“Di Angelo?” Nico glances up, nausea crashing into him like a wave. He resists the urge to gag but instead leans into the body next to him.

Jason nudges him and whispers loudly, “That’s you!”

Nico groans, twisting around in the uncomfortable hospital chair causing his stomach to flip once again. He could hear the nurse’s shoe tapping away impatiently.

Ha. Impatiently.

“I don’t need this.” Nico mutters to the other boy, “It’s 3 am and I don’t need this.”

Nico wasn't looking but he could almost feel Jason rolling his eyes. He starts to push Nico up but Nico was resilient and continues to cling to the cheap, glossy wood of the stupid chair Jason had
manhandled him into an hour before.

“di Angelo?” The nurse repeated, shooting a look their way. It was obvious who she was calling for, considering they were the only ones in this stupid 24-hour clinic. Jason elbows him in the ribs and Nico fought another gag. Actually, now that he’s thinking about it, maybe figuring out a way to make him ya know, stop feeling like death, would be best.

Nico stands, unsteady and swaying, and slowly starts to walk over to the exhausted nurse. His dirty sneakers squeak as they shuffle over the shiny linoleum floors.

“Come back when you’re done throwing up!” Jason yells after him, probably already texting Hazel every single detail of every single moment since he started throwing up. Nico flicks him off and follows the nurse into the next room. She brings him into a small side room, taking his weight and height. He even get through the embarrassing process of peeing in a cup without throwing up again. She introduces herself before sitting him down and starting up a round of questions. He tries to oblige with the nurse’s medical questioning, he really does, but every time he tries to talk his throat constricts and salvia floods his mouth and he has to clamp his mouth shut and swallow a few times. But she's nice, mostly tired and from the way she keeps checking her watch, probably about to get off, but nice.

“Your doctor will be right in.” She tells him, her eyes flashing to the clock as she gathers her papers and pens. She gives Nico a small smile and an even smaller cup of lukewarm water. “Try and keep that down, little sips.” She instructs before she leaving the room. Nico doesn't even try with the water, only taking it to be polite but quickly abandoning it on the counter. At this point anything consumable is dead to him, unless it provided the magic ability to rid him of whatever poisoning sickness was attacking him.

Instead, he focuses on the sterile, blue tiles. There was a stray cotton ball on the ground. A broken pencil laid in the trash can like it was a pathetic grave. He shifts his weight, swallowing down the constant pressure in his throat. Paper that protected the examination chair crinkles under him and he rips a piece off before rolling it into a ball with his fingers. He wishes – for not the first time that night – that he hadn't forgotten his phone on the bathroom tile where he'd thrown it after his late night SOS call to Jason. Honestly, sometimes Jason was just too good of a person. Ever since he moved into Nico’s apartment building he was just too happy to help Nico with anything he needed. At first Nico thought it was Jason’s strange way of hitting on him but was relieved – and mildly disappointed - to meet Piper – Jason’s longtime girlfriend. So when he called his neighbor in distress – hoping that maybe the blond would throw a bottle of water or maybe a damp towel at him – he was surprised when Jason showed up minutes later, ready to help Nico in any way he could. And when it became obvious that Jason had no way of helping, he herded Nico in his car – all without losing his trademark optimism. Sometimes Nico really wished he was more interested in someone like Jason – it would be so much easier.

A quick rap on the door interrupts Nico’s semi-deep thinking. The doctor, Nico guesses, steps through the doorway and greets Nico with a far-too-chipper smile, especially for this time of night. Or was it morning? It’s 3 in the morning but it’s still nighttime? Wait, it’s 4 in the morning now, isn’t that like morning-ish?

“Nico di Angelo?” The doctor, younger then Nico what expected, reads off of the clipboard the nurse had left. Nico nods, noticing how – well, - attractive the young doctor was. If nausea wasn't currently trying to seep out of every pore in his body, he might have smiled or something equally absurd.

It’s probably just the dehydration kicking in.
The doctor gave him a small wave, “I’m Doctor Solace, I’ll be your doctor for this lovely visit. Wanna tell me why you’re in my clinic this early in the morning?”

Nico huffs out a pathetic sort of laugh at his pathetic sort of joke. “Throwing up. A lot.” He rasples out, his voice more hoarse then he expected. He winces before repeating, “A lot.”

The doctor begins to mumble under his breath as he reads over Nico’s chart. “Emesis, around 9 o’clock. Checked in around 2 am and has thrown up twice since...”

Nico began ignoring him in favor of leaning forward into his hands, taking deep breaths through his nose and out through his mouth. He could still hear the cute doctor muttering to himself and Nico tried not to notice the butterflies in his stomach.

It’s probably just the nausea.

Nico begins to notice how truly he disgusting he felt – and probably looked. He regrets not throwing on a clean pair of sweats before stumbling into Jason’s car, or at least brushing his teeth a few times. Or swallowing some mouthwash. Honestly, probably the whole bottle at this point. 2 bottles? Maybe. Why was attractive doctor so happy this late? Early? Ugh, not this again.

“Nico?” The doctor asks, his voice gentle. Nico opens his eyes quickly but pulls back when the handsome doctor was even closer than he expected. He smiles and stands. “Sorry, you weren’t responding. Some information on here isn’t complete. How long have you been feeling sick, again?”

Nico blinks, “Since yesterday around...uh...noon maybe? I went home early from work.”

The doctor nods, “What did you eat yesterday?”

Nico swallows, wondering for the hundredth time how he can feel so nauseous when there was nothing in his stomach. “Milk and bagel for breakfast, a slice of cake from someone’s office birthday, and...uh...some kind of pasta?”

Doctor Solace nodded, his pen flying across a sheet of notebook paper. Huh. His handwriting was actually kind of nice for a doctor’s. “Do you remember what kind of pasta?”

Nico squints, “Um...it was Alfredo? With shrimp?”

He looks up at that. “Shrimp?” he questions, cocking his head.

Nico nods, ignoring how adorable he was and instead remembering how off it tasted, cursing himself. Nico groans as understanding floods him just as his sickness had hours before. “I can’t believe this is food poisoning!” Nico dropped his head in his hands, rubbing his tired eyes. Had he not felt so incredibly terrible he might have had some room for major embarrassment.

Solace laughs, “Hey, you don’t know how many people come in a day with some sort of food poisoning.” He takes out a pad of paper and scribbles on it, glancing up at Nico with a smile. Nico peeks through his fingers and resists his own smile, butterflies fluttering through his chest. “There’s not much I can do for you though,” Solace’s smile turned grim, “It’s mostly just playing the waiting game, waiting for it to pass. Drink plenty of fluids, some herbal teas would be best, avoid solid foods, coffee, and any alcohol like the plague for at least 24 hours until after your nausea has passed. And drink tons of Gatorade to replace your electrolytes. And you are to go home and rest forever. Doctor’s orders. Got it?”

Nico nods his head, his head reeling with the beginning of a headache. He tries to remember to
remind himself to ask Jason to stop at the store.

Solace smiled and ripped the sheet off the pad, pressing it into Nico’s hand carefully. “You call me if you have any more questions, you hear? If you don’t get better or you get worst come back right away and I’ll fix you up good. Got everything?” Nico nods, feeling suddenly kind of reluctant to see him go. Nico eyed the tight fitting scrubs. Okay, so maybe he wouldn't be opposed to watching him go.

Solace smiled, “And I better not see you in here any time soon! And defiantly be wary of shrimp. Extremely wary. Actually, just like never eat it ever again.”

Nico cracks a tiny, tiny smile and stands, clenching at the paper Dr. Solace had given him. The doctor beams and opens the door so Nico can shuffle through. He thanks him before stumbling back out to the waiting room where Jason was, sure enough, talking on the phone.

“Everything good?” Jason asks, hanging up the phone. He saw Hazel’s icon flash across the phone screen but chooses to ignore it as he stares down at the paper with a phone number and smiley face carefully scrawled above the name ‘WILL SOLACE.’

“Yeah,” Nico shoves the paper into his pocket before Jason could get a good look at it. “Can we stop by the store?”

8 months later

“Whoever said doctors were the worst patients clearly knew what the fuck they were talking about.”

There was silence on the other end of the line before Jason tentatively speaks, “So I’m guessing Will’s a little sick?”

“You’d think he has the fucking bubonic plague with how he’s acting. You know what he’s trying to do right now? He’s trying to quarantine himself in the bathroom so I don’t get sick. Firstly, who does that? Secondly, does he just not remember we only have one bathroom? And he’s not telling me when he’s sick and even if he’s about to blow chunks and I bring him soup or some shit he eats every single drop and then promptly spends the next hour and a half bent over the toilet just so my feelings don’t get hurt or some shit.”

“That’s…” Jason thought before speaking, these kinds of situations with Nico requiring much thought. “That’s actually kind of sweet in a weird, twisted, if you squint kind of way.” Jason concludes, trying to dissect Nico’s tone to figure out what the younger boy wanted him to say.

“I know!” Nico yells frustrated, throwing one hand in the air, “He’s being so nice and considerate about being sick and it’s driving me crazy!”

“Why?” Jason questions, “He sounds like he’s no trouble at all.”

“That’s the problem!” Nico exclaims, grateful his apartment building had a balcony he could yell on while his boyfriend snoozed away inside. “I’m such a nightmare when I’m sick and he’s no problem at all except his insistence to keep me away! Oh, god what if it’s more serious then the flu and he just doesn’t want me to know? That would totally be something Will would do. Or what if he’s just not telling me anything because he doesn’t want to be a bother? Or what if he’s just –”

“Nico!” Jason cut him off, “Nico. Will is fine. It’s just the flu. Now hang up the phone, go inside, and tend to Will’s sick ass. Call me later if you guys need anything, Piper and I are running to the store and we’d be more than happy to pick anything up. Got it?”
Nico sighs but agrees, “Got it.” He tells the other boy before hanging up. He smiles at the frustration he could almost feel from the other boy at Nico’s lack of goodbye – something Jason been trying to drill into his head with the appropriate title of ‘Polite Phone Etiquette.’ He heads back inside, leaving one of the doors open to help air out the stuffy apartment. He trips over one of Will’s ridiculously thick medical journals but doesn’t even feel annoyed by it.

He blames the stupid butterflies that won’t go away.

Nico stands in the doorway of the bathroom for a few moments and tries not to feel his heart grow like the Grinch’s in that stupid Christmas movie Will loves to watch. Fondness seeps into his heart and he bends down to Will’s blanket cocoon.

“Will,” he whispers and shakes his shoulder very, very gently. “Will, c’mon, let’s get you to bed.”

One of Will’s eyes cracks open, “Didn't you read the sign?” he groans out, pulling the blankets tighter around himself.

The titles are cool against Nico’s knees and he shifts away to look around. A few feet away he spots a yellow post-it note that reads in Will’s trademark handwriting, “THIS AREA IS BLOCKED OFF! QUARANTINE IN EFFECT! NO ONE ALLOWED IN! THIS MEANS YOU, NICO DI ANGELO!”

Nico laughs softly, peeling the note off of the wall and places it on the counter for later. “C’mon Will,” he tries again, this time taking on some of Will’s weight and heaving him up. Will wiggles a little, mostly because of the restrictions that come with being in a blanket burrito, but walks with Nico. He leans on him heavily until they reach their bedroom.

Nico begins to unpeel the blankets off of Will, the dangers of overheating running through his mind, when Will starts mumbling things like ‘ignored authority’ and ‘I’m a doctor dammit!’ before bursting into giggles. Nico smiles and leans in to kiss Will’s forehead but before he could, Will leans away.

“No.” Will says very seriously, a monumental feat considering the mess his hair continues to be. “The germs will get you. You’re gonna get sick. No kissing.” He shakes his head very sadly, “Doctor’s orders.”

Nico rolls his eyes and presses a kiss to his cheek before he can protest. “Doctor’s orders, my ass.”

“Maybe later.” Will agrees, relaxing in their bed but surprising a laugh out of Nico.

Nico unfolds a blanket and drapes it over the other boy, tucking him in. Will sighs and burrows further into the bed. Within minutes he was back to a deep sleep, snoring softly. Nico smiles just slightly and smooths Will’s blond, messy hair off of his forehead.

Nico stands, fetching a cold glass of water and bottle of Lime Gatorade for Will’s bedside table, and snuggles right back into bed with his sick boyfriend.

And, two days later, true to Will’s prediction, Nico comes down with the flu.

End Notes
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