the way to my heart

by 4419

Summary

They're making kimchi jjigae today. Yunseong announced that last meeting, but he announced it again today. Looking at the amount of ingredients placed on top of the counter, it's already obvious. Yunseong just likes making things clear; Jungmo is annoyed he's keeping a list of facts he's found out about Yunseong.

Notes

why did i actually write this,
either way, enjoy!
hwangmogu shall rise.

(watch out for errors, as always><)

See the end of the work for more notes

"We can't keep doing this." Wonjin announced, exasperatedly, as he looks at the unwashed dishes with ramen, instant rice, and kimchi stains in the sink. Jungmo stares at him from the dinner table boredly. The younger continues to whine as he sits across from him. "We have to learn how to cook." He finishes, looking at the older with determined eyes.
Jungmo shrugs. He doesn't really care much, as long as he can eat and live for the sake of surviving the last two years of college, he's good. "Whatever you want, Wonnie." Wonjin scoffs, knowing full well Jungmo's going to be so laid-back about this.

"Yes, you're coming with me."

Jungmo raised his brows, "Where exactly?"

That's how his life ended.

No, that's how he ended up behind a stainless steel counter with cooking appliances and a few ingredients (which he thinks they'll use today) on top of it. Along with a stove top, and an oven underneath. This is what Wonjin was referring to: a cooking class. They applied for the basic one.

"We only need to learn how to cook real food. We don't need to learn how to feed ten people, and how to cook like a five star chef, hyung." Jungmo, still, doesn't care.

It's until they hear the doors closed and someone clapping in front that Jungmo stopped staring at the variety of vegetables on the counter. "Okay people, welcome." Jungmo stares at the boy in front, much longer than anyone will, actually. The others just glanced at him then went back to talking.

"Shh, hush hush. I'm Hwang Yunseong, your basic cooking teacher." That's the name of the class, this Yunseong guy probably is not basic at cooking at all if he's teaching them, Jungmo's mind comprehends.

Yunseong tells them they're not going to cook today. Jungmo wonders why the hell did they call this cooking class if they won't be cooking, but Wonjin tells him they don't even know how to clean the dishes properly so maybe not cooking on the first day is okay. Jungmo rolls his eyes at his best friend being excited for what he signed them up to. Yunseong instructs them to clean the vegetables. "Make sure not to over wash them, please. It will get soggy." He explains, voice loud enough for the eight pairs to understand him even with the room being a bit bigger. While telling them to do things, Yunseong is also executing it in front. Jungmo wonders how he's able to multitask. (Jungmo should stop wondering about this Yunseong guy.)

"Okay, now onto chopping!" He chirps, lips forming a small smile when he catches Jungmo looking at him. "Be careful with the knives." Yunseong adds after a beat. Jungmo knows it's a caution for everyone, but his tiny brain likes to think Yunseong said it only for him.

"You're not doing anything, hyung." Wonjin calls him out. He looks at the younger in surprise, "Oh, yeah."

His best friend looks at him questioningly. "Is everything alright? Do you need help? You can call Yunseong ssi, you know."

Jungmo waves his hand that's holding the chives, "No, no. I'm fine. I just...spaced out."
Wonjin snickers, going back to chopping the carrot on his chopping board. "Of course. That's your specialty, hyung."

The class ended without them actually cooking anything. Jungmo wants to ask why, but he feels like he won't be able to speak properly in front of Yunseong. He doesn't know why, but he feels like it might happen. Yunseong did say they're cooking kimchi jjigae next week, so that's exciting.

"See you next week." Yunseong waves his hands at them as one by one of his students exits the room. As they were about to go, Wonjin turns to Yunseong. Great, Jungmo thinks. This is what he's worried about.

"Yunseong ssi!" Wonjin cheers when the two of them stand in front of Yunseong's counter.

"Please, call me Yunseong." The teacher said, and again, Jungmo's brain tells him Yunseong looked at him a second too long.

"Okay, Yunseong." His best friend casually says, eyes shining— it seems like he already admires this guy. "I was wondering why you look so young to be a teacher."

The guy laughs, covering his mouth with the back of his hand that Jungmo, weirdly, finds endearing. He shakes his head lightly, burying the thought away. "No, Wonjinie. I'm working part time. I'm probably just a few years older than you."

Wonjin nods after this, continuing to ask Yunseong all the things he's been curious about since the start of the class. Jungmo would say he didn't listen, just looked at his phone for the past fifteen minutes, but really, he's learned that Yunseong loves to cook. His father is a chef, and his mother loves cooking for them even when they have servants at home. Rich, Jungmo mentally notes. Yunseong is the same age as him, but a few months younger. He's learned a lot of things about the other, but Jungmo labels them as useless.

Wonjin finally decided to bid Yunseong good bye after he noticed everyone except for the three of them are the ones left. "Okay, hyung, see you next week!" He's comfortable enough to use hyung at Yunseong, huh.

"You, too!" Yunseong waves at them, grabbing a clean cloth to start swiping his counter. "Get home safe." Yunseong shifts his stare at Jungmo and smiles. Jungmo nods before following Wonjin out.

The rest of the week became a blur to Jungmo. His classes weren't all that interesting anyway. It's never been. But what made him mad is how much he looks forward to Saturday. Saturday, the day of the cooking class. With Yunseong. Yunseong is also the reason of his frustration. He's met the
guy one time. He's been in the same room with him (with fifteen other people) for only three hours. But he can't seem to stop thinking about him. Jungmo is mad, it's the first time he's looking forward for the week to end.

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"It's pretty simple." Yunseong tells the class, grabbing the ceramic bowl to move it to the side, making silent clank. "You can put anything you want in a kimchi jjigae. I put some sausages, ham, and spam, also cheese, so you would be able to choose which of those you'd like to put into your dish. Let's start."

He instructs them to chop the vegetables first, put it in a plate or separate bowl—whatever they can get their hands to. Yunseong then proceeds to tell them how to make the soup, "Make sure you taste if it's too bland, too sweet, too spicy, too anything while cooking!" Jungmo nods to no one, taking this cooking thing a bit seriously than he'd expected. He would look at Wonjin beside him to copy what he's doing, or look at Tony from the other counter to see if he's not the only one ruining the easiest dish on the menu.

The soup begins to boil, they already put the chopped vegetables, and Jungmo added some tofu, ham and sausages. He grabs a spoon, blowing the soup before taking a sip. Too sweet, he recognizes. Jungmo was about to grab the salt and gochu powder when he notices Wonjin coughing.

The older smirks, "Too spicy?" Wonjin coughs a bit louder for emphasis, that Jungmo tried not to laugh. But he failed. Instead, he laughs silently, shyly covering his hand to avoid unnecessary looks. He keeps on laughing as Wonjin coughs for his life, eyes crescent and nose scrunching, cutely.

What he doesn't know is that, as he's laughing at his friend's misfortune, someone in front is looking at him fondly that the block of cheese in front of him might actually melt.

The next week went slow, Jungmo didn't know he's capable of finishing five reports in one week, but he did it. He hasn't sleep in three days, the good thing is that their next cooking lesson isn't as tough. It's annoying that Wonjin couldn't go because he has a group meeting to attend to, so he's left alone in their shared counter.
Right now, they're chopping vegetables for bibimbap. Yunseong told them a good way to chop it, "Thin and long, unlike how we would chop them for kimchi jjigae, remember that."

"No Wonjinie today?" A voice speaks to Jungmo as he was chopping the carrots. Jungmo looks up to see Yunseong watching him slice the vegetable, across from him.

"Um, no. He's busy with school stuff." Jungmo mentally praises himself for not stuttering. It still bothers him that he thinks about Yunseong this way—whatever way that is. Come to think of it, Jungmo never had a proper conversation with Yunseong. It's always Wonjin and Yunseong, and his best friend asking him about what Yunseong just asked him. Wonjin's the channel for the two of them, Jungmo concludes.

"Hmm, okay." Yunseong replies, eyes glued on Jungmo's hands. "That's not how you should do it." He continues before walking around to stand beside Jungmo. "May I?"

Jungmo blinks twice, confused as to what Yunseong meant. "The knife. May I teach you how to do it?" The older nods dumbly, handing Yunseong the knife, not moving an inch to make room for the younger.

"Uh, can you, uh, move?" Yunseong doesn't quite know what to do with his free hand so he settles for flipping it anywhere between the two of them for Jungmo to get the message.

"Oh...yeah." Jungmo exhales, silently moving to the side.

"You're slicing it long, but not thin. What you're doing is actually good for kimbap, not bibimbap. We'll learn how to make that soon..." Yunseong explains as he chops the remaining carrots before moving on to the onions. Jungmo notices how serious Yunseong gets when he starts cooking, even just the preparation of it that he couldn't help but ask, "What made you love cooking so much that you wanted to work here?"

Yunseong's chopping halts, and he looks at Jungmo in the eye to smile. "You know my dad's a chef, right? I just thought he looked so cool teaching people how to cook, plus he really makes delicious foods. I want to cook delicious foods for others, too."

"If I may ask, what's your father's name?"

"Oh," Jungmo sees Yunseong contemplates, that he's about to tell him it's alright if he doesn't but the younger continued, "Hwang Minhyun."

Jungmo chokes on air for a while, Yunseong rushing to help him with anything, but Jungmo waves his hands in front of him. "It's fine, it's fine. I'm fine." He regains his posture after a few seconds, turning to look at Yunseong with amused eyes. "You didn't tell me you're a son of a three star chef."

Yunseong laughs shyly, scratching the back of his head. "I thought it was obvious. You know, he owns this culinary school. I work here, part time. Hwang."
Jungmo shrugs, "I don't know anything about this place. Wonjin just signed us up one day, and now we're here." He raised both his hands to emphasize his words. He sees Yunseong nods, and he's not sure if he heard a *I'm glad* but maybe it's his delusion again.

They forgot about the on going class that Yunseong had to apologize to the rest before continuing to teach them, but not before giving Jungmo a shy smile and muttering an *I'm sorry*. Jungmo smiles brightly, telling him it's okay.

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In the past month, Jungmo thinks he's been so into the cooking class that he didn't realized it's been two months since it started. After the bibimbap class, Yunseong has been talking to him often. He would walk around the class to *supervise*, he jokes at Jungmo one time, earning a knowing glance from Wonjin (that he seriously tried to ignore). Sometimes, Yunseong would help Tony, the other struggling student on this class apart from him. Jungmo realizes how much he enjoys seeing Yunseong be in his own world.

As he's starting to feel and accept that he is, in fact, falling for the boy, something came up. Of course it had to be the time when he's finally giving in. They're about to start cooking tteokbokki that Wonjin whines, "Isn't tteokbokki, technically, a street food? Why make it at home?" Jungmo tells him, it's better than going out of the house.

But the thing is, Yunseong is in front, and he's not alone. There's a cute guy smiling beside him, trying to distract Yunseong from teaching the class. The cute guy's name is Donghyun, or as Yunseong likes to call him *Keumdongie*. Now, Jungmo is petty. But he knows when to be and not to be. He knows he can be petty when Hyeongjun steals one of his gummy bears, so he'll steal three from his pack. If Wonjin insults him about his *old, deteriorating body*, he'll make sure to shower longer the next day when Wonjin has 8 am classes. He knows that now is not the right time to be petty, because Yunseong can do whatever he wants. Are they together? Absolutely not. (but Jungmo has been having dreams about him and the younger cuddling, while Yunseong kisses his nose. Honestly, utterly, annoying.)

He starts by (aggressively) turning the stove on, making Wonjin flinch beside him. He continues by taking the bowl, putting enough water into it, and Wonjin's sure the water is already boiling just by how his best friend looks at it. Jungmo continues to do everything, but with much more strength than Wonjin thought his best friend has.

"Will I be able to taste the food, hyung?" Jungmo scowls absentmindedly when he hears Donghyun's *calm, sweet voice*.

He hears Yunseong laugh, "Aren't you here for the food?"
Jungmo mutes them after that, focusing more on the dish instead and tried talking to a few of the students like Minkyu behind him. He's always so neat. His counter looks so professional, even his plating looks good. Jungmo turns around completely after setting the stove into low heat, "Do you want to be a chef someday, Minkyu-ya?"

Minkyu shakes his head, "No, hyung. I just want to cook nice food for myself for when I live alone."

"Preparing for the single life, I see." Jungmo jokes, earning a sincere laugh plus reddening ears from Minkyu.

Yunseong wouldn't say he's watching Minkyu and Jungmo's interaction, but Donghyun likes saying the truth. "You like him? The cute guy in front?"

"No."

Donghyun sighs, rolling his eyes. Yunseong didn't see it, but he knows Donghyun is tired of being best friends with him lately. "You keep denying when I know his name is Koo Jungmo, a few months older than you, and was only dragged into this class because of his best friend. Hyung, you literally talk about him every time we're together."

"I talk about him, doesn't mean I like him."

"Keep telling yourself that, idiot." Donghyun scoffs, earning a smack in the head from Yunseong.

To test the waters, Donghyun joins Yunseong as he walk around the room. He asked the students if they can plate just a small amount of what they cook so they could all taste what they made. They started at the back, and Donghyun didn't really find anything different from them. They're just your regular tteokbokki. Once they arrived in front however, he could see how Jungmo tries to avoid Yunseong's look.

"Can we taste it?" Yunseong asks, but Jungmo just wave at him, pushing the plate towards them. Yunseong takes a sip first, and in a matter of seconds, he becomes a coughing mess. "Why— coughs — is this s—coughs— so spicy?" And another cough. Yunseong continue his coughing fit as Donghyun notices Wonjin tilting his head a bit in wonder.

"That's weird." He heard him say, "I tasted yours and it wasn't spicy at all." Wonjin states, forehead wrinkling in confusion. He sees Donghyun staring at him then back at the gochu powder beside the bowl of tteokbokki. Wonjin glanced at it for a while before giving Donghyun a look, and the younger nodding slowly in respond.

"It's not spicy. I don't like spicy foods, remember?" Jungmo answers nonchalantly, taking a bite from
his bowl, not the plate. "I guess Yunseong isn't used to spice?"

He didn't think Donghyun realized that he saw Jungmo glaring at him from the counter in front as he jokes around with Yunseong. Donghyun smirks at Jungmo's pettiness. These two need to get their feelings out, stat.

With a few pinches on the arm from Donghyun, and a lot more convincing from his best friend that he should invite Jungmo over, Yunseong finally asked the older that. "You guys are close enough, right? Tell him to bring Wonjin hyung then we'll head out with Minkyu hyung and Tony hyung after you settled down, or when the food arrives." Donghyun states his plan, Yunseong being more amused that he's made friends with his students than anything else.

Thus, they ended up here. Awkwardly sitting side by side, backs leaning on the foot of the couch as they wait for the food to arrive. Donghyun left as soon as Jungmo got to their dorm, so much for being subtle. But Jungmo didn't seem to mind, it's like that with the other. He doesn't care about a lot of things.

"So you're not cooking?" Jungmo jokes, scrolling through the amount of movies on the romantic comedy section. Yunseong snorts, leaning closer to look at the screen as well.

"I'm too tired to do that, Jungmo."

"I thought you invited me to taste your cooking or whatever, but I guess I'm not special enough for that." The older continues to tell his sarcastic jokes, he laughs but Yunseong knows deep down that Jungmo became someone special the first time he laid his eyes on him.

"Maybe next time, okay?" Yunseong acts annoyed, glaring at Jungmo from the side in which the other snickers in delight. They're undoubtedly close, and not one of them seems to move or give at least a space for their arms to not brush against each other.

"Okay, so there's a next time."

They settled for a movie about a girl writing letters to her crushes. It was ten minutes into the movie when the delivery foods arrived one by one. Jungmo ordered chicken, half seasoned half fried, while Yunseong ordered cheese pizza and fried vegetables.

"It's rare of me to buy delivery food, really." Yunseong groans in delight as he chews a friend vegetable, not caring what's happening on his laptop screen.
"Why did you order it now?"

"I feel comfortable with you, so I thought why not eat my comfort foods to make it a much better experience." Yunseong blurs out, uncaring, missing the way Jungmo's cheeks turned pink upon hearing his words.

"That's nice..."

"Yeah..."

They stayed silent for a few good minutes, taking the time to eat and watch the movie. The hot tub scene was what made them look away, and absentmindedly, at each other. Yunseong chuckles, embarrassed, and Jungmo smiles at him shyly. Yunseong watches Jungmo's pretty pink lips move from a smile to a laugh. The older lifts his hand up to cover his laugh, but Yunseong holds it in place as he shakes his head. "Don't cover it."

"What?" Jungmo breathes, the one who noticed how close they actually are.

"I like seeing you laugh. It's pretty."

"T-Thank you?"

"I like you." Yunseong couldn't help but mumble it out, his hand tightening its hold on Jungmo's own. "I like you a lot, Jungmo."

Jungmo stares at him for a while, so many emotions coming in all at once. His eyes tried to look at anything but Yunseong's, though it always end up there. They stare at each other for a while before Yunseong leans in closer. Jungmo closes his eyes tightly, confused and excited.

"Do you want to?" Yunseong quietly says, breath brushing over Jungmo's cheeks. "We can talk this out first, take it slow, you know."

Jungmo opens his eyes, staring intently at Yunseong's own. "I like you, too." And that was the last straw, Yunseong didn't give Jungmo a chance to speak before he leans in to kiss him. They kiss for a while, forgetting about the movie playing on the screen. Jungmo is the first one to pull back, "I like you a lot." Yunseong laughs, giving Jungmo's lips a peck.

End Notes

kudos and comments are highly appreciated ♡
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