Strike A Pose

by hope_and_hardship

Summary

Hoseok and Namjoon are Instagram models who are both just starting to make a name for themselves. It turns out they have a lot in common. The trouble is they don’t like each other very much.

Notes

This is the twelfth fic in my personal challenge to write every Bangtan pairing. I’m going in international age order from oldest to youngest and trying to post one a week (though I have clearly failed at that part).

Thank you to razzlebrazzle for the plot help and the hand-holding.

And thank you everyone on twitter for input on Hoseok's and Namjoon's best and worst looks. <3

See the end of the work for more notes

“Can you believe this?” Hoseok asked Taehyung.

“Believe what?”
“This outfit?” Hoseok showed his phone screen to Taehyung. “He looks like a toddler who was allowed to dress himself for the first time. The way he cuffed them is all wrong, that shirt is way too baggy, and don’t get me started on that hat. He cannot pull that type of hat with his giant head.”

“I think it’s cute.”

Hoseok ripped his phone away from Taehyung’s view and frowned at him.

“Overalls on grown men are not cute.”

“I distinctly remember you wearing overalls before. With a santa hat?”

“That wasn’t even for Instagram, that was for work! I wouldn’t have voluntarily worn that.”

“I’m pretty sure we did a shoot like last year when you were in overalls. You were wearing that ugly tropical bucket hat.”

“I have no recollection of the event in question,” Hoseok huffed, making a mental note to go back through his Instagram and delete the evidence. He liked that bucket hat. But whatever, he looked good in overalls because he knew how to make them fashion. Mr. Kim Daily did not.

Taehyung shot Hoseok a look. But then he sighed and shook his head, like he knew there was no need to argue because he already knew he was right. Hoseok’s sister gave him that same look a lot growing up.

“Have you chosen your last outfit yet?” Taehyung asked instead of arguing. “I have to get to class.”

“I’m going with this,” Hoseok said, looking down at his outfit.

He was in Yeezy from head to toe.

And maybe it was a cop out, but Hoseok had been feeling a little off with his looks lately and he didn’t know why. It was like the more followers he got, the less sure he was about his style. He felt like he had to be what people expected, when the truth was he had a wide style and liked experimenting. But his most popular posts were always pretty much the same look. So he figured that sticking to one collection seemed pretty safe, and if he could maybe snag a sponsor in the process, that wouldn’t hurt.

He was just hitting the point where he had enough followers to start making some money with sponsored posts, but he wasn’t big enough to where sponsors came to him. So he had to build a body of work that showed he could sell their stuff.

Taehyung looked him up and down and nodded, but he didn’t say anything. The best thing about Taehyung was the he had his own totally unique sense of fashion and never really judged Hoseok’s—other than a few hated pieces over the years. He really wasn’t big on bucket hats.

He followed Hoseok to the “set” and directed him to stand where the light was best. He even lay down on the ground—the roof of their apartment building—to get a shot of Hoseok standing with his arms spread, showing off the joggers and t-shirt.

“Perfect,” Taehyung said after about 20 more poses. “The light’s great. There’s definitely a few shots here you can use. I’ll have to do a few edits on them and then send them to you to post.”

“You’re the best,” Hoseok said, giving Taehyung a back hug as he looked over Taehyung’s
shoulder to look through the pictures.

“Let’s do a selfie so you can post something today,” Taehyung said as he pulled out his phone.

“A selfie?”

“Yes. Every once in a while your beloved photographer would like to be in a shot.”

Hoseok grinned. They took three shots, the last one with Hoseok pecking a kiss to Taehyung’s cheek.

“Hyung,” Taehyung whined.

“What?”

“A boy won’t fall in love with me if they think I’m into you.”

“Send one of the others to me then,” Hoseok said.

“Don’t forget to tag me. And say nice things. The last time you did I got hired to shoot those engagement photos.”

“Do you want boys to fall in love with you or do you want to get hired?” Hoseok asked.

“Both.”

“Well, you got hired last time because you’re good. I’m not sure I can help with the boys though. I can’t get one to fall in love with me.”

“Aw, hyung,” Taehyung said. “Some day one of those idols you dance with is going to fall madly in love with you and buy you all the ugly Balenciagas your heart desires.”

“Thanks, Tae,” Hoseok said with a pout.

Taehyung patted him on the head and then took off for campus. Hoseok took a long look out at the city landscape, letting the small, lonely feeling wash over him, and then he trudged back downstairs.

Taehyung wasn’t only his photographer for his Instagram fashion shots, Taehyung was Hoseok’s roommate and his honorary best friend ever since Yoongi moved in with Seokjin, and Hoseok hardly ever saw him because he was off doing couply things that couples did.

Not that Hoseok wanted to be part of a couple.

Nope.

Who needed companionship and regular sex and someone who would delay shooting the drama they were starring in to make you homemade chicken soup when you had the sniffles? Not Hoseok. It was great for Yoongi, though. Hoseok was definitely happy for him and not jealous at all.

He posted one of the selfies he took with Taehyung and liked the photo Seokjin posted of Yoongi napping with Holly.

That was when he noticed how late it had gotten.
Hoseok grabbed his bag to go to the studio for rehearsal. They were getting new choreography for one of the company’s solo acts—a solo act who was definitely straight, secretly taken, and very unlikely to fall in love with Hoseok and buy him shoes.

So, maybe he was a little lonely. At least he liked his day job.

Meanwhile…

Namjoon had told Jimin to meet him for lunch at 12:15 knowing that Jimin wouldn’t show up until 12:30.

Namjoon got there at 12:15 just in case. But here it was 12:30 and still no Jimin.

Namjoon wanted to get some photos in while the sun was nice and he was feeling his look. At least five people did a double take when he walked by them on the way to the café. It wasn’t as if men didn’t wear long and flowy traditional dress for holidays sometimes, but as streetwear it was a little out of the ordinary.

But Namjoon knew he looked good—a mix between masculine and feminine. The t-shirt layered over the dress shirt might have said sloppy grad student, but the skirt over the slim black trousers was a reinterpretation of the traditional po and baji.

As more minutes ticked by, Namjoon was starting to get a little annoyed. He was scrolling through Instagram when Jimin finally arrived, waving and smiling at Namjoon before heading up to the counter to order his food.

Namjoon was finished with his lunch by the time Jimin got to the table with his.

“Why did you like J-Hope’s latest photo?” Namjoon asked before Jimin had even set his tray down.

“Huh?” Jimin asked.

“J-Hope. You liked his last post.”

Jemin gave him the look. Namjoon was familiar with a lot of Jimin’s looks, including this one. It was the you-know-you’re-obsessed-with-J-Hope-and-totally-not-fooling-me look.

Jemin sat down and crossed his arms.

“It wasn’t even a fashion shot. It was a selfie with his photographer,” he replied coolly.

“But you liked it!”

“Why do you care so much?”

“He’s the competition.”

“I thought you were just ‘trying out the modeling thing’ before you start grad school. Your styles are totally different. You’d never be competing for the same sponsors.”

Jemin was the only person Namjoon had ever met who could roll his eyes with his voice. He tried not to wince at the grad school comment. He hadn’t sent the confirmation of admission email yet, and it was due soon and he was kind of freaking out about it. Did he really want study coral reefs
for his whole life? At this point there probably wasn’t a way to save them anyway. He could almost convince himself it was just as pointless as modeling, and not as fun. He was starting to make money as an Instagram model, and if he could grow his follower base a little more, get a few more sponsored posts a month, it would be really good money. But then he thought about the research grants he could apply for to go back to Australia and the sense of obligation he felt to the defenseless sea creatures that were being destroyed by humanity’s selfish consumption, and he was torn again.

“That’s not true. It’s usually beauty products that sponsor posts for people with my follower count. And he had on a Sacai coat the other day,” Namjoon replied, ignoring his inner monologue.

Jimin ignored him and took a big bite of his gimbap. Namjoon was pretty sure Jimin was chewing slowly on purpose. Jimin washed the bite down with some Diet Coke before responding.

“Well, not that I own you an explanation, because you’re being ridiculous, but I was liking Tae, the photographer in the selfie. Tell the developers at Instagram to add in a feature to include an explanation associated with every like.”

“You could leave a comment.”

“What, like ‘Hey, my heart is for the guy on the left. I think J-Hope’s Yeezy t-shirts are over-priced and look stretched out.’”

“Yes!”

“Namjoon,” Jimin scolded. “How would you feel if someone left a comment like that on one of your posts?”

“I’d appreciate the constructive criticism about my choice in t-shirts.”

“You would not, and you know it.”

Namjoon knew Jimin was right. He was being ridiculous, but he was a little competitive with J-Hope, and it bugged him just a little bit that J-Hope had fewer followers but got more likes on posts when he wore bullshit “designer” t-shirts and tie-dyed sweatpants. Tie-dyed. Sweatpants. And it wasn’t that J-Hope didn’t look good, it was that he looked so effortless, like he didn’t care if anyone else got his look. Meanwhile, Namjoon tried really hard to be liked, and he wasn’t sure he ever really got there.

Sometimes he was pretty sure that he only looked good in clothes because he was tall. And people knew it.

“Wait,” Namjoon said. “Why do you know J-Hope’s photographer’s name?”

Jimin didn’t even have the nerve to look sheepish or apologetic.

“Well, for one, he was tagged in the photo.”

“Were you this much of a smartass when I met you?” Namjoon accused.

“Are you going to be mean to me? Because I don’t have to do this for you, you know,” Jimin huffed. “I mean, Jungkook has a real camera.”

Namjoon knew he had to dial it back. He was irritated at Jimin for being late, but he was really stressed out about his grad school decision, and he was taking it out on Jimin.
“I’m sorry, Jiminie. I’m kind of a mess today.”

Jimin reached across the table and patted his hand.

“I know.”

He didn’t have to agree so quickly.

“But I can’t ask Jungkook to do this, and you know it,” Namjoon reasoned.

Jungkook didn’t “get” fashion, he wore the same gray sweatpants and black hoodie every day of his life and thought the amount of money Namjoon spent on clothes was ridiculous. That, and he almost never took photos of people. When he came back from traveling, he would always have landscape after landscape and zero of people, including himself. But Jimin liked taking fashion photos, was good at it, and he did it in exchange for food because he was a student who worked part time in a bookstore slash café and was severely underpaid.

“I know. I don’t think he’d get this outfit.”

“You can’t work out in that,” Namjoon said, mimicking Jungkook’s voice.

“Well, you look amazing,” Jimin said. “Are you ready?”

Namjoon nodded. He and Jimin bussed their empty lunch trays and went outside to chase the best light.

Later that day...

Hoseok went to his sister’s for dinner after dance practice. He was exhausted after getting some pretty grueling choreography, but his sister was eight months pregnant and her husband Seokjoong was away in Germany on business, so she put Hoseok to work in the kitchen making rice and chopping vegetables while she gave orders from her seat at the table.

“Oh wow,” she blurted out, while looking at her phone.

“What?”

“Have you seen Kim Daily’s latest?”

Hoseok dropped the spoon he was using to stir the stew into the pot.

“Shit!”

“I’ll take that as a no.”

“Shit I dropped the spoon. Not shit Kim Daily. But no, I haven’t. Please tell me he’s in those awful mythography sandals again.”

“To be honest, I didn’t even notice his shoes.”

That made Hoseok lower the burner temperature and go over to look over his sister’s shoulder.

He tried not to react. He tried to come up with a critique, but the truth was Kim Daily looked really fucking good in a skirt. The best Hoseok could come up with was an awkward throat clear.
“No response? This is unlike you,” his sister said. He couldn’t see her face, but he could hear the smirk in her voice.

“It’s whatever,” Hoseok said.

Dawon cackled like a witch.

“Why do you hate him so much? You know he looks good.”

“He’s the competition.”

The real reason Hoseok didn’t like Kim Daily, or Kim Namjoon, he had learned, was because of an awkward encounter at a party a few months back where Hoseok was pretty sure that Namjoon basically rejected him for a pretty twunk, who Hoseok later found out was Jeon Jungkook, the famous speed skater. The phenom everyone was calling the next Lee Seung-hoon and who was definitely going to be in the next winter Olympics.

And Hoseok didn’t blame Namjoon really. If he could have hooked up with Jeon Jungkook he would have, too. The dude was hot. His speed skater thighs were so thick you wanted to be smothered by them.

So whatever. Hoseok had spent the rest of the party with Seokjin making fun of Yoongi for being an old man and refusing to come along because it was “too late.” And he didn’t at all pine for the man who he had been talking to about Jules Verne before another model they both kind of knew drunkenly crashed into them and started talking loudly about how she just got a job for Nylon because she had just given an editor of the magazine a blowjob in the bathroom. And then suggested that they both do the same.

Every time Hoseok thought about it, about how awkward it was to see Namjoon choke on his drink, how Hoseok did a literal spit take, his face flared up in a blush. You couldn’t ask out the guy you just spit chardonnay on no matter how good the conversation had been.

“I know you think models are super competitive, but my regulars are all really close. It’s easier if you have a support group,” Dawon said.

Hoseok knew she was right intellectually. But Hoseok felt a lot more charitable to others when he knew he was good at something. The truth was, he was pretty sure Namjoon was a better model than he was, and his insecurities always bubbled to the surface when he thought about Namjoon. So he shook his head.

“But he got a facemask sponsor over me. He had them up on his account the day after the company told me they were going in a different direction.”

The face that Dawon made was so thoroughly unimpressed that the only thing Hoseok could do was dig himself further into the hole.

“He copies me!”

“He does not copy you. I’m sure the face mask company reached out to a bunch of Instagram models. He probably just responded to them faster.”

“It’s not just that. Do you remember that pink suit I wore for my birthday photos?”

Dawon nodded.
“Well, he wore a red one like two weeks later.”

“Hoseok, those were in style for a like a minute. It’s not copying if that’s literally the trend.”

“What’s your big theory then?” Hoseok asked.

He was pretty sure Dawon didn’t know about the failed flirting and the wine-spitting. But then again, she was friendly with Seokjin, and despite the fact that Seokjin was queer as hell and so in love with Yoongi it was nauseating, he was also a horrible flirt, especially with Dawon. Hoseok knew Seokjin was one of her sources for gossip about him.

“You don’t like him because his fashion sense is more adventurous than yours and—”

“I take fashion risks!” Hoseok interrupted.

“When?”

“I’ve worn skirts!”

“Once. And you were styled by someone else.”

“Skirts don’t fit into my style.”

“That’s because your style isn’t edgy,” Dawon said.

Hoseok’s jaw dropped.

“You take that back! I’m edgy.”

“Yeezy’s not edgy.”

“I don’t only wear Yeezy.”

“You wore torn black jeans and a black t-shirt in your last post that have been in your closet for years.”

“So? I looked good.”

“You’re supposed to be sharing your fashion sense, not you.”

“But—” Hoseok started, but he didn’t really have an argument. He knew full-well that Taehyung was editing his head-to-toe Yeezy look as they spoke, and that definitely wasn’t going to pass muster with his sister.

“I’m a designer,” she said. “You can’t bullshit your way out of this.”

“Okay, maybe I’ve been a little unsure of myself lately, but I can still put together a look!”

She was staring at him in a way that looked so much like their mother, Hoseok felt like he did when he was five-years-old and in trouble for letting his mom’s parakeet out of its cage because he wanted to see it fly. The parakeet was fine, but it took about two hours to coax it off of his dad’s tall bookshelf and Hoseok wasn’t allowed near the cage without supervision for years.

Hoseok sighed.

“Do you have any ideas for me?”
“I thought you’d never ask.”

“This wouldn’t be a problem if you would just design men’s wear.”

“I have no interest in designing men’s wear and you wouldn’t want to model for me because you’re too proud for nepotism.”

That wasn’t strictly true, Hoseok would absolutely model for her and only feel a tiny bit bad about it, but for Dawon that was a compliment, so Hoseok went back to the abandoned dinner on the stove.

“Hey, you were going to say something else,” he said.

“Hmm?” Dawon asked.

“The other reason why you think I don’t like Kim Daily.”

“Oh, right. Because you clearly want to fuck his brains out.”

Hoseok dropped the spoon into the stew for a second time.

*Later that night…*

Namjoon was freezing. He knew he should have brought a scarf with him. He had the perfect one from Kapital just sitting in a bag at home waiting for colder weather.

Jungkook claimed you got used to the coldness inside the ice arena, but Namjoon didn’t want to stay there long enough to get acclimated. He was only there because he hadn’t seen Jungkook in ages, and he had sounded stressed out in the group chat they had with Jimin.

Stressed out for Jungkook meant he was actually replying to the group chat. A smiley face emoji from Jungkook to a dick joke Namjoon made was like a cry for help.

Jungkook grinned when he spotted Namjoon and skated over.

“What are you doing here?”

“You said you got done with practice at 7 and you have to eat, right?”

“Yeah.”

“Let hyung buy you dinner.”

Jungkook couldn’t say no to free food even though he made way more money than Namjoon from all his endorsements.

“Just let me change,” Jungkook said.

So Namjoon followed Jungkook to the locker room as Jungkook rinsed off and put on his standard attire of sweatpants and a hoodie. Namjoon had long ago given up the fight of trying to get Jungkook to wear anything else. He had a body that would have suited modeling, but he would have none of it. Namjoon was pretty sure he only agreed to his Puma endorsement because they gave him free clothes.
“Are you on any diet restrictions?” Namjoon asked.

“Nope, but I just burned about 5,000 calories, so I need a lot of meat.”

“Barbecue?”

Jungkook grinned. There was a place close to the training rink that they both liked, so they went in and quickly flagged the waiter over. Namjoon asked Jungkook about his training while they waited for the meat to be ready. Jungkook was silent for the first ten minutes while he crammed lettuce wraps into his mouth at a speed that Namjoon didn’t think was strictly healthy for his digestion.

“Is this an intervention?” Jungkook finally asked, after he slowed down to a reasonable pace with the pork belly.

“What?”

“You inviting me out to dinner. You don’t do this unless you think there’s something wrong.”

“An intervention is usually for, like, drinking or drugs. And I’m pretty sure the Korean Skating Union would have kicked you out if you were on drugs.”

“So why the dinner?”

Namjoon forgot sometimes that Jungkook was really perceptive.

“You seemed sad?”

“That’s it?”

“Okay, maybe I’ve been a little sad, too.”

Jungkook gave him a concerned look, which was exactly what Namjoon didn’t want to happen when he asked Jungkook to dinner. He was the one who was supposed to be comforting Jungkook about whatever was bothering him.

“I’m fine. It’s the usual, I guess,” Jungkook said.

“You guess?”

“Nationals are coming up and Junghyun is enlisted, and Jimin is acting weird, and you’re in the middle of your grad school crisis. It’s none of your faults, but it’s messing up my routine,” Jungkook let it all out in a rush.

Namjoon felt horrible. He had promised Junghyun before he left for his military service that he would help keep Jungkook grounded. Jungkook had been training since he was a kid and was so accomplished that sometimes it was easy to forget that he was still young.

“I’m sorry,” Namjoon said. “I’ve been being a bad friend.”

“I know you have your own shit,” Jungkook mumbled.

“No, no,” Namjoon interrupted. “I flaked on the pilates classes and the last, like, five workouts we had planned. I’ve been freaking out about grad school and whether or not it’s what I want to do and that’s kind of become my whole life.”

“When you put it that way, yes, you have been a bad friend.”
Namjoon stuck his tongue out at Jungkook.

“Wait,” Namjoon said. “You said Jimin had been acting weird. So you’ve noticed it too?”

Jungkook nodded.

“I haven’t seen him act this way since he was fooling around with Lee Minho back in Busan.”

“Wait. I know that name.”

“He was my biggest rival in the junior circuit.”

“And Jimin was fooling around with him behind your back?”

“I was pissed off for a while, but then I sort of realized how hard it was for Jimin to find decent guys to date. Plus, it totally threw Minho off his game. I mean, I’m not into dudes, but Jimin’s got those dick-sucking lips, you know?”

“Yeah, I—wait, so you think he’s fooling around with someone he shouldn’t?”

Jungkook shrugged.

“Same behavior.”

“But who—” And then the one person popped into his head who Jimin would want to hide from them. “You don’t think it’s J-Hope, do you?”

“J-Hope? You mean your nemesis?”

“He’s not my nemesis,” Namjoon insisted. “He just started around the same time as me and has a similar number of followers.”

“You have more and you know it,” Jungkook said around a mouthful of pork belly.

Okay, so maybe Namjoon was a little competitive with J-Hope.

The real reason Namjoon didn’t like J-Hope, whose real name was Jung Hoseok, was because of a party where Hoseok was flirting with him while they were talking about literature of all things, and then Namjoon had to be a clumsy idiot and tried to catch Eunha when she stumbled into them and Namjoon accidentally grabbed her breast. It was totally accidental, but Hoseok must have noticed and thought Namjoon was a creep, a straight creep. Shortly after the incident, he made a polite excuse and darted away, and once Namjoon made sure Eunha was drinking water, he saw Hoseok laughing with Kim Seokjin at the end of the bar. Namjoon couldn’t compete with that. Kim Seokjin was both a famous actor and the most handsome man Namjoon had ever seen in his life.

So Namjoon slunk away like a loser and went to hang out with Jungkook for the rest of the party after it was clear that Jimin had found a hook-up and was not coming back.

Hanging out with Jungkook was a great way to pass the time at an awkward party. Jungkook did impressions of all the other people there and Namjoon ended up having a good time.

But he didn’t get laid. And he didn’t get Hoseok’s number. And after that night Hoseok made it pretty clear he wasn’t interested in breathing the same air as Namjoon, and Namjoon could only assume it was because Namjoon made an ass of himself.

Hoseok couldn’t avoid Namjoon altogether, though. The Instagram modeling world was pretty
small and very competitive. Some companies had already come around and were hiring influencers with popular accounts and blogs, but you almost always had to do the leg work of pitching yourself to them. Bigger companies still preferred celebrity endorsements, and there were plenty of idols and actors to go around.

“Is J-Hope Jimin’s type?” Namjoon blurted out, after realizing he had been zoning out a little.

Jungkook smirked at him knowingly.

“Jimin usually goes for thicker guys. You know Jimin. He likes to—you know.”

Jungkook made a hugging gesture.

“Cuddle?”

“Yes,” Jungkook said, wrinkling his nose.

“You like it.”

“Yeah, well, I’m mad at him right now.”

“I’m sorry, Jungkook. I’ll talk to him.”

“No, don’t. He’s just caught up in whoever this guy is. He’ll come around after he fucks the newness out of it.”

“I’m probably going to talk to him anyway.’

“Thanks, hyung,” Jungkook said quietly.

That Saturday…

“No, no, it’s fine. I understand,” Hoseok said into his phone. “Tell Seokjin-hyung hi for me.”

He stabbed at his phone screen to hang up, which was decidedly less satisfying than slamming down a receiver.

“What’d your phone do to you?” Taehyung asked as he shuffled out of his bedroom with a big yawn.

“My phone didn’t do anything. I was supposed to get brunch with Yoongi-hyung and Seokjin-hyung, but Seokjin-hyung got a break from shooting and whisked Yoongi off for a romantic weekend on Jeju Island.”

“You sound jealous,” Taehyung said, flopping down on the sofa beside Hoseok.

“I’m not.”

“You are.”

“Fine. I’m jealous. I’m jealous and I’m lonely and I really wanted brunch.”

“I’ll get brunch with you.”

“I thought you had plans today.”
“I mean, I was going shopping and was probably going to hang out at that book café I was telling you about and look through the art books. But if you want to come with me, we can get brunch first.”

“Really?” Hoseok asked. He knew he sounded pathetic, but Taehyung didn’t seem to mind that he was pathetic.

“I mean, I assume you’re buying brunch for this poor art student?”

“Fine.”

They did have a good brunch. Neither of them were big drinkers, but they each had a bloody mary, which was making Hoseok a little fuzzy around the edges. That must have been how he ended up letting Taehyung drag him into a Visvim store.

“It’s for ideas,” Taehyung said.

But after 15 seconds, Hoseok realized that Taehyung had pulled him into the store for his own ideas. Ideas in the form of a cute guy that was looking through a rack of shirts, who threw his arms around Taehyung and definitely nuzzled his face into Taehyung’s neck. The two men spoke in low tones together while Hoseok inched closer to them—definitely not eavesdropping. Were they dating? Taehyung always told him about his dating life. Was he being so mopey and pathetic about being alone lately that Taehyung was trying to spare his feelings?

He needed to get a grip.

Taehyung’s, well, whatever he was, checked his phone and yelped about being late. He kissed Taehyung right on the lips and then rushed out of the store.

Taehyung looked stupefied for a second, smiling to himself before he finally came over to Hoseok, who was pretending to look at jackets he would never wear and couldn’t afford.

“Who was that?” Hoseok asked, trying to be nonchalant.

“Um, the guy I’ve been seeing.”

“The guy you’ve—but you were just talking about wanting boys to fall in love with you. How long has this been going on?”

Taehyung looked sheepishly at Hoseok.

“Well, it started out as a casual thing, and then, well—it’s still new. Maybe three weeks since we decided to be exclusive. And I didn’t say ‘boys.’ I said ‘boy.’”

“And you didn’t tell me?”

Hoseok was trying really hard not to raise his voice, but he was a little hurt that Taehyung kept something that big from him.

“Um, well, the thing is...”

Hoseok narrowed his eyes at Taehyung. There was some reason why he was being cagey about this guy. And then Hoseok realized that he had definitely seen him before. At that party where he spit wine on Namjoon. That was months ago.

“You know, he looked familiar,” Hoseok mused.
“Um.”

Taehyung was scratching the back of his neck awkwardly.

“What is it, Kim Taehyung? I can tell when you’re lying.”

Hoseok wasn’t actually sure he could tell when Taehyung was lying, but he was pretty sure that something was purposefully being hidden from him.

“Before you get mad, his name is Park Jimin. He’s my age, a Libra, and probably my soulmate,” Taehyung said in a rush.

“Probably? Soulmate? And you didn’t tell me about this because?” Hoseok prompted.

“Because he’s Kim Daily’s photographer,” Taehyung admitted.

Hoseok’s mouth opened, but no sound came out. That was why he had noticed him at the party. He had been talking to Namjoon. Hoseok finally found his voice.

“Top ten anime betrayals!”

“Oh come on, it’s not that big of a deal.”

“I should have known! You dragged me into Kim Daily territory. Only he would wear handkerchief shorts,” he said, waving his hand at the merchandise.

Taehyung started steering Hoseok toward the door. But Hoseok shrugged Taehyung’s arm off his shoulders. He wasn’t being that loud. It’s not like he was going to cause a scene. He kept walking toward the door because he wasn’t going to buy anything, not because Taehyung was making him.

“I was heading for the book café—it’s where Jiminnie works actually,” Taehyung explained. “But then I saw him in here—he was on his lunch break—and thought I’d surprise him.”

Hoseok nodded stiffly.

“You look mad.”

“I’m not—I’m happy for you, Taehyung. I just wish you told me sooner.”

“But you hate Kim Daily.”

“I don’t hate him, I just—he’s so—”

“Handsome. Well put together. Tall. Nice, if you would give him a chance.”

“So you’ve met him?”

“No, not yet. We were going to slowly ease the both of you into the idea. I guess we can’t do that now.”

“You’re making me feel guilty.”

“You know how you can make it up to me?”

“I’m afraid to ask.”

“Buy me hot chocolate at the book café and be nice to Jimin when I introduce you.”
“I’m always nice.”

“You promise?”

“I promise.”

That was when Hoseok’s phone pinged with an Instagram notification. So what if he had it set for Kim Daily’s posts. He needed to keep an eye on his competition. The photo his eyes were met with was not what he was expecting.

He stopped in his tracks.

“Is he making fun of me?” he blurted out.

“What?” Taehyung asked, backtracking to look at Hoseok’s phone.

Kim Daily was wearing loose shorts that might have been Yeezy and a shirt with the sleeves cut off, revealing ridiculous arms that Hoseok didn’t want to think about at all or how they could probably hold him down while he begged for it. And a bucket hat.

“He takes a photo every day. Maybe he was just working out today and Jimin wasn’t around to take a normal fashion shot. Now come on, you promised you’d be nice.”

“I’ll be nice! To Jimin. For you.”

“That’s all I ask, hyung. You can admit you want to climb Kim Daily like a tree some other time.”

Hoseok was left there sputtering as Taehyung took off toward the book café.

A few days later...

“Is this an intervention?” Jimin asked as he narrowed his eyes at Namjoon, who was standing in front of Jimin’s apartment door with a bag of kkwabaegi and two lattes.

“Why do people keep asking me that?” Namjoon asked as he pushed his way in to Jimin’s apartment.

“Other people have asked you that?”

“Jungkook. He—I had dinner with him a couple days ago.”

“Is that why you started working out again? The pic he took of you was terrible, by the way. I don’t understand why he’s so bad at taking photos of people.”

“Kind of. That’s um—also kind of why I’m here.”

“I work out! What are you implying? You come here with kkwabaegi and coffee and then tell me I’m getting fat?”

“You’re ridiculous. I brought you kkwabaegi and coffee because I know you’re studying for exams and you could probably use a snack.”

Jimin’s scolding hand-on-his-hip pose would have been more effective if his other hand wasn’t in the bag of pastries, digging around for the one with the most cinnamon sugar.
“That can’t be all.”

“Okay, it’s about Jungkook.”

Jimin’s head shot up.

“What’s wrong with Kook? Did something happen?”

“No, no,” Namjoon said, sitting down on Jimin’s ratty old armchair that was almost impossible to get up out of once in. “Nothing happened really, but maybe you’ve noticed he’s been acting a little off lately?”

Jimin was chewing on his second kkwabaegi.

“I mean, I haven’t really seen him lately, so—oh. He’s freaking out isn’t he?”

“Yeah, a little. I mean, it was me flaking on workouts and with his brother gone, and he said you haven’t been around a lot and it’s throwing him off.”

“Before nationals,” Jimin finished. “He’s been responding in our group chat. I’m such a shitty friend.”

“You’re not a shitty friend, I mean, we get caught up in our own stuff sometimes. It’s easy to forget that Jungkook really relies on his patterns, you know.”

“And he trusts us enough to let us in on them,” Jimin buried his face in his hands. “I’ve cancelled on him like five times in the last two weeks.”

“Yeah, he said, um, he said that he hadn’t see you for awhile.”

“Well now I need these to stress eat,” Jimin replied, reaching into the bag again.

Namjoon cleared his throat.

“Wait, there’s more?” Jimin asked.

“No! I mean, not really.”

“Out with it Kim Namjoon.”

“Jungkook just said that, um, when it has happened before that you’ve bailed on him, uh, it’s because you were dating someone.”

Jimin groaned.

“I told Taehyung this wouldn’t work.”

“That what wouldn’t work? Wait. Who’s Taehyung?”

The name sounded familiar, like maybe Jimin had brought him up before, but Namjoon couldn’t quite recall when or in what context.

“You better sit down for this,” Jimin said.

“I’m am sitting. I’m in your chair that tries to suck you into a different dimension if you try to get out. Who’s Taehyung?”
Namjoon was actually relieved to hear the name Taehyung come out of Jimin’s mouth, because at least it wasn’t J-Hope.

“Before you get mad. Remember that party we went to a few months ago? The big industry one that Kim Seokjin was at?”

Namjoon had to resist facepalming.

“Uh, yeah, I remember that one I think.”

“Well, I met Taehyung that night. We just had a connection, you know? He’s has a beautiful spirit. He’s an art student and he likes to come to the book café and read the art books and spends my lunch break with me.”

Jimin was beaming as he talked about Taehyung, like a living, breathing heart-eyes emoji.

“That’s great, Jiminie,” Namjoon said.

“Yeah, it’s—we tried to keep it casual for awhile because of, um, complications. But a few weeks ago, we decided that we were being stupid and letting other people dictate how we wanted to live our lives.”

“Complications? Is that why you didn’t tell me or Jungkook about him? What kind of complications?”

The only things Namjoon could think of was that Taehyung was the son of some prominent family or that he was married. What else could be so big that Jimin wouldn’t talk about him to his best friends?

“Promise you won’t get mad.”

Namjoon nodded solemnly.

“I promise.”

“He’s best friends with J-Hope. He’s his photographer.”

“What?”

That wasn’t what Namjoon was expecting at all.

“Well, after that party, you seemed a little, uh, fixated on him.”

“Fixated?”

“And it’s possible that he started getting a little competitive with you, too.”

“I knew he didn’t like me,” Namjoon said.

It was one thing to suspect. It was a whole other thing to hear. Hoseok had totally misinterpreted the situation and thought Namjoon was a creep, and now Namjoon kind of wanted to rub his higher follower count in his face. But he couldn’t. Because he was best friends with Jimin’s boyfriend and Jimin would literally kill him.

“Well, anyway, we were going to kind of ease you both into it,” Jimin said. “But, he found out and now you found out. So, surprise, I’m dating J-Hope’s best friend and kind of maybe falling in love
with him, and they live together, which means J-Hope is going to be in my life, so you’re just going to have to quit being an idiot and deal with it. Can you do that? Can you be a grown-up?”

Namjoon glared at Jimin.

“I was supposed to be here chastising you about Jungkook. Why do I feel like I’m 10-years-old and being scolded for breaking my mom’s favorite teapot instead?”

“I thought you did that the last time you went home.”

“Oh, yeah, different teapot.”

“Well, if you can help me get Jungkook back on track, I can deal with this,” Namjoon finally said.

“Good.”

“So this is why you liked J-Hope’s selfie with his photographer. You were just liking the photo of your boyfriend.”

Jimin nodded.

“Can you show me the photo again? I don’t remember what he looked like.”

“Where’s your phone?”

“In my bag by the door. I’m not getting out of this chair without a prying bar.”

“The chair isn’t that bad.”

“It really is.”

But Jimin pulled out his phone anyway.

“Holy shit,” Jimin said, looking down at the screen.

“What?”

“Nothing. It’s fine. Everything’s fine. I’ll just—the photo with Taehyung.”

“Show me what you’re holy shitting.”

“You asked for it,” Jimin said, passing over his phone.

It was open to what must have been a new post from J-Hope.


J Hope looked sexy. His outfit was simple, really, just ankle-length grey trousers that were pleated and would have looked horrible on Namjoon, along with a beautiful black cashmere sweater that was tucked in with a belt. He was wearing black loafers and carrying a clutch of some sort. But he looked elegant. Occasionally he modeled suits, but he mostly stuck to more street wear, which he wore well, but when he cleaned up, he cleaned up nice.

“He tagged Mejiwoo in the caption. Doesn’t she just do women’s wear?”

“You of all people. Clothes aren’t gendered.”
“That’s not what I meant. He looks good.”

“I’m glad you’re big enough to admit that. Taehyung does good work.”

“He does,” Namjoon agreed. “You know I’m happy for you. I’ll deal with the J-Hope thing.”

“That’s all I ask,” Jimin replied.

_The next day...._

Hoseok was sitting at the kitchen island, eating a late dinner while Facetiming with his sister, mostly because she wanted to whine about how swollen her feet were. Even though Hoseok had just gotten home from a killer double dance practice and could barely walk, he managed to nod and smile appropriately. Hoseok loved his sister, he did, but he couldn’t help but wonder if his brother-in-law specifically timed his work travel for the third trimester just to avoid hearing Dawon ask if she was getting too fat every five minutes.

After he got a very detailed account of Dawon’s heartburn, she asked about his latest Instagram post.

“It’s the most liked post I’ve ever done. Those trousers you gave me were a hit.”

“I told you! You didn’t have to tag me, but I appreciate it.”

“I always tag the designer, and I’m pretty sure most of my followers are women. Do you think they’d buy pants that a man was modeling?”

“Women aren’t as weird about that kind of thing as men are. I mean, I designed it to look like men’s wear.”

Dawon giggled.

“What?”

“Someone commented ‘Thanks for a break from the Yeezy.’”

“Hey! I’m trying to get an sponsor here.”

“And you’re lazy.”

“Fine, and I’m lazy. This was good, though. Maybe I should try to dress up my t-shirt repertoire. I got this great Basquiat print t-shirt the other day and I have a denim jacket I don’t think I’ve—Dawon? Are you still there? You’re suspiciously quiet.”

“Have you checked Instagram lately?”

“I got a notification a minute ago, but we’re talking so—”

“No, no, go check.”

So Hoseok opened Instagram. And promptly dropped his phone. He heard Dawon’s voice shrieking with laughter from the floor.

“I’m guessing you saw it,” she said, when he switched back to FaceTime.
“He’s in a corset.”

“I know.”

Kim Daily wasn’t just in a corset. He was in a black corset that was layered over a white dress shirt that was casually unbuttoned to the top of the corset. And he paired that with black, flowy wide-legged trousers. He had a black choker around his neck that had a metal loop attached to it like it was waiting for a very big leash. The worst part, though, the absolute worst part, was that he was sitting in a chair with his legs spread wide, winking at the camera with his chin resting on his hand. He looked like sin. He looked worse than sin. He was the one in the corset and the choker but he looked like he could and would not hesitate to wreck you.

And, god, Hoseok wanted to be wrecked by him.

“Kim Corset—I mean Daily. He’s in a—fuck.”

Hoseok was embarrassingly flustered.

“Like I said, you want to fuck him,” Dawon said.

Hoseok shook his head while his sister laughed at him some more.

“I don’t want to—okay fine! Fine. I want to fuck him. I want to untie that corset with my teeth. I want to pull on that stupid ring hanging off his neck while I ride his dick. Is that what you want to hear?”

“I mean, not in graphic detail, but—“

“I knew it!” Taehyung’s voice came from behind Hoseok.

“How long have you been standing there, Tae?”

“Long enough, my friend. Long enough.”

Dawon was gasping for breath she was laughing so hard.

“I swear if this triggers me into labor, I’m going to kill you. Seokjoong won’t be back for another week.”

“Well maybe you should be nicer to me,” Hoseok said, trying to pretend like he wasn’t blushing like a tomato.

“I’m hanging up now. But come by the shop tomorrow. I have a denim jacket for you that you’ll love.”

“Thanks, noona.”

“Love you. Bye, Tae-Tae!” she said before hanging up, though she was still snickering.

“Well, well, well,” Taehyung said. “I knew it. I knew you didn’t hate Namjoon. It was just a guess when I said you wanted to climb him like a tree, but you do. This is amazing. I have to tell Jiminie. We can double date.”

“No!” Hoseok shouted. “You can’t tell Jimin.”

“I already texted him.”
“Tae!”

“He’s my soulmate, sorry. He told me he loved me last night and promised no take-backs. You’ve been demoted. And before you get mad, I know you still call Yoongi your best friend instead of me.”

“But Seokjin’s his number 1, so I’m always a pathetic bridesmaid.” Hoseok shook his head. “You have to make Jimin promise not to say anything to Namjoon.”

“Why? You’re clearly attracted to him. And clearly lonely. I’ve only talked to him once, but he was really nice, and he’s Jimin’s best friend, and Jimin is a good judge of character.”

“But what if he’s not interested in me,” Hoseok finally interrupted.

He didn’t tell Taehyung that he had first-hand evidence that Namjoon, in fact, wasn’t. And the idea of being rejected again, was too much to bear. But Taehyung was already buried in his phone, frantically texting Jimin.

That Friday...

It was supposed to be a small party, at least, that’s what Jimin told Namjoon when he invited him over to his place. Namjoon only accepted the invitation to the party because Jimin had just grilled him about J-Hope and whether or not he found him attractive. And Namjoon was so flustered by the conversation that he had to get away from Jimin. At that point, he probably would have agreed to participate in a bank heist if it meant ending the conversation.

Jemin also assured him that it was mostly his student friends, so Namjoon didn’t have to dress to impress. Even so, he changed clothes five times before he settled on a Visvim tunic that he was still paying off on his credit card with basic jeans and boots.

He was only about twenty minutes late, which he thought was fair given how often Jimin was late.

“Hey! You came,” Jimin said, knocking into Namjoon a little when he ushered him into his apartment. Jimin was already tipsy.

“Hi, Jimin,” Namjoon replied, ruffling his hair. “Don’t sound so surprised. You kind of bullied me into coming.”

“I did not!” Jimin huffed. “Oh hey, before you get a drink, I want you to say hi to Taehyung.”

Namjoon had officially met Taehyung for the first time a couple days ago, but it had been when Namjoon was picking up Jimin to go a pilates class and Taehyung had been leaving, so they hadn’t said more than a few words. So Namjoon let Jimin drag him to the balcony. But as soon as Jimin opened the door, another man—that might have been Taehyung—darted out, and Jimin pushed Namjoon in the back hard. Namjoon stumbled out onto the balcony. Before he could regain his balance fully, he heard the door slide shut and the flip of a lock.

“What the fuck?” Namjoon shouted at the door where Jimin was standing with a sheepish look on his face.

That’s when he noticed J-Hope standing on the balcony.

“Oh, hi,” Hoseok said.
“Hi,” Namjoon replied awkwardly.

So this was why Jimin insisted on Namjoon coming to the party. He should have known that Jimin had an ulterior motive. He might have gotten Namjoon to confess not only that he thought Hoseok was attractive but that maybe some of his competitiveness was because he liked the other man.

“Well this is awkward.”

“Yeah.”

“So, you’re friends with Jimin?”

“Mmm hmm,” Namjoon answered.

“Cool,” Hoseok said.

“Taehyung seems nice,” Namjoon offered.

“Well, he’s great.” Then Hoseok snorted, “Can you believe the two of them have been together since that awful party?”

Namjoon was a little surprised that Hoseok called the party awful. He had left with a drama star.

“You thought it was awful?”

“Um, yeah? I was all awkward around you and then you hooked up with Jeon Jungkook.”

“When I what?” Namjoon exclaimed.

“At that party?” Hoseok said, looking confused. “We were flirting—at least, I thought we were flirting, and then I accidentally spit my wine on you and you looked mortified.”

“You spit wine on me?”

“Are you kidding me? I got it all over your shirt!”

“I honestly didn’t notice. I spill stuff on myself all the time. I thought you thought I was a creep because I accidentally grabbed Eunha’s breast when I was trying to steady her.”

“I didn’t see you do that,” Hoseok said, shaking his head. “She was mess, but I wouldn’t have thought—I mean, you don’t seem like the boob-grab type. We were talking about women being underrepresented in science fiction. You posted a Lee Jeong-hee quote the other day.”

Namjoon was trying to process the fact that this whole time Hoseok hadn’t noticed him accidentally groping Eunha. And that Hoseok looked at his Instagram account enough to read his quotes. And that he knew who Lee Jeong-hee was.


“But he grabbed your ass.”

“He made me start working out with him because he said my butt was too flat to be a model. He was making sure I hadn’t skipped leg day.”

“Leg day?” Hoseok asked weakly.
“Yeah, I don’t know why he likes working out with me because he can lift three times as much as me and I’m shitty at spotting.”

“Did it work?” Hoseok asked. “I mean—oh god, I didn’t mean to ask that out loud.”

“My ass is still flat, but my thighs are pretty ripped,” Namjoon answered honestly.

“Oh. Oh I, um, that’s nice. For your thighs, I mean.”

Hoseok was not-so-subtly checking out Namjoon’s legs.

“So you were flirting with me then? I didn’t get that wrong?” Namjoon asked.

“Yes, I was flirting with you. And then I thought I made an ass of myself, so I dashed.”

Namjoon was shaking his head.

“But you left the party with Kim Seokjin. I saw you leave with him!”

“Seokjin-hyung? Oh god no. No no no. For one, Yoongi would literally kill me. For another, He is so not my type. He laughs at his own jokes and sleeps in Super Mario pajamas.”

“Yoongi?”

“My be—one of my best friends. Seokjin-hyung’s boyfriend. Of like forever. They have a dog and two sugar gliders together. Yoongi wears matching Princess Peach pajamas that Jin got him for his birthday. I mean, I did leave the party with him, but I drove his drunk ass home and helped Yoongi pour him into bed and then went home and jerked off. Uh, I mean—possibly jerked off.”

“So that’s why you’ve been avoiding me?”

“Um, I guess. I thought you thought I was an idiot. And if I didn’t distance myself a little, then I’d make an ass of myself in front of you again. It sounds stupid when I say it out loud.”

“For the record, I didn’t think you were an idiot at all. I’ve met a lot of models since I started doing this, and you’re way smarter than any of them. Eunha’s sweet, but she thought the Yi Mun-yol novel I was reading on set was about making money.”

Hoseok snorted.

“So, do you get a lot of other modeling jobs, then?” Hoseok asked.

Namjoon couldn’t tell if he was curious or jealous.

“I’m starting to get a few more sponsors, but it’s a lot of work to pitch yourself, you know? Eunha and I worked together and did some cross-posts with a friend of hers who wanted to build their photography portfolio.”

“Oh!” Hoseok said. “I think I remember those. You were in Saint Laurent, right?”

“You remember that?” Namjoon blurted out.

“Um, I don’t know how to tell you this, but you’re really hot. And those jeans you were wearing? With the leather? You should wear those, like, all the time.”

“I, um, thank you,” Namjoon said, flustered, flattered that Hoseok paid that much attention to his
“Well, it’s true,” Hoseok said, smiling.

Namjoon melted a little. Hoseok had a great smile. Namjoon remembered the way he had smiled when they were talking at the party, when Namjoon thought he would at least get his number, if not a date.

“I don’t know if Taehyung has told you anything about me, I mean, through Jimin,” Namjoon started.

“That you don’t like me?” Hoseok offered.

“Well, yeah,” Namjoon said, not expecting Hoseok to be so blunt. “I don’t not like you, for the record.”

“I don’t not like you either, I mean, if that’s what you heard from Jimin. I just—I’d like to go back to that party and get a do-over.”

“Okay,” Namjoon said, stretching out his hand. “I’m Kim Namjoon. I’m not a creep who gropes women.”

Hoseok shook his hand and shot him another smile.

“I’m Hoseok. And I’m not a spitter.” Then he winked. “I’m more of a swallower.”

Namjoon was about to flirt back when there was a knock on the glass door. Namjoon turned around to see Taehyung and Jimin staring at them.

“They’re not kissing yet! What are we doing wrong?” he heard Taehyung ask.

“We should have locked them in the closet,” Jimin replied.

“How would that have helped?”

“Namjoon-hyung isn’t into PDA, and they’re outside,” Jimin explained.

Namjoon felt his cheeks heating.

“I thought Taehyung was bad and now there’s two of them,” Hoseok whispered.

There was a slight tone of fear in his voice, and Namjoon wondered if the world was ready for the combined power of Taehyung and Jimin. Namjoon quickly ran through possible scenarios that would end up with Jimin agreeing to open the door.

“I think they’re serious,” he finally said.

“I’m willing to resort to bribery,” Hoseok said. “It’s getting chilly out here.”

“I don’t think I can afford Jimin’s demands,” Namjoon replied.

“Any blackmail opportunities?”

“Or, you know, we could,” Namjoon said, looking down at his feet.

“Could what?”
“Kiss. I mean—just a little, to get them to let us back in. We’re only three floors up, but I don’t feel comfortable with my ability to scale a building and that’s the only other plausible course of action.”

Hoseok laughed, but then he stopped himself and bit his lip.

“Are you serious?”

“Yeah,” Namjoon said. “First kisses are always awkward, and we’ve already established that we’re both awkward, so we might as well, um, get it over with? I mean, not that I assume that there would be any kisses in the future. Namjoon, stop talking.”

Hoseok was laughing at him now.

“You’re adorable,” he said.

And then he was grabbing Namjoon’s tunic and pulling him in and, before Namjoon quite realized what was happening, pressing his lips softly against his. Namjoon barely had time to enjoy the pressure, to reposition his lips, to tug a little on Hoseok’s lower lip, before Hoseok was pulling away too quickly.

“Oh,” Namjoon whispered.

He could feel his face getting warm again, but before he could process how Hoseok tasted a little like peppermint, the door slid open and Jimin was pouncing on him.

“I knew it would work! Double date next Friday!”

“We’re not dat—next Friday is Jungkook’s prelim heat.”

“We can all go together!” Jimin said brightly. “Do you like speed skating, Hoseok-hyung?”

“He’d be delighted,” Taehyung answered for Hoseok.

Hoseok met Namjoon’s eye.

“My place is empty and just around the corner. We can, um, talk? Away from these two barnacles,” Hoseok offered.

He was peeling Taehyung’s arms from around his waist as he spoke.

“That sounds great,” Namjoon said.


“This is what you wanted!” Hoseok exclaimed.

Taehyung and Jimin shared a conspiratory look, like they were having a silent conversation. Namjoon didn’t want to know what that look was about, so he used the opportunity to get out of Jimin’s grip and followed Hoseok into the apartment.

“Have fun, hyungs!” Jimin and Taehyung called after them.

An hour later...
“We should—go slow?” Namjoon asked breathlessly as Hoseok pushed him back into the couch cushions and climbed onto his lap.

They had actually been talking, but then the conversation turned to their fashion posts and Hoseok blurted out how hot he thought Namjoon looked in the skirt and then Namjoon complimented his legs, and somehow they started making out.

Namjoon was a fucking amazing kisser. He didn’t just try to cram his tongue down Hoseok’s throat the way a lot of guys did. He took his time, pushing in, teasing, pulling back. He was unpredictable and it was driving Hoseok crazy in the best way. And his lips—Namjoon’s lips were so full and soft it was like kissing a pillow, only a warm and responsive pillow that moaned a little when Hoseok rolled his hips.

“Slow, right? Uh huh,” Hoseok said. “I can—fuck. Do you have any idea how good you looked in that fucking corset?”

He moved to Namjoon’s neck, to nibble a little, not hard enough to leave a mark.

“Based on the creeps in my messages, yeah, I have an idea,” Namjoon said.

Hoseok pulled back abruptly.

“Sorry, I—” he started.

“Not you! You’re not a creep. I didn’t meant it that way! I—I want you to think I look good.”

“Yeah?”

“Yeah.”

“But we should—yeah,” Hoseok agreed as a climbed off Namjoon’s lap. “Slower. Right. I keep forgetting that just this morning I thought you hated me.”

“I thought you hated me.”

“I admit, I’m a little bit competitive,” Hoseok confessed. “You have a bigger fan base than me. But it mostly just pushed me to want to do better. It’s more work than I thought it would be.”

“I started before you did,” Namjoon replied. “It didn’t take you as long to get the number of followers you have as it did me.”

“You’re just saying that to be nice,” Hoseok said.

“Am not,” Namjoon said, as he brought his hand up to cup Hoseok’s chin, pulling him back in for another deep, lingering kiss that was making it really hard to keep thoughts of “go slow” in Hoseok’s head.

Namjoon pulled away and rested his forehead against Hoseok’s for a breath.

“I get it, though,” Namjoon added as he pulled away. “I haven’t really decided if I want to do this full-time, you know? It’s a competitive industry. I’m just starting to get some sponsors, and I can see how it could pay off. But you have to sell yourself to sponsors and do a lot of networking, which is not my strong suit.”

“I just started doing fashion posts because my sister’s a designer and she has all these sets and it was fun. But it messes with my confidence some days. And I have a day job that I really like. I
don’t want to give that up for anything, even if the money ended up being better.”

“What do you do?”

“I’m a dancer.”

Hoseok heard Namjoon swallow.

“A dancer?” he squeaked. “What kind of dancer.”

“Street,” Hoseok said. “I work for an entertainment company. I do a lot of backup dancing for idol groups.”

“Oh wow. That’s really, um—”

“I know what you’re thinking and, yes, I’m flexible. And I have really good balance.”

Hoseok liked the way Namjoon was looking at him, biting his lip so hard his dimples appeared. But Hoseok didn’t want to seem like he was that easy.

“So what’s your deal? You don’t model full time?”

“No, I actually just finished a second bachelor’s degree and got accepted to graduate school in the fall. The idea of being a poor grad student though, it’s—well, like I said, I’m torn.”

“Second bachelor’s?”

“The first was in literature, but I did a semester in Australia, and it turns out I really like marine biology, so I just kind of tacked on a second degree.”

“In a totally different field. Wow. That’s—wow.”

Namjoon looked sheepish.

“I don’t usually tell people all that.”

“Why not? You should be proud of what you’ve accomplished.”

“They think I’m wasting my life trying to model. I’ve gotten it from every single member of my family, most of my professors, and even one of my professor’s mothers once. Long story.”

“But you’re good at modeling, and you like it.”

“I do.”

“And my sister thinks you’re good. She only does women’s wear but she knows good modeling.”

“It’s hard, though, you know. Having so many followers,” Namjoon admitted.

“For you, too? You seem so sure of yourself and your style.”

“I mean, I kind of am. I love fashion and I’ve mostly figured out what I like and what works for me. But the commitment to taking a photo every day means I have some bad ones. And if you scroll back too far, there are some really unfortunate choices.”

“The overalls with the Timberlands,” Hoseok blurted out.
“What! No! I liked that look. And that was like last week.”

“I’m sorry,” Hoseok said. “Oh my god, don’t hate me. It just—the way you rolled them up made your ridiculously long—and gorgeous I might add—legs look short.”

“It’s okay,” Namjoon said. “I’m not super fond of your oversized t-shirts. But that’s mostly because they hide your ridiculously gorgeous body.”

He looked Hoseok up and down while licking his lips. Hoseok bit his own lip and looked away. He always had a hard time taking compliments, but compliments from Namjoon made him even more embarrassed somehow.

“You know what we should do?” Hoseok asked, trying to take the focus off him.

“What?”

“Take a photo together.”

Namjoon grinned.

“You mean like I did with Eunha?”

“I mean, I’m not trying to steal your followers or anything. I just—we’d look good together.”

He couldn’t help himself and leaned to press his lips against Namjoon’s again. This time he deepened the kiss, parting his lips in invitation. Namjoon didn’t disappoint. The kiss was on this side of filthy when Namjoon moaned and Hoseok pulled away, alarm bells of “slow” going off in his head.

“That’s a brilliant idea,” Namjoon said, sounding slightly out of breath. “Do you want to be in a Kim Daily post?”

“If you want.”

“I want,” Namjoon replied. “But I always take my photos the same day I post them, so that means you’ll have to see me tomorrow.”

“I was kind of hoping you’d stay over,” Hoseok said. “We can go slow! I just—it’s getting late, and I don’t think I’ll be done making out with you any time soon.”

He hooked his arms around Namjoon’s neck, swallowing Namjoon’s murmured agreement.

Hoseok didn’t have anything to match Namjoon’s expensive Visvim tunic for a photo, but maybe he didn’t need to.

Maybe being himself would be enough.

End Notes

Title from "Vogue" by Madonna. (I had to.)
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