesn't matter what it is, but you just lost someone important to you, it's gonna hurt.” He whispers, “You can still feel hurt.”

“...You're right,” Hoseok sighs.

“I miss Jungkookie too, and it hurts that we parted like that.” Taehyung says, “But it'll be fine, you know? We love him, he loves us, we'll cross paths again.”

Hoseok nods even though it's barely visible to Taehyung.

“Yoongi hyung too. He'll come around.”

“Tae,” Hoseok whines, “don't.”

“I mean it hyung.” Taehyung pats Hoseok's belly playfully, “he loves you, I just know he does. Faith will do its thing.”

Hearing that Yoongi loves him, it does something to Hoseok.
“That wasn’t a lie.”

When he was stuck in that net of lies, he held onto the things that were true, no matter how little of it there was.

He held onto the quick flashes of Yoongi’s eyes that he’d catch for a quick second. He held onto the little murmurs that were meant for only him to hear, onto the soft touches that felt more than they appeared to be.

It wasn’t faith though, it was just Yoongi.

“Faith’s not gonna do anything,” Hoseok mumbles and sinks further into Taehyung’s pillow. “If faith’s not gonna do anything then I will.” Taehyung says determinedly.

“Yeah?” Taehyung can’t do anything of course, but Hoseok appreciates the sentiment nevertheless. “You go do that then.” He murmurs as he drifts to sleep.

* *

“Okay, I’ve had my doubts at first,” Seokjin admits, “but this isn’t so bad afterall.”

“Namjoon said it’d work,” Yoongi takes one last glance at the neatly stacked bills before softly shutting the briefcase, “how much more of these do we need?”

“Not a lot,” His assistant hums, “we’re ahead of schedule actually.”

“Good, I want to get this over with and take a nap or something.”

The door clicks open without a prior knock, and they both snap their heads toward the sound before visibly relaxing when Jungkook’s big round eyes pop in.

“Knock, Kook,” Seokjin deadpans, “just knock. That’s all I ask. You’re taking years off my life.”

Jungkook blinks but nods, “I got hyung’s coffee.”

All trace of annoyance dissipates from Yoongi as he reaches for the large iced americano. “Good kid,” Yoongi ruffles the boy’s hair as he takes a sip, “go take a break already.”

Jungkook grins, “I wanted to visit a friend anyway.”

He’s starting to grow into it all; the mafia image, yet he still has an air of innocence to him that Yoongi figures is just a part of who he is. It doesn’t take away from what he’s doing though; it oddly reminds Yoongi of his mother. Jungkook had a long but much needed conversation with his parents regarding all the change. It took them a while to get around the idea, but they never directly said that they don’t approve of it. Yoongi wouldn’t understand completely since he was born into this life, but he understands the stigma towards this profession, and the shock and bemusement towards an accomplished police officer joining the mafia should be expected. For Jungkook to go through all that and still persist with his decision in the end is the kind of passion and bravery.
Yoongi admires.

“Donghyuk hyung’s outside your office by the way.”

Yoongi frowns into his drink, “And why is he?”

“Who knows,” The boy shrugs, “he said he’s not mad at you which means he definitely is, but my question is he was mad at you like three months ago, so is this a new thing or is it that old thing that’s just prolonged?”

“Well I’m not gonna waste my time wondering,” Yoongi says flatly before he turns to Seokjin again, “when’s the next client coming?”

“In three hours or so, plenty of time,” Seokjin says as he pulls his sleeve back down to cover his rose gold watch.

“I’m gonna take a nap then,” Yoongi stretches his arms above his head with a groan, “go do something that’ll make up for all the hassle you had to go through for the past few months.”

“Taking a nap right after drinking coffee,” Seokjin comments as he swings towards the door, “how on-brand of you.”

Yoongi spends his time alone in his office finishing his coffee and checking the progress on all the ongoing transactions before sinking back into his chair and closing his eyes.

He doesn’t sleep— can’t. He takes a moment to wallow in what he sees through his closed eyes, the blobs of indistinguishable colors. Something takes over him, and he’s tracing his lips with the tips of his fingers again.

He should stop; knows that he should stop, but these quiet and empty moments give way to possibilities. The could haves, would haves, should haves, all ending with a familiar name he hasn’t said in a while.

“Hoseok…” His breath forms the word through his lips, though it barely makes a sound.

In moments like this, Yoongi lets himself go. Perhaps he's imagining it— even if he's imagining it; he can feel so faintly the press of Hoseok's lips on every digit that day when he bit his nails until they bleed. It takes him back then, from the softness of it along the crevices of his nails, the way the stinging stopped just from his hold, his touch, his warmth.

This is the only trace of Hoseok left that he can have. This faint memory of when they held hands resurfaces when Yoongi runs the flat of his calloused palm up his face. He lets himself pretend, only then, that Hoseok is still lingering somewhere near, so close that he can feel it through his skin. With his eyes closed and the world dark around him, he sees those lips, prim and crafted into a heart, the small tip of a nose that curves into a perfect bridge, and those sad sad eyes, the ones that were red and filled with unshed tears, so vivid and so so painful in his mind that he forces his eyes open.

“Fucking hell,” Yoongi murmurs to himself, “he’s not yours.”

“You’re such a drama queen.”
Yoongi straightens himself up with a glare sharp enough to break through his own cascade of illusions. “I thought you were busy being mad at me.”

“I can multitask,” Donghyuk says simply, entering like he’s welcomed and not as if he’s just come out of nowhere.

Yoongi sighs, “If this is going to affect work then just get it out. You’re mad about me lying this one white lie, big deal.”

“You lied about your feelings, Yoongi,” His brother bites, “good thing dad’s knocked out in time before he realizes you’ve been going around lying about being in love, making people believe that you actually love someone.”

“Shut the fuck up,” Yoongi growls, “I didn’t lie about that.”

“You think I’d believe you?” Donghyuk laughs, “After all this? Give me a fucking break, Yoongi. You don’t care about anyone but yourself.”

Yoongi snaps then.

“What, you think I did this for fun?” He raises his voice, “You think I wanted to mess around with some cop for fun? It was for dad!”

He shoots up so that they’re eye-level, “It was for dad, but then I fell in love with him and I know he’ll keep getting hurt if he’s with me so I left him. This has never been about me!” Yoongi shouts at his brother, “Do you think I’d let him go if I was only thinking about myself? Of course not, I’d fucking marry him if it means he’ll stay!”

He draws out a long sigh as he composes himself before he finishes, slightly calmer, “None of the shit I’ve done has ever been for me.”

Donghyuk is quiet for a while, “... So you do love him?”

Yoongi slumps back onto the couch, “Yes, I fucking love him.” He looks up at Donghyuk, “It was never intended, but that’s just how it is.”

“So you’re just going to leave him?” Donghyuk asks, “You’ve found the love of your life, and you’re gonna let him go just like that?”

Silence.

“Yeah.”

“Hyungie~” Jimin loops his arms around Hoseok neck from behind, pulling his chair closer, “don’t be so sad~”
“Jimin-ah, how can I not be?” Hoseok sulks.

“Taehyung said it himself,” Jimin reminds him, “you’re not gonna cancel this. You’re going to see Mina-ssi.”

“On Taehyung’s birthday.”

“I mean yeah it sucks that she’s not free any other day but it’s fine, you need this!” The boy encourages him.

Hoseok nods but pouts anyway.

“Hyung,” Jimin grabs his hands, “I promise you, me and Namjoon hyung and Jung- we’re gonna take great care of Taehyungie and he will have lots and lots of fun, okay? Trust me. It’s gonna be great even though it would be better with you there, but it’s gonna be great.”

Hoseok grabs for his phone, “I can’t just miss it after you say that!”

“No!” Jimin swats Hoseok’s hand before it can reach his phone, “go see Mina-ssi, you need it. Me and Joon hyung will take care of everything and we’ll relay all the good TMI to you later.”

“Ah, alright,” Hoseok pouts and lets Jimin push his chair back toward his desk. His eye catches the familiar little primrose badge. Perhaps it’s just him, but the poor little flower almost looks tired in a way, like it used to stand straighter and had brighter colors. He cradles it a little in his hand before gently placing it in his desk drawer and softly closing it.

✿

“What if this doesn’t work?”

“It will.”

“Hyung, you sound confident.”

“Yeah, where’s all this energy coming from?”

“This is a five-man operation. It won’t fail.”

“This is a five-idiots operation.”

“We’re talking three mafiosi and two cops, surely we can at least do something right.”

“What if one of them already moved on? Then what? We’re gonna make it difficult for them. Not that I completely disapprove of this operation I’m just objectively weighing the pros and cons.”

“Oh Hoseok hyung is definitely still in deep.”

“So is Yoongi hyung, honestly.”

“Of course they are, they’re made for each other.”

“Yeah! Think like Jungkook. Faith’s not doing its thing and it’s been way too long, so I’m taking
matters into my own hands.”
“It’s not faith, it’s Taehyung.”
“Happy birthday by the way, Tae.”
“Oh right thank you. Now about operation soulmates…”

It started during the last shift before most of the officers go home for the Lunar new year.

Taehyung’s back slams against the wall and he curses, “What happened to you, Jeon Jungkook!? What did those bastards do to you!?”

“Those bastards are my family!” Jungkook rebuts him, “And they’ve made me realize how much I hate you!”

“Oh yeah? I’ve raised you after all these years and this is what I get?”

“You’re only two years older than me! Stop acting like you’re eighty!”

“I told you it’s my dialect!”

“That middle part hair has nothing to do with your dialect!”

“Oh like you’re one to talk with that nasty hair gel.”

“Fucking cop!” Jungkook spits.

“Fricking mafioso!”

Jungkook suddenly lifts his hand like he’s about to hit him, but Jimin quickly springs up to diffuse the situation.

“God, it’s the last shift, damn it,” Officer Seojoon groans, “what even fuelled all this?”

Taehyung has a tear sliding down his cheek, “I don’t- I don’t know…” he sniffles, “I wanted to reconnect or even just leave on good terms since he is- was my best friend. I don’t know what happened…”

Seojoon sighs, “Even Jungkook’s not saying anything, and he’s been in there for four hours. His mouth is glued shut.”

“Jimin didn't even make him budge, hyung,” Taehyung emphasizes as he presses the ice pack against his own cheek, “ Jimin .”

“Did he tell you what will make him talk?” The elder asks.

“He said he refuses to talk to anyone except Hoseokie hyung but unfortunately, you specifically said that he’s not allowed to deal with cases regarding the mafia.” Taehyung says too fast like he's
rehearsed it.

Seojoon sighs, “Ah, you know what, if he's only going to speak under that stupid condition then just get Hoseok in there.”

“On it!” Taehyung is already a good few metres away from him, making his way to Hoseok's desk and leaving the ice pack behind, sloppily melting on the floor.

“No.”

“Come on, Yoongi,” Seokjin wheedles, “this is the first time it has happened to him.”

“And he'll learn that it'll be the last. I'll go get him tomorrow.”

“He refuses to talk to anyone but you. Hell, he won't even let me take him home.”

“Which he will learn is really fucking stupid of him,” Yoongi grumbles, “because I'm not gonna go get him. Not today, anyway.”

“Jungkook was a cop, he was one of them before he made the riskiest decision of joining you and has never once betrayed you this past few months.” Seokjin raises his voice, “That's how loyal he is to you, and this is what you're gonna do? You're gonna let him sit behind bars in front of all the people he's left behind? Humiliate him?”

“Oh for fuck's sake,” Yoongi fixes his tie and shrugs on his coat, “learn to shut up sometimes.”

Seokjin grins knowingly. All clear here.

“Jungkook…” Hoseok sighs as he reads through his file, “assault? Seriously?”

“I'm sorry, hyung,” Jungkook says sadly, his eyes fixed on the table, the chain of the handcuffs clicking on the surface.

“You've been in my position before, you know this is going to stay in your record!” Hoseok catches himself before he starts yelling, “You're lucky Taehyung isn't pressing charges, because sorry isn’t going to cut it in court. But you already know that.”

Jungkook pouts, “Hoseok hyung... why are you acting so cold towards me so suddenly?” He lets out a little sob, “Is it because I'm a mafioso now?”

“That’s not it,” Hoseok sighs, “I don’t care about-” he gestures vaguely at Jungkook’s gray suit, “about this, I don’t care what you do as long as you're happy, but being in the mafia doesn't mean you can just recklessly assault Taehyung!”

The door clicks open behind Jungkook.

It started during the last shift before most of the officers go home for the Lunar new year.

The image, the colors that slipped past that gray door didn’t prepare Hoseok for what he saw at all.

Brown leather shoes and a gray trench coat, a white shirt under the dark brown suit. Blonde hair, followed by the deep, gravelly voice that whispered the saddest thing to Hoseok months ago.
“I’ve come to get Jeon Jungkook.” The voice says in that casual way that Hoseok thought to be charming, but now it makes his heart stop. “All his charges are dropped-”

Everything feels unrecognizable at first, but it’s the voice that pulls him back and then everything comes in to form this familiar yet odd, unforgettable scenery.

After months, the one thing that made Hoseok so vulnerable steps into the room.

“...Yoongi hyung?” He whispers.

“...Hoseok.”

Chapter End Notes

fun fact instead of taehyung and jungkook fighting i was going to make seokjin try to get himself arrested by stealing a bunch of stuff and saying ”send the check to min yoongi” and, public nudity (i’m sorry) because i really wanted him to say ”let’s do it baby i know the law” when he gets arrested but it should be more of a joint group effort so i changed it but that means now i have a draft of seokjin shoving gummy worms into his pockets, vandalizing a wall with ‘if you read this you’re instantly homosexual’ and committing public nudity on a crossroad that will never see the light of day.

hope you're all doing well => please don't worry about me !

my twitter,
my curiouscat
Hoseok has loved, and still loves, a few people in his life.

He loved—loves his parents, his little sister, for as little time he has had with her. He knew, more from her absence than her presence, that he loved her. It's always the absence, the negative space, the too lates and no mores that make people realize and condemn themselves for being so stupid not to.

It's as though things are more beautiful when they're gone, and twice that when they come back—if they come back. He doesn't know if this is always the case; he never had anyone come back before.

Not until now, anyway.

“...Yoongi hyung?”

“...Hoseok.”

It's been months since Hoseok has last seen Yoongi, but he vividly remembers the sight. Sickly pale skin, hollow cheeks, smudges of dark circles, dry chapped lips, dark hair falling from their place in sharp thin strands on his forehead, a black suit of different textures that he forced himself in. Exhaustion personified in every way, yet Hoseok still felt the pull, the way his heart squeezed and jumped at him and the prospect of him even when he thought then that that'd be the last of Min Yoongi in his life.

But Yoongi is back, somehow, like a twist of faith. Hair bleached blonde, clothes a combination of colors that are spectacularly vivid compared to the usual black, which is nowhere to be found on him. There’s a healthy tint to his skin, colors on his round cheeks as if that memory of Yoongi was just a shadow of the Yoongi now, standing in front of him.

Despite it all, Hoseok meets his wide-eyed gaze, and the glint there feels so familiar he could probably tell that it’s Yoongi even if he hadn’t spoken in that deep, smooth voice of his.
“Oh my god,” Jungkook suddenly chimes in, voice hued with faux surprise, “Yoongi hyung is here. Holy shit. Hasn’t it been a while since you two have seen each other?” He fake gasps as he cups his face like some expressionist painting, “Whaaaaat.”

It feels almost surreal to see Yoongi’s face mold into a familiar scowl as he turns to Jungkook, “You brat. Did you plan this?”

Before Jungkook can cook up an answer, Taehyung pushes past Yoongi into the room and uncuffs the boy. “You're right, Kook,” He says with the same if not higher level of drama, “we should give them some space so they can catch up. It's been so long.”

“Hey!” Yoongi calls after them as he tries to catch Jungkook by the tail of his coat, but the poor fabric slips just before his fingers could grasp them. He sighs in defeat when the door slams shut.

It takes Hoseok too long to realize that they’re alone.

The seconds they take to stand there awkwardly in silence feels like hours drawn out in a stretch. It’s almost too quiet, the silence amplifying the sound of Hoseok’s speeding heartbeat that seems to relentlessly accelerate after every second that passes.

The door is not locked, Hoseok can tell, but Yoongi isn’t leaving, makes no move to.

There’s suddenly a small tapping sound coming from behind him, the mini force of it resembling that of a frustrated child tapping on a goldfish bowl to see it flinch and move for once.

Hoseok has a lot of things to say, but his first proper words have to be “Let’s go talk somewhere else.” He quickly adds when Yoongi almost flinches at the sudden start of the conversation, “I think they’re uh... watching us from there.” He turns to glare at the mirror behind him for good measure, knowing damn well that he’s looking directly at either one or all three of the gremlins that set all this up.

“Just pretend we’re not here!” Jimin’s voice suddenly comes out through the speakers.

Hoseok walks to the door and swings it open before he hesitates. Sheepishly, he turns back to Yoongi, “... Hyung?”

Yoongi’s eyes appear fogged for a moment then before he snaps out of whatever trance he fell in, “Yeah. Let’s go.” They ignore the protesting sounds of a disgruntled audience and what oddly sounds like Seokjin’s yapping as they make their way out.

They walk out to the garden near the station that they’ve met at before, a long time ago. In his haste to get out, Hoseok completely forgot about the freezing cold wind that shivers him in every step.

“Are you sure it’s okay to leave like that?” Is the first thing Yoongi says to him, hands shoved into the pockets of his warm-looking trench coat, “We can go back if you want.”

“It’s fine,” Hoseok assures him.

It’s silent again. They fill a minute looking around at the darkening scenery before Yoongi speaks up, “You look nice,” he fumbles when Hoseok whips his head to look at him, “I mean, you look healthy and happy. All that.”

“Thank you,” Hoseok smiles. He doesn't mind that they're having a shaky start—at least it’s a start. “So do you. This is a fresh look,” He gestures vaguely to Yoongi.
“Ah yeah,” Yoongi says as though he’s reminded that Hoseok hasn’t been here for all the changes, “it was a bit of a gamble. More of a statement, really.”

Hoseok hums to hide his chattering teeth, not letting the cold get to him until this conversation is over.

“So,” He starts, “how have you been, head chief Min?”

Yoongi chuckles at the name, the sound bubbling in Hoseok’s chest. “It’s been pretty hectic, but everything’s calmer now. We’ve been preparing for my mother’s death anniversary tomorrow.”

“Oh,” Hoseok whispers. The mention of Yoongi’s mother takes him back to that night where they kissed, though no one was there to witness it. When they held each other and cried to sleep, waking up swollen and aching in all wrong places. He remembers the hurt in Yoongi’s face, the way he seemed stabbed by all the pain of his past. The mention of the death anniversary also reminds him of his family’s.

“It’s fine,” Yoongi seems to have caught Hoseok’s worried gaze, “I can talk about it more freely now. I’ve been uh,” he rubs the back of his neck sheepishly, “I’ve been seeing a therapist.”

“Oh, really?” Hoseok lightens up at that, despite everything, “That’s great!” He can’t help contain the smile that pulls across his face, “That’s really great, hyung.”

“I can give you the therapist’s card if you want,” Yoongi says as he digs through his pockets, “he’s pretty good. Helped a lot.”

“Ah no, it’s fine,” Hoseok quickly says, “I’m… I’ve also been seeing one. Oh Mina.”

Yoongi’s hands pause in their digging, “Oh, that’s good to hear,” he smiles as he meets Hoseok’s eyes once more, “really good. I’m happy for you.”

And that— that stirs something in Hoseok. It makes Hoseok want him closer, makes him want to kiss him and tell him how stupidly in love he is and that he’s basically been pining for the past few months.

He doesn’t. He can’t. Can’t, because there’s something in Yoongi’s smile that’s telling him not to. It’s the smile of someone who has given up and let go.

So Hoseok bites his lip and clenches his hands into fists by his side to ease the cold, and to keep himself from doing something stupid.

“Jungkook,” He says out of the blue. He had to say something, and that was the first word his brain could come up with, “...Jungkook.” Hoseok, you fucking idiot.

“Ah,” Yoongi doesn’t seem to mind the awkward conversation starter, “he’s doing well. You don’t have to worry about that.”

“I’m always gonna worry,” Hoseok tries to follow along, “but he does look happy. I didn’t know when the three of them made up, but that eases me a bit.”

Yoongi nods, “How’s Namjoon?”

“I’ve seen him from time-to-time with Jimin,” Hoseok chuckles, “they’re practically inseparable. It’s like they’re made for each other or something. They seem really happy.”
“Is he back in the academy?” Yoongi asks.

“Yup,” Hoseok hums, “according to Jimin, he’s basically ready.”

“Of course he is,” Yoongi chuckles as he smiles down at the ground. It’s a different smile, fonder; happier. Hoseok briefly wonders if Yoongi had ever smiled like that for him, why he stopped if he did. “He was always meant to be on the other side of the law anyway. Some things are just meant to be. You can’t avoid it forever.”

Perhaps it’s just a light comment, perhaps it means more, but those words stick to Hoseok. If they can’t avoid what was meant to be, then what are they doing right now? Why are they talking like old friends when Yoongi just told him months ago that he loved him and just silently broke off? Why are they both avoiding it? Why does Yoongi look like he has given up? Why isn’t Hoseok saying any of this out loud?

He’s waiting, he realizes.

It’s like what Taehyung had said: things will work itself out. They can’t avoid it forever, so Hoseok waits. He’s waiting for that moment when Yoongi isn’t going to avoid it, when everything works itself out. He just has to wait.

“I’m sure Jimin’s doing fine. How’s Taehyung?” Yoongi looks up at him.

Hoseok takes a sharp inhale. He’ll wait. “Same old, really. He’s definitely getting a lecture after this, though.”

“Ah yeah, Jungkook too,” Yoongi agrees, “he’s definitely going to get an earful. He knows better than to do something so reckless. They really set up a whole thing… also I’m pretty sure I heard Jin hyung’s voice back there.”

“Sorry that they had to drag you into this mess, hyung,” Hoseok says sheepishly, “both of them were being really stubborn.”

“I should be the one apologizing,” Yoongi murmurs, “he knows I was trying to leave you alone. I told him.”

Hoseok swallows away the hurt that came with the words. He’ll wait, he reminds himself. It’ll all work out in the end.

“It’s alright,” He says instead, “at least they got what they wanted. We’re talking.”

Yoongi pauses for a moment as if he’s trying to process Hoseok’s words before he answers, “Yeah,” he smiles again, “we’re talking.”

A surge of wind suddenly rushes through them, the cold snaking up Hoseok’s spine as he wraps his arms tighter around himself, trying to keep his legs from shivering.

“You forgot your coat,” Yoongi comments, hands still shoved deep in his pockets. He suddenly pulls out the hand warmers he’s been holding and hands them over to Hoseok.

“Oh, no,” Hoseok quickly says, “it’s fine. I’m alright.” He tries to bring his hands up to wave him off, but the cold is relentless.

“No, you’re not,” Yoongi grumbles and reaches forward, hesitantly, to envelope them over one of Hoseok’s hands, one against his palm and one on the back of his hand.
They’re not touching, with the barrier of warmth and Yoongi’s glove between them. The wind is blowing strands of blonde hair down Yoongi’s face when Hoseok looks up. Meeting his eyes, he can imagine for a moment then that the warmth is Yoongi’s, and that they’re touching, somehow.

Yoongi urges Hoseok to bring out his other hand, and the warmth on the back of his hand shifts to the palm of his other hand.

It’s like they’re holding hands. The wind blows the dead leaves off the ground and past them like some scene from a requited love chick-flick, but it’s all twisted because this isn’t the beginning of something new— it’s a goodbye.

“Take care of yourself, Hoseok,” Yoongi says with that same surrendered smile on his face, in a tone touched with tragedy like they’re never going to cross paths again.

He says it like it’s a farewell.

And after every farewell, no matter how big or small, Yoongi would lean in to kiss Hoseok’s cheek.

He almost does.

Yoongi leans in the same way he used to, even takes a step forward to lessen the gap between them. It’s like muscle memory, the way he moves, and Hoseok almost follows.

Yoongi catches himself in time, and a crushing expression washes through him. He suddenly flinches away and lets go of the hot packs. His right hand comes up to his lips but snaps down as soon as it grazes it. His wide eyes scrunch into a sharp scowl as he bites down on his lip. He’s not looking at Hoseok, isn’t scowling at him. He’s scowling at himself like he’s never been more ashamed.

Hoseok doesn’t say anything when he turns away and leaves, hands shoved deep into his coat pockets once more.

It’s okay. Hoseok reminds himself again as he grips onto the hot packs tighter. He’ll wait. Everything will work itself out.

He didn’t know that waiting hurts.

❀

“Are you really okay on your own, oppa?” Jinsoul’s worried voice sounds from the phone, “I can still come. Jungeunie said she’s feeling better.”

“No, I didn’t,” Another girl’s voice slips through the call, worn and tired. Jinsoul quickly turns to hush her.

“It’s fine, Jinsoul-ah,” Hoseok assures her, “take care of your girlfriend. I’ll be fine.”

He can hear Jinsoul’s sigh of defeat through the call, a strong single huff, “Call me if you feel uneasy, okay? And say hello to auntie, uncle, and Sunny for me.”
“I will,” Hoseok answers both inquiries.

His empty hands ball up into loose fists as he takes a sharp inhale, and steps into the columbarium. It feels different, knowing that Jinsoul isn’t just behind him like before, but he shakily bows to the three urns on the shelf, “Mom, Dad, Sunny.”

For the past few anniversaries, Hoseok hasn’t visited. He hasn’t visited at all because he couldn’t bear the reminder of what happened.

Things change, however, not always in the best way, but things changed so that he could stand here and face his family, years after he has lost them.

“How long has it been? Ten years?” Hoseok tries to recall, “I’m sorry that I haven’t been here for the first nine.”

Hoseok stands still as if he expects a response. He doesn’t get any, of course.

“Things haven’t been great,” He admits, “and it’s still weird now, but it’s getting somewhere, I think. Taehyung, Jungkook, and Jimin has made up, everyone’s happy.” He smiles, “As for me… I guess I’m getting there.”

An old memory briefly resurfaces. All Hoseok wanted to do was dance when he was younger. His mother wasn’t against it, but his father didn’t seem to approve. He soon gave in one night when he visited the studio Hoseok went to.

He can’t remember the exact words, but his father mentioned that he was smiling the whole time, and that he was okay with this, as long as it made him happy.

His father taught him a lot of things, so did his mother, so did Sunny, in a way. They knew him like no one else did, and they always seemed to know what to do in every situation. Hoseok wants that kind of wisdom in his life now, more than any other time.

“I’m waiting for things to resolve,” Hoseok tells them, “I don’t know how long it’ll take, but I didn’t know it hurts to just wait.”

Silence.

“There are so many times when I just wished that you were still here, so you can just hit me and just say, ‘Hoseok-ah, this is what you’re supposed to do,’ or something, but I know it’s not possible.” He breathes, “But I still wish anyway. Like right now, I’m so confused. How much can I trust that faith will do its thing?”

Silence.

Hoseok laughs at himself, “Why am I even waiting for a response, what am I-”

In that silence, something dawns on him, and it makes him want to slap himself for being so stupid.

Everything has already worked itself out— everything but him.

Yesterday was his chance to work himself out. Taehyung and everyone else aligned everything to favor him, but he didn’t do anything because he was busy waiting for, what he realizes now, is absolutely nothing.
He had months to work himself out, to take the initiative and reach out first. He’s become so used to being given instructions, being persuaded from the moment he met Yoongi that he forgot that he has a say in this as well.

“Thank you so much,” Hoseok hastily bows to his family, heart pounding in his chest, “I love you.”

He rushes out to the hall but comes to a halt just before he passes a particular room.

According to Jungkook, the Min clan are not going to arrive until the evening for the ceremony, so the room is still empty.

He steps toward the particular shelf and bows.

“Head chief Min,” He says, “...Chieftess.”

Yoongi looks like his mother, the same sharp eyes and lips. Hoseok stares at the picture frame for a moment before he talks. “I know that I don’t really have the right to be standing here anymore,” he bites his lip, “but I just want to say thank you, head chief, for letting me be with Yoongi hyung despite everything. And to the both of you,” he turns to the chieftess’ urn as well, “thank you for raising someone so beautiful, for letting him get to where he is now and… for letting our paths cross.”

It feels different than talking to his own family, like Yoongi’s parents are actually looming around him as he speaks.

“I love Yoongi hyung,” Hoseok tells them, “so much. I know things didn’t start off right at all, and I was stupid enough to hide my feelings from him this whole time, to never take that extra step forward,” he sighs, “but things change. I hated him then, but I love him now... I didn’t do anything then, but I will now.”

He bows once more, “I know I can’t directly ask for your approval, but I won’t let go of him so easily this time. I’ll work things out.”

Hoseok can barely keep himself from running as the Min’s mansion appears in hindsight. A wave of nostalgia hits him as he stands there in front of the door, reaching over to press the doorbell. Shaky still, but he’s not scared.

This was how it all started, with Hoseok ringing Yoongi’s doorbell in the cold.

He doesn’t have to wait long for a response, but it’s not the one he’s expecting.

“Jung Hoseok... is that you?” A gruff voice sounds from the intercom. It’s not Yoongi. It sounds familiar, but Hoseok can’t pinpoint exactly who it is.

“Ah yes, but-”

The door suddenly opens, and Donghyuk’s face emerges from behind it.

“Donghyuk-ssi,” Hoseok quickly bows, “I’m here to see Yoongi hyu- uh, Yoongi-ssi, but if he’s not here then-”

“Come in,” Donghyuk says, voice a neutral tone, “it’s cold out.”
Hoseok wordlessly follows him into the mansion and the first thing that welcomes him is… screeching. Lot’s of it.

“Settle down please,” Donghyuk quickly scolds the two children running around, “we’re not uncle Seokjins.”

“Who’s that?” The boy, smaller than the girl, points at Hoseok.

“That’s a cop on his day off, son. He’s more tolerable than the others,” Donghyuk says as he ushers them both into a different room, “go back to your mother.” That done, he turns back to gesture for Hoseok to follow him into another room.

“Your daughter looks like you,” Hoseok finds himself saying when he’s settled down on a couch.

“Eunji? Yeah,” Donghyuk nods, “hopefully not too much, or else she’ll blame our gene pool for making Sunho look so much like his mother.”

“Donghyuk-ssi-”

“I’ve told you before, hyung is fine,” Donghyuk quickly counters, “the others just left for the columbarium. I’ve already paid my respects this morning so I could watch over the kids tonight.”

The way Donghyuk is talking to him as if nothing happened makes Hoseok feel guilty in a way, and he bites his lip as he considers telling him the truth, suffering the consequences of Donghyuk getting furious and kicking him out.

“I know what happened,” He says suddenly and Hoseok freezes, “Yoongi told me. Or more like I pestered it out of him.”

“Oh,” Hoseok breathes, “then why did you let me in?”

“Because it’s not your fault that Yoongi’s an idiot,” Donghyuk answers simply, slouching down on the couch opposite to Hoseok, “you can call the whole thing fake as much as you want. It doesn’t take away from the fact that he’s just pining right now.”

“Pining,” Hoseok whispers, “I can’t even picture it.”

“He has this habit now where he does this,” Donghyuk sits back completely and closes his eyes, bringing a hand up to rub his lips lightly, before sitting back up once he gets the message across, “he doesn’t even bite his nails anymore, he just does this when he’s stressed or resting. It only happened after you’ve left too. People only do weird shit like that when they’re pining.”

Hoseok mimics the gesture, dragging a finger across his bottom lip, “Ah, his lips were often dry, maybe he’s-” A memory strikes him in the head.

The last time Hoseok kissed Yoongi was when they were outside head chief Min’s room. Yoongi was biting his nails until his skin broke and he bled. Hoseok took his hand into his and kissed the wounds away.

Has Yoongi been pretending to kiss him?

Touching his fingers where Hoseok last kissed him to his lips, like an indirect kiss to calm his nerves. He suddenly remembers Yoongi doing it too, yesterday when he panicked just before he left.
Hoseok’s heart thuds and squeezes in his chest, and he feels an embarrassing blush color his cheeks.

“Has it all been a lie for you?” Donghyuk suddenly asks.

“Oh,” Hoseok cups his heated cheeks as if it’d help dilute the color, “…No. It hasn’t.”

“Good answer,” Donghyuk nods, “if you were here to cut all ties because you hate him then I would’ve had to kick you out. I would’ve agreed though, but still.”

“I lo- it’s not like he’s no one to me,” Hoseok mumbles, “he’s my soulmate.”

Donghyuk hums, “Yoongi seems… almost afraid of intimacy somehow. I don’t know how to explain it, but sometimes he just freezes, like touching someone reminds him of something, and he just doesn’t do it.”

Hoseok stares down at the floor as he shakily nods, “…Yeah, I get like that too sometimes. Being close to someone just reminds me of him, and how everything started from lying, so it just… I don’t know.”

“Makes you feel anxious?” Donghyuk supplies.

“Yeah,” Hoseok nods, “…yeah.”

Opening up to Donghyuk doesn’t feel as awkward as he thought. Despite the scowls and the murmurs when they first cross paths, Donghyuk has looked out for him in the past, and for Yoongi, multiple times. There’s love beneath the sarcastic tones and the arguing.

“Listen,” Hoseok quickly looks up at him, “I have no idea what you two are going to do, I don’t care if after you’ve talked you decide to get married or just be friends, but just don’t fuck it up again.”

Hoseok feels the tip of his ears heat up at the former, but he gulps and nods, “I won’t.”

It turns out that children and a puppy can be very distracting. Hoseok spends the whole evening playing with Holly and being dragged around by Donghyuk’s children that he forgets for a moment what he was there for. He’s quickly reminded when he hears a muster of people entering the mansion.

“I forgot how loud this place can be,” Donghyuk grumbles once he enters the room, “Eunji, Sunho, go say hello to your uncles,” He aptly tells them before he turns to Hoseok, “if you want privacy, you’re not gonna get it here. Follow me.”

The family garden looks better in the morning, was what Yoongi said when Hoseok was here for the first time. He wonders if he’ll ever get to see it in the morning, curious as to how it’d look with brighter colors and in warmer air.

He walks around for a moment after Donghyuk has left, trying to distract himself by identifying all the flowers in the low light. Primroses, sweet peas, gladiolus, and remnants of other flowers that don’t survive in the cold.

Just as his heartbeat slows and calms, a familiar grumbly voice picks it up again.
“You put a present in the family garden?” The voice groans, “If it’s a statue of dad or something I swear-”

“A statue is too expensive,” Donghyuk rebuts, “this present is priceless, I tell you.”

“What is it then?”

“Go see for yourself.”

“Why’re you pushing me- you’re not coming with me?”

“What, do I have to?”

“Am I supposed to expect something nice if you’re not even gonna show it to me? Gee thanks hyung, I’m so excited to see this perfectly harmless ‘present’ you’re presenting to me on my mother’s tenth death anniversary that you’re making me go see alone because it’s _totally_ not a fart bomb or some dumb shit-”

Hoseok turns as soon as Yoongi’s voice comes to a sudden halt.

“Hyung-”

“What are you doing here?” Yoongi cuts him off, the tone low but a step away from threatening. He’s standing on the wooden floor, a meter away from the grassland Hoseok is in. “Did Donghyuk hyung drag you here?”

_Work things out_, Hoseok reminds himself just before he regrets everything after hearing Yoongi’s tone, “I came and you weren’t home. I wanted to talk to you.” When Yoongi makes no move to step forward, Hoseok walks toward him instead, “...Can we talk, hyung?”

Multiple emotions ran through Yoongi’s face at that, some that Hoseok can’t quite distinguish. His expression is softer at least, less defensive than before.

“Yeah,” Yoongi says with a sigh as he gingerly steps past the wooden floor into the garden, “yeah. I owe you that much, at least.”

Now with Yoongi nearer, under the soft low light, Hoseok sees the styled blonde hair and the black attire worn for the ceremony. It’s hauntingly beautiful in a way, the fusion between the past and present him, softened by the night.

It makes Hoseok think, is it still okay to want him? If Yoongi has transitioned from his past with Hoseok to the present without Hoseok, is it still okay for him to be here? Is Hoseok deliberately trying to drown himself again?

“I thought hyung planned this,” Yoongi says before Hoseok can even gather himself, “that’s why I got annoyed... I didn’t know that you came here on your own.”

Did Yoongi expect Hoseok to just... disappear? Did he really not entertain the possibility that Hoseok might come back?

These are the things Hoseok should be saying out loud.

“Did you expect me to just leave?” He whispers.

“Well our...contract came to an end,” Yoongi fumbles, “and like we agreed, we parted.”
“Yeah but,” Hoseok hesitates, but reminds himself that he shouldn’t, “but it’s been almost a year, hyung. I don’t think things are the same as before.”

Yoongi is staring down at his feet but sighs, “Yeah...” he breathes, “yeah, you’re right.”

“I know we started off in a really weird way, but I don’t feel the same way about this... separation as I did back then,” Hoseok tries to explain. He should’ve rehearsed this or something. “At the end of the day, you’re my soulmate, hyung. That’s not a lie.” He bites his lip, “I don’t want you to just disappear from my life, you know?”

Yoongi’s eyes widen at that, like it’s the most bizarre thing Hoseok has ever said. Hoseok doesn’t understand why.

“And it- it hurts, hyung,” Hoseok manages to say anyway, “it happened so suddenly, and I just- the fact that I’ve found my soulmate and then he’s suddenly gone again... it just messed with me. I didn’t know what to do.”

It’s quiet for a moment before there’s a faint murmur, “I didn’t think it’d hurt you. I’m- I really didn’t.”

“I’m sorry.”

Yoongi’s voice from back then resurfaces, and from the way his heart tugs painfully at the thought, to the fact that the outcome of this conversation may be that they will continue to not see each other again, Hoseok knows he’s owed at least that answer, that truth, if anything.

“There’s been something that has been on my mind for a while.”

Yoongi takes a sharp inhale before he nods, “What is it?”

Hoseok bites his lip, “You... you apologized, the last time we saw each other.” He wills himself to meet Yoongi’s eyes, “You said you were sorry.”

Yoongi pauses for a moment, frozen like he didn’t expect that, out of all things, but nods, “I did.”

“...What were you sorry for?”

“Everything.” He says simply, but it seems like he’s on the verge of something, “Everything. For ruining your life, for taking away your friends, for hurting you,” his voice suddenly breaks, “like shit... I hurt you so much, Hoseok, it’s disgusting.”

“Wait,” Hoseok frowns, “what are you talking about?”

“I hurt you, Hoseok. So many times.” Yoongi sighs, “Even from the very first time we saw each other, I hurt you.” He curses, “Fuck, I almost killed you then.”

Hoseok doesn’t know what he can say as a response to the sudden confession. Yoongi takes a moment to recalibrate before he continues, “I basically guilt-tripped you into doing things for me and manipulated you to stay, turned you against everyone else. Even your friends. You got into so much danger because of me. You went through trauma and all this messed up shit no one should
“Hyung…” Hoseok whispers.

“I dragged you into so much shit.” Yoongi continues anyway, “I was so selfish that I made you do all these things you shouldn’t be doing at all. Hell, I made you talk to one of those bastards.”

“What, when you made me speak Japanese?” Hoseok asks, “That’s not a big deal.”

“It is,” Yoongi rebuts, “I got you involved in something you shouldn’t be involved in at all. You’re a cop,” He sounds exasperated, his words start to ramble. “I hurt you a lot, and when you left it dawned on me the things I put you through and I’ve never hated myself so much... I’ve hurt the person I love and just left them like that because I think if I’m going to inevitably hurt them again if I’m around them then I might as well let them go, but then it hurts me to see you go and it looks like it hurt you too so did I really make the right decision? I don’t know at this point.”

“I think...” Hoseok starts even though he’s not really sure where he’s going, he hasn’t even completely processed everything that Yoongi said. He just said it to pull Yoongi out of whatever wallowing well of self-loathe he has put himself in, “I think if anyone... I get to decide if I’ve been hurt or not.”

Yoongi’s mouth snaps shut at that.

“Have I gotten myself into a lot of shit by agreeing to help you? Well... yes. Were you the kindest at the start? Not really,” Hoseok admits and Yoongi grimaces at that, though he doesn’t disagree, “but after time, things change. You change, I change. Jimin, Jungkook, and Taehyung, even Namjoon sometimes, they get me in trouble when they didn’t meant to. I can’t even begin to count the number of times I’ve had to clear things up for them because they fucked up. Sometimes it’s such a hassle, but that’s not them hurting me, I don’t see it as that,” he huffs out a breath, “and I don’t mind it because they’re important to me and I love them. People fuck up all the time, I’m no exception. Neither are you.” There’s a glint in Yoongi’s eyes when Hoseok says it. “The only time you’ve really hurt me is when you just suddenly disappeared like nothing happened.”

“I’m sorry,” Yoongi whispers, wet and broken.

Hoseok sighs as he takes in Yoongi’s words. It feels surreal to hear it. “Thank you for that.”

“I really don’t know how I could make it up to you, I-”

“Come back,” Hoseok says, “don’t suddenly become a stranger and disappear from my life, hyung. At least stay around as my friend. Just... just don’t leave me,” His voice breaks off into a whisper at the end.

He can hear Yoongi draw another long breath in before he nods, “Yeah... yeah, I can do that.”

“You’re important to me, hyung,” Hoseok says, trying his best not to sound too emotional, “I lo-”

He catches himself just before the full word actually leaves his mouth. He can’t say it right now, can he? Not if they’re going to start over, start properly. He’s going to make things more
complicated if he does.

“Yeah,” Yoongi says suddenly, biting down on his lip before he nods, “...me too.”

Hoseok doesn’t breathe for as long as the silence lasts. He’s heard it, or the alternative of it before, long ago.

_That wasn’t a lie, Hoseok._

And now,

_Me too._

His eyes fix onto the grass beneath his shoes before they catch the sight of Yoongi’s hands fidgeting, clutching onto the hem of his pockets.

Hesitantly, Hoseok reaches a hand forward towards one of them and stops just before they could touch, waiting.

Hesitantly, Yoongi’s right hand lets go of his pocket and shifts forward until their fingers brush, before he takes Hoseok’s hand into a light, nervous hold. Hoseok has to remind himself to breathe.

It’s a start. It’s finally the right start to something.

“Ah,” Yoongi breaks the silence after a while, turning around to have a quick look at the garden, hand still holding Hoseok’s, “you’ve never seen this place in the morning, have you?”

Hoseok laughs softly at that, “No. You said it looks better then.”

“It does,” Yoongi confirms, leading Hoseok around to the bushes of primroses near a little pond. He quickly crouches down to gingerly pluck a flower out before he turns to hand it to Hoseok, “You should come see it in the morning next time.”

_Next time,_ Hoseok takes a sharp inhale. He accepts the little primrose from Yoongi’s hand, “I will.”

Next time.

Next time does come, and the time after that, until Hoseok sees Yoongi at least four times a week, be it a short visit at the station, lunch break at some nice place where he treats all of them, or just a short little walk in the morning before Hoseok has to go to work.

“And that’s why I came in super late for work,” Hoseok concludes his rant from yesterday.

Yoongi nods as he takes a sip of his coffee, “Tragic. We don’t have set working hours. It’s just based on what we have to do.”

“Boo,” Hoseok pouts and Yoongi laughs, “do you know how hard it is for me to get up in the
morning? Sometimes I could be dressed up and leaving my apartment when my eyes are still half-opened. It’s terrible.”

“Take the night shift then,” Yoongi says like it’s a no-brainer.

“No way,” Hoseok protests, “I’ve worked the night shift before. Remember? Messed up my whole sleep schedule.”

Yoongi makes a confused noise, “Since when? Was I even there?”

“You were!” Hoseok assures him, “It was back in May last year or something.”

“Ah,” Yoongi hums, “I remember now.”

They walk around, a coffee and sometimes a sandwich between them, until they reach the police precinct. It’s an unusual sight; a mafia boss and a police officer walking together side-by-side, never a step too far away from each other.

Hoseok sighs when they reach the front doors, “Another day, another dollar.”

Yoongi laughs at that, “Go get ‘em tiger,” he gives Hoseok’s lower back a little pat, waving as Hoseok turns around to face him.

“Have fun with your non-standardized work day hyung,” Hoseok grumbles.

“I’ll be sure to enjoy it,” Yoongi assures him with a smile before they part ways.

Their touches are light and friendly, but never anything intimate, save for the quick brushes of fingers and little soft grips of each other’s hands. Every time it seems to escalate into something more, those moments alone when they catch each other looking with a lingering want, a confession hanging off the tip of their tongues, they turn away, sometimes laugh about it. They need that time as friends.

The random bursts of pain don’t come as often as before, and not as painful, as if the universe has decided to give them a break and let them take things at their own paces. They grit their teeth through those aches, but sometimes just the sight of the other smiling feels like it helps subside the pain, if only by a little.

For the next few weeks, Yoongi and Hoseok become friends; good friends, and soulmates. They never pretend that that’s not a fact. They don’t discuss what they will be, or if this is building up towards anything. If it’s not, then they’re fine as they are now. If it is, then they’ll welcome it.

For now, they just enjoy a friendship they didn’t have before.

[13:16:34] yoongi hyung: lunch?
[13:17:22] hoseokie (☼ ~ ⧸)♥: !!! yes pls
[13:17:26] yoongi hyung: what are you thinking
[13:17:30] hoseokie (☼ ~ ⧸)♥: uhhh
[13:17:32] hoseokie (☼ ~ ⧸)♥: i chose last time
[13:17:40] yoongi hyung: what does taehyung want then
[13:17:43] hoseokie (☼ ~ ⧸)♥: oo one sec
[13:18:04] yoongi hyung: 20 minutes
[13:18:10] hoseokie (✿ ˘ ³˘): thank u hyung ur my favorite delivery man followed by uber eats
[13:18:21] hoseokie (✿ ˘ ³˘): twas a joke :

[22:23:21] yoongi hyung!: are you home yet
[22:24:12] yoongi hyung!: good
[22:24:15] yoongi hyung!: go get some rest
[22:24:20] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): i will i will
[22:24:22] yoongi hyung!: promise?
[22:24:25] yoongi hyung!: no unnecessary staying up
[22:24:28] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): lol why does this sound like a life or death matter
[22:24:37] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): i promise ill sleep as soon as i shower my heads gonna hit the pillow
[22:25:09] yoongi hyung!: thats what i like to hear
[22:25:16] yoongi hyung!: goodnight seok-ah
[22:25:45] yoongi hyung!: ♡
[22:26:00] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): ♡♡

[07:13:22] yoongi hyung (← →): hey its hyung
[07:13:30] yoongi hyung (← →): you told me you have an early schedule today
[07:13:32] yoongi hyung (← →): be sure to wake up
[07:13:33] yoongi hyung (← →): like really
[07:13:38] yoongi hyung (← →): k thats all im going back to sleep you better wake up
[10:26:02] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): …
[10:26:07] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): so that didnt work
[10:26:12] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): but i appreciate the effort

[09:32:43] yoonie (← →): hey
[09:32:46] yoonie (← →): isnt it your birthday today
[09:33:03] hoseokie (☼ ˘ ³˘): yes it is :0 u remembered
[09:33:10] yoonie (← →): i do
“So Yoongi hyung is gonna take me somewhere after this,” Hoseok suddenly announces later in the evening when his friends are setting food down on his little coffee table, “no big deal.”

Taehyung is chewing on one of the pretzels, “Ah, is this the 100k getting back together arc that I’ve been waiting for?”

Hoseok grimaces at that, “I don’t even want to know what any of that means.”

Jimin enters the room with more food and beer from Hoseok’s fridge, “Honestly, what is your relationship right now?”

“We’re friends,” Hoseok rebuts, “just friends.”

Jungkook clears his throat as he swallows a snack, coughing out something that sounds suspiciously like ‘bullshit’.

“Kook,” Hoseok snarls, “I won’t hesitate to make this a cop-only party and kick you out.”

“Police brutality,” Jungkook nods thoughtfully, but pipes down anyway.

Their gathering is quite funny, with the three of them in their blue uniforms and Jungkook in his dark gray suit, the coat and jacket disposed on Hoseok’s couch.

“Say,” Taehyung speaks up, “why isn’t Namjoon hyung and Jin hyung here?”

“Hm?” Jimin looks up from the food, “We’re allowed to invite people? I thought this is only an us thing.”

Hoseok shrugs, “It’s not that you’re not allowed, I’m just so used to this arrangement that I forgot that I have more friends now.”
“That’s so sad,” Jungkook whispers before he turns to swat Jimin’s knee, “call them over.”

“Right ahead of you,” Jimin says as he dials Namjoon’s number on his phone.

His face lights up when the call eventually picks up, “Joonie~!”

Jungkook gags a little too loudly but Jimin ignores it, “Are you free right now? Really? Come to Hoseokie hyung’s house! No he’s here, it’s his birthday. Yeah! Get Jin hyung to come with you too, we have food. Yeah? Alright, see you soon baby,” he makes little kissing noises into the phone and that is the final straw.

“God,” Taehyung grimaces as he and Jungkook both shove Jimin at the same time, “you’re shameless.”

“That’s why we make it work,” Jimin giggles from the floor, “I’m absolutely shameless.”

“Ah, this guy,” Taehyung slaps his knee, “you’re head over heels.”

“Pretty much,” Jimin agrees easily, “I make it known. I think everyone should.”

Jungkook blinks, “You make a pretty good point. Surprisingly.”

“Right?” Jimin agrees again, “Boldness gets you far. Just tell them what you want so there aren’t any misunderstandings.”

Hoseok isn’t sure if they’re trying to tell him something, but he also doesn’t want to risk embarrassing himself if it turns out that they just wanted to talk about relationships. Jimin’s words stay in his mind throughout the evening though.

Namjoon and Seokjin join them an hour later with a handful of beers and other drinks from the convenience store. Seokjin got Hoseok an actual present even though he said it’s unnecessary. He accepts the sweater anyway and tackles the elder into a hug. He also brought a pink polaroid camera but refuses to take anyone’s picture with it.

A few more hours past like that, then the doorbell rings.

“Hyung's boyfriend is here,” Jungkook says through a mouthful of food.

Hoseok sprays his beer, “Ah, he's not my boyfriend!”

“Go get your boyfriend, hyung,” Jimin says.

Hoseok groans as he gets to his feet, “I'm going, but he's not my boyfriend!”

Ignoring the whistling and commotion and the heat growing at the back of his neck reaching his ears, Hoseok makes his way to open the front door.

Yoongi stands at the door in his familiar black getup, a stark contrast to his light blonde hair, the same effect happening with the black bag against his pale fingers.

“Hyung,” Hoseok smiles, “what a surprise.”

“Hey,” Yoongi greets, “I should've called beforehand.”
“Ah no it's fine!” Hoseok quickly says, “It’s not like we were doing much anyway. You know, the usual.”

“Yeah?” Yoongi smiles, and Hoseok ignores the way his heart pathetically tumbles in his chest, “Am I ruining it?”

“What? No!” Hoseok fake gasps and Yoongi laughs, “My birthday is always usually just the four of us messing around at my house, so I just didn’t really think about inviting anyone. Jimin called Namjoon and Jin hyung in a few hours earlier.”

Yoongi squints, “I’m not sure I believe you, but I’ve brought a peace offering that’ll help me charm my way in,” he holds up the bag in his hand.

Hoseok’s eyes widen at that, “You brought me a gift? Hyung,” he fake pouts, “you shouldn’t have.”

“Ah, really?” Yoongi lowers the bag, “Alright.”

“No I’m kidding,” Hoseok drops the act, “gimme.”

After taking the bag from a laughing Yoongi, Hoseok shuffles back inside to rest it on the table and dig out its content.

“No way,” Hoseok whispers when he sees the faint white letters through the paper wrapping, “no.”

“Happy birthday, Seokseok-ah,” Yoongi says once Hoseok pulls out the red Supreme acorn pouch, mouth agape at the sight.

“I- wow,” Hoseok tries to find his words, “when is your birthday again? I really have to save up.”

“Don’t be ridiculous. You don’t have to get me anything,” Yoongi frowns, “it’s March 9th.”

“Be prepared,” Hoseok warns, “wait, does that mean we’re the same age for the next few weeks?”

Yoongi hums as he thinks before he shrugs, “I guess.”

“Can I drop the honorifics then?”

“If you want to.”

Hoseok can hardly contain himself, “Yoongi-yah.”

“I’m gonna regret this,” Yoongi mutters under his breath and Hoseok laughs.

“Ah, but seriously,” Hoseok looks down at his new bag, “thank you so much, hyung.” He leans in to kiss Yoongi’s cheek, not giving himself much time to dwell on it.

Just as he leans away to see Yoongi’s wide eyes, a sudden squeal sounds from behind them.

“Oh, come on,” Hoseok whines when he turns to see the five troublemakers trying to loom in the shadows a foot away.

“Just pretend we’re not here!” Jimin says as he fumbles with the camera settings on his phone. Taehyung, Jungkook, and Seokjin on the other hand, are already making their way with their own cameras.
“Hyung, is that why you brought the polaroid camera?” Hoseok turns to Seokjin, appalled.

“I gotta save up on the films,” Seokjin says frankly, “those things are expensive.”

“We need a shot of the two of you together anyway,” Jungkook says, “it’s been too long.”

“Stand closer please,” Taehyung instructs as he lifts his camera.

“We’re leaving room for Jesus,” Yoongi says and Hoseok barks out a laugh.

“Closer,” Taehyung insists.

“It’s fine, hyung,” Hoseok says when Yoongi hesitates. He takes Yoongi’s hand and places it on his waist, feeling Yoongi freeze against him before slowly giving in.

“Good good,” Taehyung says like he’s a professional director, “now kiss.”

Hoseok chokes on air as the warm sensation starts burning his cheeks again. He said it so easily, “Tae!”

“Oh don’t act like you didn't just give him a kiss, Hoseok,” Seokjin tuts, “give him one in return, Yoongi-yah.”

“You’re fired,” Yoongi murmurs under his breath. Hoseok feels the hand on his waist tighten before it loosens again.

“I mean it’s only fair, right?” Hoseok turns to him, “Don’t you have to make it even so you don’t owe me anything? Isn’t that a mafia thing?”

“It’s not,” Yoongi deadpans.

“It totally is,” Jungkook confirms.

Yoongi scowls but it’s clear that he’s biting back a smile, “You’re all brats,” he suddenly turns to press his lips against Hoseok’s burning cheek, the sensation just the slightest bit of overwhelming.

After an embarrassingly long photo session filled with cooing and requests so ridiculous that they eventually draw the line, Hoseok shoos them back into the living room, telling them to leave and lock the door as soon as Hoseok leaves.

“Sorry about them,” Hoseok grumbles, “they’re an insatiable bunch.”

“Unapologetically so, and I love them for it,” Yoongi has that fond smile on his face again, “...don’t tell them I said that.”

“They won’t let you live it down for sure,” Hoseok laughs, “where are we going anyway?”

Hoseok didn’t expect Yoongi to take him to any place in particular, but if he did, he wouldn’t have expected the beach at half past six.

The place is completely empty save for a few seagulls and stray dogs strutting along the line where the tides meet the sand. It’s too cold for anyone to be visiting the beach, little sprinkles of snow in the salty air.
Hoseok leans on Yoongi’s car, staring up at the gray sky and the light fog near the water, “What gave you the idea?”

“Thought I should treat you to something nice for once,” Yoongi murmurs as he shoves his hands into the pockets of his trenchcoat.

Hoseok chuckles, tightening his coat around himself, “You’re always treating me to something nice,” he looks toward the beach again, “it’s looking a bit gray though, probably because it’s winter.”

“It’ll lighten up nearer to sunset, so around an hour or so,” Yoongi says as he checks his watch, stepping forward to the stone stairway that leads into the sand before he turns back slightly to Hoseok, holding out his bare hand, like an offer and a question.

Hoseok accepts.

“You know,” Yoongi starts as they take their careful stroll on the sandy surface, hand-in-hand, “the tides are controlled by the moon.”

“I think I’ve learned that in school,” Hoseok hums, “it’s pretty cool how everything’s connected.”

“It’s like everything in the world has some kind of pull that is controlled by something beyond us,” Yoongi says, “like soulmates.”

Hoseok smiles as he squeezes Yoongi’s hand, “Yeah.”

It is quite magical how no matter how much Hoseok has hated Yoongi in the beginning, or how messily they separated, they’ve managed to orbit back around to each other again. Hoseok isn’t sure how much of it is him and how much of it is the universe, the pull controlled by something beyond him, the need for them to be together somehow.

Hoseok felt like drowning when everything first started, like Yoongi had brought this powerful wave that flooded his whole world, leaving him to sink until his feet graces the deepest end. But after everything, he’s up now, above the surface, staring off at a seemingly infinite span of the ocean next to Yoongi.

The gray ocean reminds him of Yoongi when they first met, in a way. Cold, dark, and little whispers that brush past his ears. The Yoongi holding his hand right now is different; more colorful, figuratively and literally, softer, warmer, the kind that Hoseok wants to bathe himself in, but would never admit it. He doesn’t know what caused the change, but he likes it.

“Ah, it’s time,” Yoongi comes to a stop when everything suddenly starts to warm up around them.

The sky turns an array of different pinks and purples and oranges, with hues of the gray and blue from earlier just beyond it. The fog masks the actual sun from their vision, but Hoseok looks up to admire the soft pastel brushstrokes it makes, smudged by the clouds, reflecting onto the little snowflakes. The ocean itself blends into the same palette, shaped by ripples and highlighted by sea foams, reflecting little sparkles like drops of diamonds on its surface. Sheets of the sea climb up to caress the sand before it leaves, glossing the surface that reflects the same painting the sky is making. It returns again a second later, adding an extra layer of peach and purple.

“I haven’t been to the beach in a while,” Hoseok whispers, like he’s afraid that he’ll be disturbing something if he’s too loud, “it’s a shame though,” he sighs, “you can’t even see the actual sunset.”
“I’m looking at one.”

Hoseok turns to see Yoongi turned away from the sparkling ocean and towards him, the smile that he has for the scenery staying on as their eyes meet, even widens a little. Amongst all the beautiful things that are happening around them, Yoongi has his eyes fixed on Hoseok.

The colors reflect in the brown of Yoongi’s eyes, glossy and bright. Hoseok sees it again then, though much more clearer, the story beyond them. The change is Hoseok.

Hoseok paints Yoongi like the sun paints the beach in all the soft, love-filled colors. It’s not even a change as there was never an alteration, but rather a development, like Hoseok adds something to Yoongi that makes his gray tint pink and purple, something that makes a complete scenery.

“Hoseok-ah,” He feels Yoongi whisper. He doesn’t have to look to know that Yoongi is biting his lip again, “I know that we agreed to let things flow, but right now I just-” He exhales sharply, “you already know this, but I’m so fucking in love with you.”

Hoseok tries to breathe, but he feels so choked up all of a sudden. It happened. He said it.

“And really, it’s fine if you don’t want… this. I get why you wouldn’t. Just don’t feel like you have to reciprocate or play along,” Yoongi says, “it doesn't matter what I said. You're not mine.”

Hoseok doesn't know what to say. He looks into Yoongi’s eyes and they tell a different story.

His eyes are glassy, with stardusts, little flecks of them, sparkling this want, this longing that Hoseok feels so drawn to.

“You’re not mine, Hoseok,” Yoongi says, though his eyes say otherwise, “I don’t get to dictate what you do. So just… just listen to yourself.”

Hoseok tightens his hold on Yoongi’s hand, like that would be an obvious enough answer for him, but Yoongi deserves better than that.

So Hoseok thinks. He thinks of a lot of things. There are a lot of things that he wants, yet he can’t seem to come to a conclusion right now.

He wants Yoongi and more, and it sounds ridiculously selfish. He wants Yoongi with him, wants it all to be real, wants nothing to be some kind of elaborate act.

Hoseok looks at the man he’s cried over, the one that makes him follow his pull like waves.

Hoseok isn’t sure of this - isn’t sure if they’ll fall apart again, but he hopes not, and that’s something. He wants Yoongi, he knows that much. Wants him so desperately that just having him around, just seeing the glow of his smile is enough, is so much already. But he also wants more, wants to overwhelm himself with Yoongi until he’s sick.

The thing that Hoseok wants the most right now…

“I want to kiss you.”
Yoongi’s eyes widen slightly, and then he lets out a breath of a laugh. “Sure. Yeah. Go on.”

The approval comes so easily that Hoseok has to remind himself to breathe just before he holds his breath again. He shifts a step closer to Yoongi, hesitating for a moment because of how still Yoongi is, before he closes the gap between them completely.

It’s just the simplest of presses, but Yoongi doesn’t kiss back, doesn’t do anything at all. Hoseok feels like he’s sinking from how still Yoongi is, though he tries to pretend that it didn’t just break his heart when he pulls away.

Yoongi isn’t even looking at him.

“... Hyung?” Hoseok whispers.

Silence.

Did the kiss make Yoongi realize something? That this isn’t actually what he wants? That Hoseok is no longer something beautiful to him?

No, Hoseok thinks, panicked, please no.

“Was it that bad?” Hoseok resorts to joking, to the same approach he has to everyone... Everyone but Yoongi. At one point. Not now, not anymore. “My bad,” He manages a laugh, “I guess it’s been a while.”

“Seok-ah,” Yoongi suddenly says, just as Hoseok is about to bury himself under the widest smile. “That was-”

“Horrible,” Hoseok supplies with a laugh but it's too loud, ringing uncomfortably in his own ears, lingering around the calm tides like it doesn’t belong. It doesn’t. “Ah, Yoongi-ssi, just because it’s my birthday doesn’t mean you have to agree to everything I say. Like sure, my pride would be a little hurt but then-”

“Hoseok-ah,” Yoongi takes one of Hoseok’s hands and brings it up to rest against his chest.

There’s something beneath his palm, strong and insistent. It’s rapid, unlike the steady flowing of waves, but more like the pulsing feeling in your ears as you descend beneath water. Lower. Deeper.

The same feeling Hoseok feels when he’s so deep into his facade of feelings and false hope he unconsciously built for himself because of Yoongi. The one that made him understand why one falls into love rather than anything else; walking, flying, jumping. None of them make sense because there’s no consequence to them; no breath holding or nerve-wracking leaps, none that bears the same risk as falling deep, deep, deep.

That very same feeling, Hoseok feels underneath his palm from Yoongi’s heart.

Yoongi’s head is ducked down, eyes focusing on the sand beneath their feet. His hand is still above Hoseok’s, holding it in place above his rapidly beating pulse.
“...You see,” Yoongi manages out, “I don’t know what would happen if I kissed you back. It—” He bites his lip, uncertain, “I won’t be able to hold back.”

Everything suddenly feels like a dream that is too good. Too good that Hoseok is terrified of shifting weirdly and suddenly waking up alone with everything still broken.

He’s terrified, but he reaches for Yoongi’s free hand anyway, ignoring his sudden wide eyes to rest it on his own just as, if not even more, rapidly thrumming heart.

“I’m not asking you to,” Hoseok whispers.

For as long as they stand, it feels like their heartbeats slowly sync together just from the touch alone. The warmth remains, lingering on and around them, as if they’re one for just that moment, like their souls form one complete piece.

Slowly, slowly, Hoseok lets go to gently slide his fingers up Yoongi’s face before cupping it, tilting it up to face him.

Yoongi’s face is an embarrassing red, a strong scarlet that cuts through the dimming colors around them. Hoseok can imagine that he’s not far off himself.

“Kiss me?” Hoseok asks. He never had to, but that was then, and this is now. And now is real. So, very real.

It feels real, because the cold still manages to creep up between them. Real because Yoongi’s lips are chapped and his stubble brushes Hoseok’s cheek and nose. There’s a magic to it but also none at the same time, and perhaps that’s why it feels so enchanting.

Yoongi kisses him because he wants to. Presses closer and rests his hands on Hoseok’s waist because he wants to. Smiles and huffs out a breathless laugh when Hoseok makes an embarrassing noise because he so desperately wants to and not to fool anyone; not to lie.

They stay close when their lips part, and Yoongi, because that’s what he does best, lingers as he tilts his head to give Hoseok one last peck before he pulls away to look at him.

“Is that what you wanted?” Yoongi is still whispering even though he’s not as close as he was, even though there’s no one else here but them.

“I want…” Hoseok catches Yoongi’s hand just as they leave his waist.

Yoongi’s hands still as Hoseok holds them, “... This?”

Hoseok nods. He wants this. Wants him.

“You.”

Silence.

“Yeah,” Yoongi nods slowly, “me too.”
“I want…” Hoseok fumbles, he wants so much, “I want you closer.”

Yoongi smiles that lovely little smile as he raises his eyebrows and nods, “Sounds good.”

Hoseok reaches for both of Yoongi’s hands and places them back on his waist. His arms snake up to loop around Yoongi’s neck to keep him close.

“Oh,” Yoongi breathes, “like literally.”

“Yeah,” Hoseok smiles, “Oh, and,”

Yoongi chuckles, “What is it now?”

“I love you too.”

Hoseok can hear Yoongi’s breathing, muffled by the crashing waves and whispering wind around them. His ears feel numb from the cold, but he feels Yoongi’s hands through his coat.

“Can I kiss you again?” Yoongi whispers.

“Hmm…” Hoseok pretends to consider it, as if the answer isn’t obvious enough already, “I guess I’ll allow it.”

Yoongi laughs, “How kind of you.”

It became difficult for Hoseok to pull away once he’s had Yoongi in his arms, even when the sky has gone dark and the cold is getting to them more than ever.

Even when Yoongi had managed to push him off so they can go home, Hoseok still can’t keep to himself for too long, leaning over to kiss Yoongi’s cheek whenever he has a chance, finding every excuse to do so. Yoongi doesn’t complain.

“Wow,” Yoongi muses when Hoseok steps out of the bathroom, “didn’t know you own those,” he gestures to the green button up pajamas Hoseok is wearing, “the color’s not it, but it looks cute on you.”

Hoseok ducks his head down to hide his red face but steps closer to Yoongi anyway. The orange glow from the mood light on his bedside table makes a soft hue on Yoongi’s skin, his smile endeared like Hoseok in his stupid green pajamas is some holy sight to behold.

“Can I touch you?” Yoongi whispers, fingers skimming at the hem of Hoseok’s shirt.

Hoseok bites his lip and nods, expecting warmth on his skin, but Yoongi just pulls him closer into a hug, his arms wrapped around Hoseok’s waist. This is great too, though. A different, but very welcomed, warmth. Hoseok curls his hands over Yoongi’s shoulder, feeling the softness of his borrowed sleep shirt beneath his palms. Yoongi’s grip is firm, tight, but not uncomfortable. His fingers dig lightly into the fabric of his pajamas, almost like he’s afraid that if he lets go of Hoseok, he’d just disappear. He feels Yoongi nuzzle softly into his shoulder, murmuring against it.
"You’re such a dream," Hoseok feels the words on his shoulder, “Can I-"

"Hyung,” Hoseok deadpans, and Yoongi whips his head up with wide eyes like he’s been caught doing something wrong, “I really appreciate you asking and stuff, but if you’re going to ask me for permission before you do everything I'm gonna scream.”

“Alright alright,” Yoongi laughs, “get caught off-guard then,” he hugs him closer, tilting his head to kiss along Hoseok’s cheek until Hoseok giggles and squirms in his arms.

They stay like that until they grow sluggish. By the time they slip into Hoseok’s bed, Yoongi has a sated look on his face, a lazy little smile as he holds the side of Hoseok’s face with one hand, thumb gently stroking across his cheekbone. Hoseok flutters his eyes at the way waves of warmth spread across his skin, but he doesn’t let them close completely, the desperate want to look at Yoongi’s melting smile a reach away from him completely overpowering his sleepiness.

Yoongi likes to ramble, Hoseok realized when they were reconnecting and became more open with each other. Yoongi likes to ramble when he’s sad or happy. Hoseok likes his happy rambles, it’s like he has so much to say as to why something is making him so happy, and he’ll say it all even if he’s tired and slurring his words. Hoseok listens, of course, because Yoongi’s voice has a charm to it; a soft low rumble, constant like his stream of thought.

Yoongi is rambling a lot tonight.

“I’m touching you right now, but I’m still getting this lingering thought that… what if I wake up and none of this was real? What if this is just my imagination?” Yoongi murmurs as he continues to caress Hoseok’s cheek, his own face pressed against Hoseok’s pillow, squishing it slightly.

Hoseok rests his own hand over Yoongi’s on his face, letting himself indulge for a little more before he tilts his chin upwards, blinking expectantly.

Yoongi gets the hint and he chuckles fondly, “God, I miss that,” he easily leans forward to kiss him, chaste, little pecks on his lips that drift across his face, “you’re so cute.”

“Hyung,” Hoseok smiles against his skin, “Yoongi-yah,” Yoongi breaks the kiss with a laugh, “I don’t even wanna go to sleep.”

Yoongi shakes his head, “You’re sleepy. What are you talking about?”

“I’m not,” Hoseok tries to protest, but Yoongi’s hand is carding through his hair and it’s embarrassing how his eyes flutter closed at the touch.

He can hear Yoongi huff out a laugh, “People always get sleepy after they’ve come home from the beach. It’s odd.”

“Hyung,” Hoseok whines even though his eyes are still closed, “I don’t want to just go to sleep when you’re right here.”

“You’re literally slurring your words,” Yoongi remarks, “I’ll still be here by the time you wake up. I promise,” Hoseok feels Yoongi’s lips press against his once more, lingering there as they breathe, then a whisper he feels more than hear, “Goodnight, Hoseok-ah.”

In Hoseok’s defense, he did sleep for a good few hours, but it’s not easy. Not after all the things that have happened today, and definitely not with Yoongi right next to him.
Everything flashes through his mind like a projection; memories of Yoongi and how it’s been a year since Hoseok’s world was flooded and invaded by all these new things. He ponders for a moment how different things would be if he never went home that night and just crashed at Jimin’s place, if he was never shot in the heart by his soulmate.

That’s how they met— that fateful, or faithful bullet that pierced its way into Hoseok’s chest. Hoseok fell in love with the guy who shot him.

Yoongi’s apology from weeks ago resurfaces; the way he condemned himself for every little thing, the way he still seems afraid of everything going wrong. Hoseok aches, not knowing how to get it across that he’s moved on from that, that Yoongi being here is more important to him. He needs to let him know. How can he let him know?

*Oh, he’s right here.*

“Hyung,” Hoseok gasps as he abruptly pushes himself up, his head swirling and his heart pounding in his chest. Yoongi’s here. Yoongi’s right here, and he’s slowly pushing himself up from the bed, “Yoongi hyung.”

“You okay?” Yoongi brushes his bangs out of his eyes, voice addled with sleep, “What’s wrong? Does your chest hurt?”

“I-” Hoseok can hear his heart pulsing in his ears, so loud that he’s surprised Yoongi hasn’t caught up. He has, however, reached over to slip his right hand under the collar of Hoseok’s shirt, resting it above his heart. He does it so swiftly like it’s muscle memory.

He can probably feel Hoseok’s pulse rate, how unbelievably fast it is, and that makes Hoseok’s cheeks color, hopefully not too much to be visible in the dark.

“Ah,” Hoseok laughs at their position and how much Yoongi is straining his arm to reach over, “this position is kinda awkward.”

Yoongi cocks his head to the side, a familiar gesture, “Make yourself comfortable then.”

Hoseok grins. Maybe suddenly waking up in the middle of the night isn’t so bad after all.

Pulling Yoongi’s hand off, he shifts over to sit between Yoongi’s legs, pressing his back against his chest before he sets Yoongi’s hand back on his heart.

“Oh,” Yoongi laughs, and Hoseok feels the vibrations on his back, “comfy?”

Hoseok hums in response.

“It doesn’t seem to be slowing down,” Yoongi comments after a while, concerned about Hoseok’s rapid heartbeat. He still thinks it’s the pain condition. Hoseok feels lips press against his cheek, in his hair, “Does this help?”

“I-It doesn’t hurt,” Hoseok tries to ignore the way his heart is beating faster at the touch, “I’m okay, hyung.”

“Oh, why’d you wake up then?” Yoongi makes a move to lift his hand off, but Hoseok quickly
holds it back in place.

“I can’t sleep,” Hoseok mumbles, “Talk to me?”

He feels Yoongi pause, “What about?”

“What you’re thinking of right now,” Hoseok says as he presses himself closer to Yoongi, fingers stroking the back of his hand, “I want to know.”

It’s quiet for a moment, but Hoseok can feel Yoongi’s calm breathing behind him. “Alright... I’ve been thinking of you. And I’m not just even saying it,” Hoseok laughs, “I was thinking of how these past few weeks, I’ve fallen for you even more than before, even faster.” Yoongi breathes, “...I was thinking if I really deserve this, with all the things I’ve done to you.”

Yoongi’s tone feels different from usual, calmer. Perhaps it’s because they’re not looking at each other, so there’s no pressure to say anything, to fumble and struggle a little. Hoseok can feel its softness and the touch even though he can’t see his face, staring up at his empty ceiling while Yoongi rambles.

“Because I don’t know what’s going to happen in the future, if you’re going to be in even more danger,” Yoongi continues, “but Seok-ah, I swear,” his arm comes up to hold Hoseok closer, “I swear I’ll do everything I can to make sure those things don’t happen again.”

Hoseok suddenly turns in Yoongi’s arms, shifting up into his lap until he’s looking down at him.

“I forgive you,” Hoseok whispers when their eyes meet.

Yoongi takes a moment to process it, and Hoseok lets him, watches until his eyes come to a resolve before he continues.

“I love you,” Hoseok leans down to kiss him, murmurs it into his lips, and Yoongi kisses back, whispering a response.

It’s safe and quiet; two of the things they haven’t really had before. Yoongi nuzzles closer when Hoseok plays with the hair at the nape of his neck, resting his arms on his shoulders while Yoongi holds onto Hoseok’s waist, fingers stroking idly.

A shiver runs down Hoseok’s spine when the kiss deepens, when the contact gets warmer, when they part with panting breaths.

“We don’t have to do anything,” Yoongi says through his heavy breathing, fingers still skimming at the hem of Hoseok’s shirt, “we can just... make out until we fall asleep or something.”

Hoseok laughs, brushing his nose against Yoongi’s, “Is that what you want?”

“Well I’m open to other ideas,” Yoongi lets Hoseok nose at his cheek, “but we can stop here if you want.”

After a moment of consideration, although Hoseok doesn’t really need to consider much, he shakes his head, “I don’t want to stop.”

Yoongi nods at that, “Okay,” his hands finally slipping under Hoseok’s shirt, “me neither.”
When their lips reconnect, it feels more heated. Not rushed, but more eager, more intimate than before, with Yoongi soothing his hands up and down Hoseok’s back like the waves washing over the sand before slipping away again.

Hoseok hesitantly pulls away to fiddle with the button of his shirt, not letting the embarrassment get to him, considering how eager he must seem. Yoongi’s hands come up to touch him.

“May I?” He asks, and even though Hoseok did say something about not asking before doing every single thing, he allows it, drops his hands down to let Yoongi undress him. “This reminds me of back then, when I used to unbutton your shirt a lot.”

“Ah,” Hoseok laughs at the memory, “I remember. I was in too much pain to do it myself.”

“You never wearing an undershirt appalled me to no end,” Yoongi says as he works to undo the third button, “no luck still, probably.”

“Nope,” Hoseok confirms with a cheeky smile.

When the final button comes undone, Yoongi looks up at Hoseok, waiting for a nod before gingerly pulling his shirt down and letting it pool at his elbows, not coming off completely. Hoseok exhales softly when his bare chest braces the cold air.

That expression washes across Yoongi’s face again as he looks down at Hoseok’s bare chest. That disbelief that this is actually happening, that this is for him.

Yoongi looks up at Hoseok’s face again with the most awestruck expression, like he’s watching the tides rise and fall, watching the scenery they saw together earlier that day.

“Hyung…” Hoseok cups his face, tilting it up so that he can plant a little kiss on his lips once, “I’m yours,” twice, “yours,” three more times for good measure until Yoongi is smiling that wide gummy smile of his, still visible in the low light.

Yoongi laughs into the kiss and Hoseok does too until they’re just breathing against each other in quick huffs. Yoongi kisses up his jaw, down his neck to the base of his throat and his collarbone. Hoseok’s breath catches at that, and Yoongi hesitates a bit before his lips drift down to Hoseok’s chest.

“Thank you,” Yoongi murmurs against his heart, “thank you for coming back to me.” It’s like he’s talking to Hoseok’s heart and Hoseok himself for coming back, for falling in love with him again, though Hoseok never really stopped in the first place. “I won’t let you go again.”

And Yoongi means it. He holds Hoseok close through it all, a warm hand on his lower back, soothing fingers skimming up his thigh beneath his pajama pants.

Their hands are tangled together when they’re both naked, Hoseok still in his lap and waiting, bracing himself. He stares down at the bud of daffodil on Yoongi’s chest, moving as Yoongi breathes in these calm, deep breaths.

“Only if you’re sure,” He says, rubbing his thumb over the back of Hoseok’s hand, keeping close. He’s sure.

The feeling makes something twist low in his gut, makes his brows furrow from how long it’s been, and he lets go of their hands to hold onto Yoongi’s shoulders. There’s always a soothing hand running up his thigh and up his spine, patiently waiting and watching as Hoseok gets used to it all.
“Still okay?” Yoongi asks, trying to mask the strain in his voice from the contact, “Tell me- ah, tell me if it hurts. We can stop.”

“I’m fine,” Hoseok assures him but it’s shaky, his fingers digging into Yoongi’s shoulders so hard that it has to be painful but he doesn’t seem to mind, “just… it’s been a while. I need a minute.”

“Don’t hurt yourself,” Yoongi presses a small kiss to his neck before whispering there, close, “we have all the time in the world.”

It’s gentle throughout, and close, like the sunset, or the parts of it that they saw at the beach. Yoongi colors Hoseok’s skin a shimmering gold as he leaves a trail of open-mouthed kisses, marking little blots of reds and purples that decorate the canvas and makes Hoseok keens. He lets Hoseok set the pace, lets Hoseok pull him closer and muffle his whimpers into his neck, lets Hoseok mark a few spots himself on his pale skin, lets Hoseok pull away as he watches like he’s admiring some entrancing scenery, awestruck and in love.

Yoongi is so tentative, so careful yet so blissed out. He lets out these little grunts, a groan at particular times, muffles his louder moans into Hoseok’s shoulder, and doesn’t hold back on the praises, on telling Hoseok how well he’s doing, how good it feels. He likes when Hoseok becomes more vocal, when he doesn’t muffle his moans and blabbers all these words that don’t make sense to him but probably means something from the way Yoongi reacts to it, holding him closer, kissing up his neck. Closer.

He’s there when Hoseok is starting to tire and rocks them gently until he sets his own pace, lets Hoseok gasp and whine into his ear, taking it as encouragement, bringing up another hand to stroke him along until they both let go. Yoongi stays close as he helps Hoseok through it, the sudden wave of senses that rushes all the way down to his toes, holding onto Hoseok’s trembling body. Little praises and confessions slip past their lips even as they settle, holding each other close not out of fear of the other disappearing, but out of want, and comfort, and love, and just for the sake of being close after something so intimate.

They laugh about it after as Yoongi brushes Hoseok’s hair off his face. Yoongi lets Hoseok kiss and touch as much as he wants, lets him kiss even though their lips are red and swollen. Soon, their talking turns into soft murmurs once more, and they sleep after a day filled with confessions, the truth dissolving all the lies they’ve built up before into the ocean.

Hoseok blinks his eyes open to see a rose and a poppy. The two inked flowers sit in the middle of Yoongi’s back, branching out into different flowers growing out of the same stem.

He’s always been drawn to them, from the first time he saw it and tried not to gawk. It’s different from when he saw Namjoon’s. He doesn’t think of the pain he had to go through to get these imprinted into his skin, but rather how intricately it sits on Yoongi’s body, how it complements his pale skin so well, and how beautiful its meaning is.

Hoseok reaches out to trace the lines with his fingers, from the sweet pea and hawthorn, to the rose and poppy, up to the water lily and a small little primrose nearer to his neck.

Yoongi stirs awake from the touch, and before Hoseok can even begin to feel infinitely guilty for waking him up, Yoongi’s eyes go wide when they meet, and he shoots up from the bed to hover over him.

“Well,” Hoseok laughs, “good morning I guess.”
Yoongi has this bewildered look on him as strokes across Hoseok’s cheek with the back of his finger and Hoseok hums happily, leaning into the gentle touch.

“That wasn’t a dream,” Yoongi whispers in wonder before he completely slumps down onto Hoseok, forcing all the air out of his lungs in a wheeze, “you weren’t a dream,” he murmurs against Hoseok’s neck.

“No,” Hoseok assures him, his hands skimming back up to trace the flowers from memory as Yoongi breathes into his neck, “it’s all for real this time.”

“No lies,” Yoongi says, muffled into Hoseok’s skin.

“Nope. Not even white lies,” Hoseok says as he pulls Yoongi closer, “none at all.”

Namjoon takes a moment to yawn and stretch the sleep out of him. His eyes water as he pulls his shirt above his head in one swift motion, cursing when he realizes a second too late that he has already put on his glasses. The collar has caught the arms of the glasses and now they’re flying off him along with his shirt.

“Damn it, Namjoon,” He murmurs to himself as he gives his own cheek a soft slap, groaning as he reaches down to pick up his hopefully not shattered glasses.

There’s suddenly a loud and equally hard slap on his butt, and Namjoon barely saves himself from toppling over with a loud shriek.

He turns back to sigh at the culprit, “You scared me there!” his voice is still sleep-addled but it’s whiny enough, “I was a hair’s breadth away from hitting my head and dying.”

Jimin laughs at that, voice much more awake than his somehow, “This is coming from an ex-mafioso?”

“There are a million ways to die,” Namjoon points out, “you can die from getting shot and hitting your head, it’s all the same.”

“You’re so dramatic,” Jimin cackles, but tries his best to settle down when Namjoon is still pouting. “Sorry for almost killing you, baby” he wraps his arms around Namjoon’s middle for added effect, rubbing the sleeve of his stolen warm sweater on Namjoon’s stomach.

Namjoon’s resolve comes quite quickly as he shortly ruffles Jimin’s hair, laughing when Jimin presses his cheek against his bare chest. “You’re all ready for tomorrow?”

Jimin nods, cheek still squished against Namjoon’s chest, “I’m gonna go help set up a bit in the morning, but I’ll come back here so we can leave together,” his right hand skims up to trace the bud of morning glory sitting above his heart, then to the fresh initials JM that decorate it like petals.

“Right,” Namjoon nods and lightly pats Jimin’s waist, “go eat something first, you have a job to go to and I need to shower.”
“Can’t I stay and enjoy the show?” Jimin pouts, but it slowly breaks into another laughing fit muffled into Namjoon’s shoulder when the elder whines. “Fine, give me a kiss first,” he puckers his lips.

After Namjoon complies all too easily, Jimin slips out of his room with a grin.

“Young肮 hyung?” Jimin says as he pulls his phone out, “Where is he right now?”

“He went with Hoseok, I think.” Namjoon’s voice comes from beyond the door.

“Where?”

“To visit their parents.”

“Say it.”

“You say it,” Hoseok counters, “that’s how we rehearsed it.”

“They’re your parents,” Yoongi elbows him lightly, “come on. You’ve run out of things to talk about to stall this.”

“Say it, Hoseok,” Hoseok huffs, “you weren’t complaining then.”

Yoongi gives in with a sigh, “Alright fine,” he looks up at the urns of Hoseok’s family as he tangles his hand with Hoseok’s, absentmindedly tracing the ring there. “Me and Hoseok are getting married tomorrow.”

It does feel different now that he’s said it, different from when he told the others when he proposed, different from when he said it was at that same beach a year later and Donghyuk unexpectedly started to cry just before Jimin and Taehyung joined him.

It feels different, and Yoongi can’t quite suppress the smile quirkling up the corners of his mouth. “I proposed a few months ago, and I was very serious about it.”

“Do I even trust you alone with my family?” Hoseok tries to frown, but he shifts away anyway, offering him a bright smile before he lets go of Yoongi’s hands to go stand just outside the room.

Yoongi turns to bow once more to the urns. “You’ve raised a very beautiful person. I used to feel like I don’t deserve someone like him in my life at all,” He bites his lip, “sometimes I still do, because of how important he is to me. But I promise you,” he says more determinedly, “I promise that I’m always trying to do better, to be worthy of having him in my life, to cherish him. So please don’t worry anymore,” he nods, more to himself if anything, “I’ll make him happy.”

“I can’t just let you go at this point,” Hoseok says in a deep, slurred voice when Yoongi comes out, “you know too much. Everybody who has seen my dick and met my parents either dies or
marries me.”

“I said stupid unfiltered shit when I’m nervous. I get it.” Yoongi deadpans “you’re never gonna let me live that down.”

“Nope,” Hoseok hums as they exit the columbarium, “you couldn’t have said anything worse right after such a beautiful proposal.”

“At least it wasn’t my opening speech,” Yoongi points out.

“Hyung, you literally recycled the speech you wrote two years ago when you didn’t even know me,” Hoseok rebuts.

“I remastered it,” Yoongi counters, “I didn’t know Jin hyung showed you the old one. And it made you laugh when you were crying anyway.”

_Because I was happy, you doofus_, Hoseok thinks internally. Yoongi could have said worse things and Hoseok would still say yes in a heartbeat.

“Hey,” Hoseok speaks up as they step down the stairs, the breeze brushing his hair onto his cheek when he turns to Yoongi, “you know you already make me happy, right?”

“That’s good to hear,” Yoongi murmurs, “doesn’t mean I’m gonna stop trying.”

“Gosh,” Hoseok squeals as he shoves Yoongi lightly, “what a charmer you are.”

“Being engaged changes you I guess,” Yoongi jokes along as he rubs his side where he was shoved.

They reach the quiet street intersection where they have to go their separate ways for work.

“You’re going out with the kids after work, right?” Yoongi asks, though he already knows, “Donghyuk hyung, Jin hyung, and Namjoon are probably going to drag me somewhere too.” His index finger comes up to trace his lips, “I won’t see you again until tomorrow then.”

At the gesture, Hoseok closes his fingers around Yoongi’s wrist and pulls it away from his lips. He leans in to kiss him instead, soft and chaste. Yoongi’s nose is red from the cold, his face a bit puffy, and Hoseok can’t recall ever loving anyone this much.

“Why do you still do that when I’m right here?” Hoseok teases him, “You weirdo.”

“Can’t really say anything to that,” Yoongi admits defeat, “I’m marrying a cop.”

Hoseok snorts, “Damn right you are. I’m marrying a mafia boss,” after a quick scan around to find no one but a lone stray cat at the opposite end of the road, Hoseok loops his arms around Yoongi’s neck as he puckers his lips, “give this cop a kiss before you go.”

Yoongi laughs but leans in anyway, leaving a few lingering kisses before he pulls away. Hoseok tightens his hold and keeps him there, feeling Yoongi huff out a laugh before brushing their lips together again.

He has that fond smile on him when Hoseok eventually lets him pull away, that glint in his eyes that says more than words could ever convey. He can’t imagine ever growing tired of it, can’t imagine his heart not swelling every time their eyes meet.
Everything started with one little white lie that expanded to an immense size, so it’s a wonder how they got through that flood and make it up to the surface. It was a red string of faith that brought them together in the first place, but their journey to coming back, to reconnecting was driven solely by them, maybe Taehyung as well, but also the insistent feeling that things would be better if the other is around that kept multiplying the longer they were apart.

“I love you, officer Jung.”

“I love you too, head chief Min.”

And that is indeed, the whole truth.

❀❀❀

Chapter End Notes

white lie was my chance to become more ambitious with my writing. i really went through hell and back with this fic and its almost unreal that it has finally come to an end after six whole months.

i started off writing to bring myself and hopefully others as well, little joys. i thought initially that that meant exclusively happy moments and zero hardships, but as i progress as a reader and writer, i realize how joy is derived from so many different emotions, how you have to feel the lows before you can really enjoy the highs. we face a lot of things we dont want to face everyday, and it made those little joys so much more special. ive never ended such a long fic before so maybe the ending isnt incredibly interesting, but i hope it makes up for all the hardships we've seen yoongi and hoseok go through, and that all your efforts in real life are even more fruitful.

i hope white lie has brought you joy through all that you have gone through.

thank you for following this not-so-little story until the very end.

edit: @/thelittlestbab on twitter drew this beautiful scene at the end and i am just in awe thank u so much:(

my twitter,
my curiouscat
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!