in which twitter is evil, jeon jeongguk is a bit tsundere, park jimin is satan and kim taehyung may or may not have a boyfriend.

There's a lot to be said about the fact that this would not be the first time Jeongguk's ever sprayed his laptop with warm honey-lemon tea after opening his barely-used, for-decoration-purposes-only Twitter account.

And it speaks of how dire the evil tweet of doom he's currently reading actually is when he barely notices how all that milk and sugar is ruining the exterior of his 1,500-dollar Mac and that's going to be a bitch to clean in the morning.

He doesn't know what drove him to open his Twitter account this evening, the one he'd been forced to make after one of their teachers said he'd been tweeting random answers for future tests and had never used it after finding out it had all been elaborate April Fool's prank by Mr. Shim. Apparently,
he should have just stayed away altogether because the first post he sees once again only further supports his initial theory that Twitter is, in fact, the root of all evil.

Jiminnie @youngbaefan88

@iamthebest01 @kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 EMRGENCY OMG TAEHYUNG HAZ BF WTF??!!??

To be fair, the first thing he does note is how atrocious his cousin's spelling and grammar have become since he started hanging out with that grumpy old man next door (“I'm fucking 19, you little shit,” Yoongi screeches from a distance). It takes a while before the actual context of the short but concise message hit him like a ton of Hoseok's fastballs.

And then his brain promptly stutters to a pitiful, grinding halt.

Because that's not possible.

In fact, Jeongguk has a carefully monitored list hidden within the deepest bowels of his computer archives that details just how impossible it is for Kim Taehyung to acquire a boyfriend in his lifetime.

A list that may or may not include scientifically-proven reasons such as Kim Taehyung is ugly, Kim Taehyung is weird, Kim Taehyung likes vanilla better than chocolate and perhaps most importantly, Kim Taehyung has only ever liked Jeongguk.

Granted, Jeongguk started this list in second grade when they were forced to keep diaries and he'd just developed a habit of adding something new at least once a week. It has never really crossed Jeongguk's mind that any of his observations would not be applicable after a certain time.

Okay, so they're 18 now and Kim Taehyung is sort of, maybe not as fat and ugly anymore ("he's hot as fuck, you lying liar who lies," Jimin's unhelpful voice supplies at the back of his mind) but that doesn't mean he can just go ahead and mess with Jeongguk's life like this. All of a sudden it's like everything he's ever learned in preschool are turning out to be cleverly-disguised lies spread by capitalists as a profit-boosting marketing strategy for holiday events.
How dare Taehyung get a boyfriend when he claims Jeongguk is his moon and stars and even asked him to go to prom with him just two weeks ago?

(Conveniently ignoring the fact that Jeongguk turned him down using the words "Prom? Are you kidding me? That is the most ridiculous idea you’ve ever said," this is still not okay, OK?)

No, he should be thinking more along the lines of Taehyung’s going to make a complete fool of himself by cavorting with this unnamed guy who’s probably just using him for money and is bound to drop him like a hot potato when he realizes Taehyung’s poor as fuck.

This isn't going to end well for anyone and it's his civil responsibility to put a stop to this idiocy immediately.

He's momentarily distracted into clicking "11 New Tweets" at the top of the page, revealing various posts by his “friends.”

*Jesus fucking Chist.*

**Jiminie @youngbaefan88**

@iamthebest01 @kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 THERE WAS ADORABLE HAND-HOLDING INVOLVED, I'VE GOT PICTURES

**Kim Seokjin @pinklover92**

@iamthebest01 @kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @youngbaefan88 the fuck?? where was i when this was happening!!?? does jeongguk know? ALSO, DETAILS PLS

He's about to reply to Jimin's post with a gloriously-worded piece of his mind when he realizes something.
He's tagged in this tweet.

And while Jeongguk's never been able to call himself an expert in social media sites (anything with word "social" in it really), he does know he's meant to see this.

Which means everyone's waiting for him to react like a bumbling idiot to this stupid, unfounded piece of news - like exactly what he was about to do five seconds ago.

Jeongguk pulls back his now-sticky hands faster than he's ever moved in his life. This won't do.

Everyone's expecting him to react like a jilted lover when he's not. Kim Taehyung’s just that weirdo kid who cuts holes into his sweaters, runs into doors on a daily basis and just happens to be in all of Jeongguk's classes since first grade. He's just stupid, naive little Taehyung whose sole purpose in life is to follow Jeongguk around and make him miserable with his endless space theories and dramatic monologues.

Okay, so maybe he is feeling a little bit betrayed that his oldest and longest friend couldn’t even be bothered to send a text saying, “Hey Guk, I have a boyfriend, just thought you should know xoxo.”

God, this is so annoying.

Jeongguk is weirdly frustrated about his current situation that he does the only he can do when he's stuck: he calls Taehyung.

By the fourth ring Jeongguk feels 120% more annoyed because (1) Kim Taehyung always answers his calls by the second ring and (2) is the world ending or something what the hell is going on?

"Jeongguk!" Taehyung's voice chirps excitedly and a little breathlessly from the other end, and Jeongguk feels his hackles rising up in an instant.

"Why didn't you answer my call right away? What are you doing that's more important than me?" Jeongguk demands, eyes narrowing at the mental image of Taehyung doing god-knows-what.
There better be no strange men in his bedroom right now or he is going to have a long talk with Mr. and Mrs. Kim about their son’s proclivities.

"I was making a peanut butter-sardine sandwich," Taehyung replies cheerfully, like that's not the most disgusting combination of food items Jeongguk's ever heard and like he's not at all bothered by Jeongguk’s internal struggles. God, who would like this insensitive asshole. "Need me to run to the store for something?"

"Ye-" he's about to reply but thinks better of it. There's an off chance Taehyung might run into that “boyfriend” of his and Jeongguk's, not going to instigate that. Instead he goes for the much more subtle, "is there something you need to tell me, Tae?"

"Hm? Oh, uhm," he can hear Taehyung thinking out loud from the other end. "Oh! Mom wants you to come over for dinner next week. It's her birthday."

Jeongguk rolls his eyes because Taehyung says it like Jeongguk hasn't been coming over for dinner at the Kim residence since he was 12. Plus, Taehyung's mom had called him about the dinner weeks ago, knowing her only son is a flighty, absentminded little shit.

"Anything else?" Jeongguk grits out, pinching the bridge of his nose.

"Walking Dead’s gonna be on in 20 minutes. Wanna watch it together?" comes the clueless reply. Jeongguk shouldn’t have expected anything less.

“Are you fucking kidding me?” he replies irritably, eliciting a chuckle from Taehyung. “When have I ever let you watch that stupid show alone? You’re going to cry without me there. Expect me in 15.”

“Okay, cool. Mom’s out so me and the kids are having pizza. I'll order a meat lovers for us,” the other boy says. “Be safe, Guk-ah!”

Jeongguk frowns at his phone for a long second after they hang up.

He's never even heard of anyone having a crush on Taehyung in the 11 years he's known him and since Taehyung's never really changed much over the years, he'd never really thought anyone could actually like him that way. (Okay, so maybe that’s a bit of a stretch. There have been a few idiots every now and then, but they don’t count. All of them didn’t know Taehyung enough for Jeongguk
to recognize the validity of their feelings.)

The dude’s probably blind. Or a player. Or stupid. Or a criminal.

Whatever he is, he’s not going to be good for Taehyung and it’s like Jeongguk’s the only one who realizes it.

No big deal. No biggie at all. Jeongguk just has to pull a few strings and they can all put this incredibly unnecessary boyfriend thing behind them.

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Jeongguk has never been that big of a fan of zombies so he has no problem ignoring the latest episode of TWD in favor of observing Taehyung.

Taehyung, on the other hand, is fairly obsessed with the show and has no problem ignoring everything around him in favor of watching Norman Reedus and a bunch of other sweaty, dirty good-looking people run around and killing off the undead.

He’s in one of his soft, white sweaters again, the kind that leaves his neck and shoulders visible, and good, Jeongguk doesn’t spot any stray hickies or bruises. Which either means Taehyung’s not having sex or whoever this asshole is who thinks he can just touch Jeongguk’s property knows not to leave any evidence. He’d like to believe it’s the former because Taehyung pledged his virginity to him at age 13 and no one in their 8th grade class has forgotten it, including a traumatized Mr. Cha Hakyeon.

“Tae, I need to borrow your phone,” he says, and the other boy doesn’t take his eyes off the TV once even as he grapples the bed covers for his phone and hands it over.

Jeongguk is about to enter the password (which has always been Jeongguk’s birthday, by the way) when the phone is just as quickly grabbed from his hands.
He looks up, startled, and sees a sheepish looking Taehyung holding the phone away from him.

What.

“Uhm, what do you want with my phone, Guk?” he asks, like he didn’t just break some sort of unspoken rule between them. Taehyung does not keep secrets from him. He just doesn’t. Jeongguk doesn’t keep secrets from him either because, well, Taehyung will always love him anyway, even when he cheated on their English exam last year or when he accidentally flushed his pet goldfish GD down the toilet in 2nd grade. It’s just fact.

And Jeongguk knows that expression on his face right now. He has seen it in several occasions and there’s always one prevailing theme in all of those instances, which is Taehyung being guilty of something awful. Or what constitutes for something awful in Kim Taehyung’s vocabulary.

He thinks he could be forgiven for spacing out for a second because what the fuck is happening here?

“Excuse me?” he splutters indignantly.

Taehyung doesn’t give it back like he expected him to, just keeps half-hiding it behind him. “Did you want to play games? I can help you download it on your phone,” he offers.

Jeongguk leans forward, eyes narrowed. “Are you hiding something from me? Why won’t you let me see your phone?”

Taehyung chuckles nervously. “I’m not hiding anything, I swear! My phone’s been acting up lately, it might break down on you. And the response is slow, you get annoyed when that happens,” he quickly replies, moving back a fraction when Jeongguk invades his space.

Another strike. The Taehyung he knows wouldn’t have moved away, probably would have leaned in and dared Jeongguk to kiss him because he’s a little shit like that.

Don’t tell him— “You’re hiding something. Are you dating someone? Do you actually have a—oh my god, you have a boyfriend.” Jeongguk needs to sit down. Oh wait, he’s already sitting down. He needs to lie down. Yes, that’s good. Just saying the words gave him heartburn. This isn’t right. This is weird.
“Wait, what?” Taehyung’s eyes widen. “I don’t have a boyfriend. Why would you even think that?” he denies a little too strongly for it to comfort Jeongguk.

“Is this because I wouldn’t go to prom with you?” He’s been wondering if that was what this is about. He’s turned down Taehyung’s invitations to numerous social events it’s practically a habit now. He knew he’d raise a fuss about it someday, even if it came six years too late.

“What? No!” he protests. “I was just asking to be polite. I know you hate parties and stuff like that. Proms aren’t that much fun anyway.”

“How do you even know that? You’ve never been to one,” Jeongguk retorts. “And don’t lie, you love parties.”

“I love you more.” Taehyung shrugs. “Staying home to watch movies with you sounds better than any party.”

Jesus Christ. He still doesn’t understand how Taehyung can manage to say things like that with a straight face and not regret every life choice he’s made so far. Jeongguk can feel his own toes curling and his face heating up just hearing the words.

“You still haven’t denied the fact that you’re hiding something from me. And that you’re dating,” he grumbles irritably.

“I’m really not hiding anything, Guk-ah,” Taehyung insists, shifting back so he’s against the headboard and Jeongguk has to grasp the wood to keep from toppling all over him.

“You’re lying to me. Why are you lying to me?”

“I’m not. What’s the big deal anyway? It’s just a phone,” Taehyung says, sounding mildly petulant.

He’s taken completely by surprise that he reels back, confused. This asshole actually asked him, him of all people, what’s the big—okay. This isn’t a big deal. Maybe his phone really is just acting up, god knows he’s dropped it enough that it shouldn’t be still alive and functioning at this point.
“Taetae, can you let me borrow your phone please? I’ll be gentle with it,” he tries, all the way in Taehyung’s personal bubble now, using his ultimate weapon against him. Taehyung can never resist anyone who asks earnestly and says ‘please.’

“I—“ He looks torn for a moment and just when Jeongguk thinks he’s giving in, he—runs away. “Be right back! Just grabbing some soda!”

“Dammit.” Jeongguk groans when he sees Taehyung took his phone with him.

He still refuses to believe that Taehyung is dating someone (behind his back) but Jeongguk knows he’s hiding something from him. Something big and probably important because Taehyung normally doesn’t make a fuss about anything. He is the poster boy for TMI and shameless self-promotion.

Jeongguk retreats back to his side of Taehyung’s tiny twin bed, stuffing a handful of popcorn into his mouth and chewing noisily.

Obviously this conversation is far from over; he is going to get a straight answer from Taehyung if it’s the last thing he does.

And he should probably sleep over tonight. Just in case some best friend-stealing manwhore comes climbing up Taehyung’s window or something.

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Jeon Jeongguk @iamthebest01

@youngbaefan88 @kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 KIM TAEHYUNG IS NOT DATING. HE IS SINGLE. STOP SPREADING LIES OR YOU WILL BE SUED.
Against his better judgment, Jeongguk clicks on the link, which leads him to two photos of Taehyung with a person he doesn’t recognize in front of a bubble tea shop he does recognize (because it’s his favorite bubble tea shop, what the hell). They’re both in their school uniforms, their backs facing the camera and it looks like other boy is holding Taehyung’s hand between his.

Taehyung’s face isn’t visible but Jeongguk can clearly see the other guy’s side profile. Taller than Taehyung, messy hair, glasses, elegant nose, jawline that could cut glass, physique of a god, looks stupidly enchanted by whatever Taehyung is saying…okay, so basically everything Jeongguk hates in a person.

He shouldn’t have clicked on the link. He should know better than to accept links from Park Jimin.

@youngbaefan88 those pictures prove nothing

@iamthebest01 denial isn’t just a river in the amazon guk kekeke~

@youngbaefan88 that’s not even the right country, it’s supposed to be Egypt dumbass

@iamthebest01 SAME DIFFERENCE

Lord Namjoon @rapgod94

@youngbaefan88 @kingyoongi @iamthebest01 @hobistyle @pinklover92 Methinks the gentleman doth protest too much jiminie

Jeon Jeongguk @iamthebest01

@rapgod94 @youngbaefan88 @kingyoongi @hobistyle @pinklover92 Stop pretending to be posh,
you’re from ilsan

**Jeon Jeongguk** @iamthebest01

@rapgod94 @youngbaefan88 @kingyoongi @hobistyle @pinklover92 TAEHYUNG HIMSELF SAID HE DOESN’T HAVE A BOYFRIEND. DROP IT

**Jiminie** @youngbaefan88

@iamthebest01 @rapgod94 @kingyoongi @hobistyle @pinklover92 Did he actually say he didn’t go out on a date with anyone…?

**Your President** @kingyoongi

DUDE OUCH @youngbaefan88 “@iamthebest01 @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 Did he actually say he didn’t go out on a date with anyone…?”

**Jeon Jeongguk** @iamthebest01

YES “@iamthebest01 @rapgod94 @kingyoongi @hobistyle @pinklover92 Did he actually say he didn’t go out on a date with anyone…?”

**Jiminie** @youngbaefan88

@iamthebest01 I can hear you lying over the internet guk, give it up

**Your President** @kingyoongi

@iamthebest01 @youngbaefan88 @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 KIM TAEHYUNG IS FINALLY FREE FROM JEON JEONGGUJK HALELUJAH

He closes the Twitter tab irritably, scowling at his computer. See, this is why Twitter shouldn’t have been invented. It promotes dishonesty and slander among loudmouthed asshole high schoolers who think they know everything when they actually know nothing.

He regrets it immediately though because the next tab open is those pictures of Taehyung on a “date” with this bozo. He’s always been mildly aware that Taehyung does indeed have a life outside of catering to Jeongguk’s every whim but this is the first time he’s actually been slapped in the face by this fact.
They’re friends…right? Friends should tell each other when they (plan to stab them in the back) start dating. Especially dating people who look like they could convince Taehyung to go back to his room for sex and then toss him out on the street once they got off.

This is just—he doesn’t know how he feels about this but he knows it’s utterly wrong. They should have established something between them before this. He should have told Taehyung he’s not allowed to date until Jeongguk is ready to share him with somebody. Which won’t be for a long time.

(Possibly never.)

It’s not too late though. As he’d said, the photos prove nothing. If Taehyung says he’s not dating anyone (or has a boyfriend, same difference, *pshaw*), then Jeongguk believes him.

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“Who are you texting?”

Taehyung starts a little when he suddenly asks, turning slightly nervous wide eyes at him. “Guk?”

“You’ve been texting for a while now.”

He frowns, before turning his attention back to his phone. “It’s a free country. I can text whoever I want,” comes the snarky reply.

Jeongguk rolls his eyes. This child. “You’ve barely been paying attention to geometry. Your grades aren’t high enough for you to get away with that.”

Taehyung shrugs, apparently unconcerned that his future is at stake here. Is he hoping to flunk out of high school? Because even with Jeongguk’s Spartan tutoring his grades in algebra last year were
appalling and definitely hurt his chances of going to a good college.

“It’s okay, Hongbin can help me out.”

Jeongguk zeroes in on the unfamiliar name. “Who’s Hongbin?”

Taehyung glances at him with a blank expression. He hates that look—he can never really figure out what he’s thinking when he’s got his poker face on. “A friend who helps me out.”

“I’m the friend who helps you out,” he grumbles. What? It’s true. Jeongguk helps him with everything, especially sports. Granted, he’s not getting straight A’s in math subjects either, but he’s passable enough.

Also, just when did Taehyung start feeling he needed another friend to help him out?

Taehyung’s expression is soft and fond when he glances at him again. Now that’s more like it. He’s more used to Taehyung looking at him like that than ignoring him for his cellphone.

“I know, Guk-ah,” he agrees. “Hongbin’s just another friend, that’s all.” And because he’s a little shit, he adds, “Don’t worry, you’ll always be number one in my heart.”

“That is disgusting, don’t say things like that,” he mutters, making a face at him. Taehyung just chuckles, big eyes forming gentle crescents when he laughs, before going back to texting.

He’s (more than) a little annoyed that Taehyung dismissed him without putting up a fuss in favor of texting whoever he’s texting (stupid Hongbin, that tall chiseled motherfucker) but he can’t help grinning a little because fuck yeah, he’s number one in Taehyung’s heart.

Obviously Taehyung isn’t going to date anyone but him because he loves Jeongguk the most. There, mystery solved.
“Jeon Jeongguk!”

The boy in question turns on his heels and power walks towards the library where he just came from.

Unfortunately, it’s impossible to really lose Park Jimin when the guy’s on a mission however, (based on experience) and he catches up to Jeongguk in seconds, clinging to him like a baby koala. Jeongguk shoves his face away.

“I don’t have time for you,” he interjects in the middle of his cousin’s melodramatic rant about emo babies being physically repulsed by their hyung’s love.

“Wait!” Jimin stops him before he can sidestep the guy. “I got more photos of Tae’s boyfriend!” He shakes his cellphone in front of his face, like he thinks that would make him beg for the chance to see the pics.

Jeongguk scowls. “Okay, first of all, are you getting paid to do this shit? If you’re just following Tae around, that’s creepy as hell and you need to be arrested.”

Jinim raises a sassy brow at him. “You seem to forget that I’m friends with Tae too. And sometimes friends do things together like go to the same cram school and sit next to each other,” then he smirks mischievously, waggling his eyebrows in a way that tells Jeongguk the next words out of his mouth are going to annoy him, adding, “that’s where he meets his boyfriend every day, by the way.”

“What.”

Jinim, seemingly unconcerned with the way Jeongguk’s face is twisted in disgust, throws an arm around his shoulder, awkwardly because of the height difference, and shows him the damning evidence.

“Yeah, look! Aren’t they super cute together?” he chirps, as photos of Taehyung sitting with said boyfriend, Taehyung sharing a laugh with him, Taehyung—taking a sip of the bubble tea in the guy’s hand. What. ‘Hongbin’s so nice and he likes Tae a lot. And he’s not afraid to show it. He’s...”
very expressive with his feelings. You know, unlike some people.”

He feels like Jimin is trying to tell him something, with the way his eyes are looking at him pointedly and his eyebrows are performing gymnastics on his forehead.

Nah, he’s probably just constipated again.

“Tae says he’s a friend. He’s allowed to have friends. Except you. You’re a bad influence on Tae.” He throws a glare at his cousin when Jimin only scoffs. “And it’s too bad if this guy really does like Taehyung because he’s only gonna get hurt. Tae says I’ll always be number one in his heart.” He might smile a little bit, can’t help feeling proud of this.

Jimin looks like he’s going to pass out, what with the way he’s smothering his laughter with a hand firmly pressed on his mouth.

“What? Taehyung actually said that, I’m not making shit up!” Jeongguk growls defensively.

Jimin has to take deep breaths before speaking again. “I’m sure he did, I would never presume that you’d say anything half as cheesy. And probably ‘coz you get all jealous and possessive over him,” he says, with that pointed look again. “Otherwise you’d never let it go.”

Jeongguk crosses his arms against his chest, scowling. “I don’t know about jealous, because obviously there’s nothing to be jealous about, and the term ‘possessive’ is a little too strong, don’t you think?”

There’s that stupid smile on Jimin’s face again that says he knows more than Jeongguk does and he’s planning on lording it over him. *This little*—“Remember that foreign exchange student from Thailand who was all over Taehyung for, like, two weeks freshman year?”

Jeongguk glares daggers at him. He should know better than to talk about that BamBam kid, whose name they all still can’t pronounce. That brat was evil. He can still remember wanting to pour his milk down the idiot’s pants whenever he acted cute around Taehyung, who is a complete sucker for tiny, adorable things. He is a thousand times cuter than BamBam, okay, but Jeongguk never used his powers for evil, like making Taehyung give him hugs and partner up with him in History when everyone knows he’s always been Jeongguk’s partner.
(He also clearly remembers the betrayal that struck deep in his chest when Mr. Park Jin Young completely supported BamBam stealing Taehyung away for that one project, only saying, “Jeongguk-goon, why don’t you try working with your other classmates this time? See, Jackson doesn’t have a partner.” Like, sure, of course, make him do a project with the Chinese-American foreigner who barely speaks Korean instead of the person he knows better than the back of his own hand. Yeah, that makes sense.)

“Yeah, Hongbin’s like him, except Taehyung actually likes him back,” Jimin says, showing him a photo of Taehyung stealing a glance at Hongbin, head cocked slightly to the side and wearing an expression that’s disturbingly familiar. That is—not okay. It’s on an entirely different planet from okay. That expression is Jeongguk’s. Why is he just going around showing it to everybody else?

“And he’s so good in English too, that’s how he and Tae got close,” Jimin continues nonchalantly, wisely moving his phone away from Jeongguk’s reach. “He even walked Tae home once and I heard from Mrs. Kim they hung out a bit in his room before he left. You know, alone. Just the two of them.”

“That’s—preposterous.” He feels like he’s going to be sick. This is not a good feeling.

He’s unaware he’s been staring into space, numb, until Jimin brings his hand down on his shoulder, hard. “Remember that feeling, Jeongguk-ah. That’s what you call jealousy and possessiveness.”

Jimin gives him a couple of hard pat-smacks on the back before jogging away, “Later, Guk!”

Jeongguk only just resists the urge to throw the book in his hand at him—if he didn’t need it for a report, he probably would have.

He’s said it once and he’ll say it a thousand times: Park Jimin is Satan and needs to go back to the hellhole he came from.

And Jeongguk—Jeongguk needs to find Taehyung.
Taehyung is still in the classroom where Jeongguk left him, poring over the books in front of him and carefully taking notes.

For the first time in years, he hesitates to approach him, to ask him. He just stands there for a minute observing Taehyung’s side profile, the way his brows knit together in concentration and he’s got his tongue caught between his teeth. As expected, he chews on his full bottom lip before swiping his tongue over it to soothe the ache.

Taehyung looks so…grown up. He’s almost an adult physically, if not emotionally, and for some reason, this makes him ache. Jeongguk’s always been aware that Taehyung got taller and wider, they both did. It’s normal, people grow older. But Taehyung, who doesn’t care much for things that aren’t anime, puppies and food, seemed perpetually stuck in Neverland, where he’d dragged Jeongguk into at age 7.

When did Taehyung get out and leave him behind? And, more importantly, why hadn’t Jeongguk noticed?

It’s only when he takes the seat in front of Taehyung that the other boy looks up. “Hey, you got the book?”

Jeongguk hands it over quietly, still a bit numb on the inside. Taehyung’s hand brushes against his own when takes it with an absentminded “thanks, Guk,” and—his hand is so big. That is not a child’s hand.

Taehyung is an adult. Logically, he should know that, seeing as he’s the only other person besides Taehyung’s family who spends a lot of time with him. But why does it feel like he completely missed the part where he grew up?

“Tae,” he calls unthinkingly. “You should skip cram school today.”

Taehyung looks up, blinking in surprise. “What?”

“You should skip cram school and come over tonight.”
“It’s fine but—“ The other boy frowns in confusion, head tilted slightly to the left. “Aren’t you the one who keeps telling me not to skip classes because, and I quote, ‘you need all the help you can get so we can go to the same college.’”

Shit. He did say that. “You can afford to skip one day,” he retorts. “We, uh, we need to finish this report by tonight.”

The confusion on Taehyung’s face doesn’t dissipate. “The report’s not due until Monday next week.”

“That’s only four days away,” he reasons. “And besides, you really want to do this report on the weekend instead of watching Tokyo Ghoul?”

Taehyung’s eyes widen as realization dawns on him. Honestly, this manchild will never survive without him. “You’re right.”

“Of course, I’m right,” he scoffs, carding his fingers through Taehyung’s hair and ruffling the silky brown strands, a habit that comforts both him and the other boy.

He feels a little bad for making him skip but Jeongguk always puts in extra time to help Taehyung review before all major exams so it’s not a big deal. What’s a more important matter is educating Taehyung on the ground rules of their relationship before he sees that Hongbin guy again.

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It should have been easy to tell Taehyung what he wanted him to do, but for some reason, Jeongguk finds the words caught in his throat, unwilling to get out.

He’s never had this problem before. It’s just Taehyung, he listens to everything Jeongguk says. He might complain a bit or throw a bit of a fuss but he always gives in at the end so going by that logic, it should be easy to tell him ‘don’t date that Hongbin guy’ or ‘stop seeing him.’ But it’s not and that’s what boggles Jeongguk the most.
Maybe it’s because he’s starting to realize that there might be things about Taehyung that he doesn’t know, secrets he’s not privy to, fractions of his life that Jeongguk is not allowed to see. It’s disconcerting.

Taehyung’s got his pen between his teeth again, and by now he’d be telling him to knock it off and use the pen for the purpose it was made for instead of chewing the poor thing into an unrecognizable mess.

Instead Jeongguk has been watching Taehyung put that pen in his mouth for what seems to be hours. Why is this suddenly so fascinating? He does this all the time. Taehyung was the kind of kid who ate anything remotely edible and has put all kinds of things in his mouth at least once. If anything, this was just him in his natural habitat doing normal, everyday things. So why can’t Jeongguk look away?

“Guk, can I borrow your computer? I need to Google something,” Taehyung says, barely intelligible as he’s still got the pen stuck in the corner of his mouth.

“Taehyung.” The somberness of his tone makes the boy in question glance at him, brows knitted.

“Hm?”

“I know your secret.”

Taehyung still looks clueless, shifting his glance between Jeongguk and the notes in his hands. “Okay?”

“You—you like that Hongbin guy, don’t you? And you guys are dating?” he says and even to his own ears the words sound accusatory.

Taehyung sighs. “This again. I told you he’s just a friend,” he replies. “How did you even reach this conclusion? You’ve never assumed I dated any of my other friends before.”

Well, duh, because his other friends are Park Jimin, Kim Namjoon, Min Yoongi, Kim Seokjin, Jung Hoseok and their TA Byun Baekhyun. Who would date those idiots? “But if you’re dating him, you would tell me, right?” he prods, ignoring that last question.
The other boy perches his chin on his fist, unimpressed by the question. “I already told you I don’t have a boyfriend, why won’t you believe me?” he complains. “I’ve told you numerous times that I love you.”

Jeongguk narrows his eyes at him. Taehyung might have a good poker face sometimes but he can’t lie to him. He’s relieved to find that he’s utterly sincere.

“Okay, I believe you,” he replies, earning him a fond smile from Taehyung. “You’re not allowed to date anyone but me,” he adds unthinkingly, grabbing a book from the pile next to his study table.

He almost misses Taehyung going absolutely still.

“Tae?” he calls, snapping his fingers in front of his face.

Taehyung suddenly bursts into laughter, the kind that has him clutching at his sides and rolling on the floor. Jeongguk leans across the table to check on him, slightly worried Taehyung’s finally lost his mind. All those zombie movies and TV shows wouldn’t be good for anyone’s mental health.

“What’s so funny?” he demands, feeling left out of the joke. Was it something he said?

Taehyung finally calms down several long seconds later, wiping tears from his eyes when he sits up.

“What is it?” he repeats, pouting.

Taehyung just shakes his head, smiling in amusement. “The only thing I want right now is to be right there with you and see the look on your face when you finally realize what I’m laughing about at this moment,” he answers cryptically, still a little breathless from laughing too hard.

“I don’t get it. Just tell me already.” This is getting annoying.

Taehyung just beams at him, the little fucker. “Oh no, I’ve been waiting for years, you can’t take this from me. Trust me, it’ll be better if you get to the punchline yourself. Way more fun,” he says
cheekily. Jeongguk wants to wipe that smug look on his face.

“I swear to god, Kim Taehyung—“ he starts, but Taehyung cuts him off by pressing a kiss to his cheek. Dammit.

“I believe in you, Guk-ah,” he says, before handing him a textbook. “Mom wants me home by 9 so chop chop.”

Jeongguk takes the book absently, still thinking about the joke he missed. He’s smarter than Taehyung, obviously he should know what this is about. “You’re not sleeping over?”

Taehyung cocks his head to the side, smirk on his lips. Ugh, he hates it when Taehyung knows something he doesn’t. “You want me to sleep over?”

“Well, no one’s forcing you to sleep over but that’s what we always—“ Jeongguk starts to explain, before realizing the content of Taehyung’s question. Since when does he question Jeongguk’s motives?

Jeongguk narrows his eyes at him. Taehyung just gives him an innocent look, which he hates so much because it’s never that convincing when other people do it.

“Whatever it is you’re doing, stop it.”

Taehyung’s eyes widen a fraction. “I’m not doing anything,” he says, and Jeongguk barely catches the quiet, “If I were, you wouldn’t be so clueless.”

“What?”

Taehyung taps his pen on the book in front of him. “Are we doing this or what?”

Jeongguk grumbles but follows suit—he needs to get this report out of the way anyway so he can go do more important things like work out and figure out what hell Kim Taehyung is not telling him.
He doesn’t know what kind of fresh hell he walked into just now but he really should have known better than to accept Satan’s offer to buy him bubble tea.

“Look, it’s Taehyung and Hongbin!” Jimin says a little too loudly, like Jeongguk needed the verbal reminder that his best friend is sitting there and drinking bubble tea with some dude he doesn’t know. A really muscular, tall ass dude with a kind face and dimples as deep as the Marianas Trench. And he’s holding one of Taehyung’s hands, playing with his fingers while the other boy gesticulates wildly with the other, involved with telling some crazy anecdote from the looks of it.

Jeongguk hates him on sight.

He’s about to go over and give the guy a piece of his mind when he finds himself being dragged by the forearm towards the counter. “What the hell, Jimin?”

“Eh, let’s leave them alone. The kids are having fun,” he just says, grip firm on his arm. “So what are you having? I think I’m getting a vanilla chai.”

Jeongguk ignores him in favor of watching the two boys sitting several tables away. “Why is he holding Taehyung’s hand? Who does this dickhead think he is?” he demands, attempting to shake off his cousin’s grasp again. “Jimin, you asshole, let me go.”

Jimin beams at the kind lady behind the counter, who returns the smile, while giving Jeongguk a patronizing pat on the head. “Let’s get him an extra sweet tapioca, he seems to be a little grumpy today.”

“He. Is. Holding. Taehyung’s. Hand. In what universe is this okay?” he mutters irritably. “He’s wearing hipster glasses. Hipster glasses. He’s obviously a player. Taehyung should not be anywhere within a hundred meters of that guy.”

Jimin pats him on the arm. “Sure, cuz, whatever you say,” he says, before shoving the tray of bubble tea and cake onto Jeongguk’s hands while he’s silently contemplating murder. Rude.
They sit a few tables away, much to Jeongguk’s annoyance. They should have just joined them, maybe sit between them.

“Why would you want to crash their date? Tae’s obviously having fun,” Jimin just remarks when Jeongguk asks him what the hell is wrong with his brain.

“It’s. Not. A. Date,” he insists for umpteenth time and seriously, he doesn’t know how many times he has to emphasize this so Jimin will finally understand. “They are friends. Friends do not date each other.”

Jimin raises a brow at him while taking a long sip of his drink. “Uh, yes they do. Friends can date. There’s no rule saying otherwise.”

He frowns at his cousin. “No, they don’t. Because that’d be weird. And awkward,” he retorts. “Imagine me dating Yoongi. Or Hoseok. Why would anyone want to date their friends?”

Jimin looks like he’s having a mental breakdown, which is ironic because Jeongguk is the one who wants vomit watching that overly muscular hipster flirting with Taehyung.

“Oh, I don’t know, because they’re crazy about each other? Even though one of them is a dumbass and does not deserve to be loved because he takes his best friend’s feelings for granted,” Jimin mutters snarkily.

Jeongguk glances at him briefly, brows knitted. “Are you trying to tell me you’re in love Hoseok?”

“Oh my god,” Jimin groans. “I’m talking about Taehyung!”

Jeongguk rolls his eyes at him. “Please. Taehyung’s not in love with that guy.”

“Oh of course not,” Jimin agrees, adding, “Because obviously Tae’s in love with someone else. Like, oh I don’t know, his devil spawn of a best friend.”
He stills, doesn’t like where Jimin’s going with this. He narrows his eyes at his cousin, who’s looking at him like he’s waiting for Jeongguk to figure something out. “Are you telling me—“ He almost doesn’t want to say it because it sounds too horrifying to be true. “—that you think Taehyung is in love with you?”

“Yes!” Jimin exclaims, before quickly backtracking. “Wait, what? No!”

“You poor, delusional midget.” Jeongguk gives him a comforting pat on the hand.

“Oh my god, I am so done with you,” Jimin sulks, slapping Jeongguk’s hand away. “I don’t even know why I try. Taehyung is going to leave you for a much nicer girl or guy and my poor Taetae is finally going to catch a break.”

“Taehyung’s not going to leave me,” Jeongguk scoffs. “I’m the most important person in his life. I’m the center of his universe, whatever that means.” He mulls over his words for a moment before explaining, “He said all that himself, by the way, I can’t come up with shit like that.”

“And what about Taehyung?” Jimin asks him, expression uncharacteristically somber. “Doesn’t he deserve to be the center of someone’s universe too?”

“What does that metaphor even mean? I’m pretty sure that makes sense in Taehyung’s head but it seems like a load of crack to me,” he replies, stealing another glance at the pair by the window who now have their heads bowed together, talking in hushed whispers. “No one can literally be the center of someone’s universe, everyone has a lot of people in their lives.”

Their faces are too close to each other, Jesus Christ.

Jimin follows the direction of his gaze. “It means that no matter how many people there are around you, there’s always that one person your eyes will always be drawn to.”

“Yeah, no, I still don’t get it,” Jeongguk says absently. “Why is that asshole taking a sip from Taehyung’s drink? He literally has a drink in front of him. What a selfish prick.”

He misses the way Jimin rolls his eyes heavenward, praying for strength, and his annoyed, “How does this dumbass have a higher academic rank than I do?”
“It means,” Jimin stresses, sounding more irritated with each word, “that even with all the people in your life, there’s the one person that you always call first whenever something happens. There’s this one person you always want to be partnered up with in class or the one you make strawberry cupcakes for in Home Ec because you know he loves them more than life. Or you know, this person you dedicate all your extra time to tutoring because you care more about his success and happiness than even he does—hey, are you even listening to me?”

Jeongguk waves him away when he tries to peek at his phone and continues typing furiously. “Shut up and drink your bubble tea,” he says, tuning out Jimin’s angry muttering.

*Go home asap*

*Are you not even reading my texts now? Wtf Kim Taehyung*

*Kim Taehyung, answer your goddamn phone*

*Go home right now or I am hiding all your manga DON’T THINK I WON’T*

*KIM TAEHYUNG*

*YOU DRIED PIECE OF STRAWBERRY WHY ARE YOU IGNORING MY TEXTS*

To his complete and utter frustration, Taehyung doesn’t even get his phone out and read his texts, still completely engrossed in talking.

Logically, he knows Taehyung gets caught up in conversations with friends about things he’s passionate about and will often forget all other responsibilities until they come bite him in the ass. Maybe it’s because he’s never *not* been the center of Taehyung’s attention when they’re in the same room together, but it’s a different experience, watching it happening from an outsider’s point of view.

Is that what Taehyung looks like when he’s in love with someone? What does being in love even look like?
God, his stomach hurts.

Next to him, Jimin heaves a deep sigh and pokes him on the arm. “Hey, you okay? You look like you’re about to be sick.”

He glares at Jimin before eyeing the bubble tea in front of him. “The tapioca’s gone bad. My stomach hurts.”

Jimin looks so completely done it’s almost funny. When the look’s not directed at him. “You haven’t taken one sip of it,” he retorts in the most unimpressed tone Jeongguk’s ever heard from him.

“I didn’t?” He’s pretty sure he did. Why else would his stomach be turning over and roiling in pain and disgust? “Of course I did. It feels like I did,” he insists.

His cousin just sighs and brings his own phone out to take a photo of their drinks, which Jeongguk has never seen the point of.

He stands up, meaning to go over Taehyung’s table, but instead his legs lead him to the door and he’s out of the shop in seconds. He doesn’t slow down despite Jimin calling for him; he feels like he needs to get out of there without being noticed by Taehyung.

He hates himself a little bit for it but for some reason, it didn’t feel right interrupting Taehyung’s date.

And it was a date. It couldn’t be anything else, what with the hand holding and the touching and the sharing of drinks.
He’s accepted it.

He’s made his peace with the fact that Taehyung has someone else in his life now whom Jeongguk may have to share a fraction of his best friend’s time with.

He still doesn’t know what Taehyung even sees in that muscle bound hipster (dimples aren’t that great, pfft) but he supposes someone who can make Taehyung laugh must be halfway decent.

(Then again, Taehyung laughs at all of Jimin’s jokes, no matter how idiotic they are, so that reasoning might need a little more consideration.)

That’s cool. That’s okay. He can handle it. As long as He Who Shall Not Be Named doesn’t encroach on his and Taehyung’s sleepovers, shopping trips and study dates, he’s completely cool with him being Taehyung’s…whatever. Anyway, he’ll never be as close to Taehyung as Jeongguk is—he’s got 11 years and the rest of forever on him. He can try, but he won’t succeed.

Now he only needs to repeat that about 99 more times until his brain believes it.

His silent contemplation is interrupted by the violent vibration of his cellphone.

*Guk, you were at the bubble tea shop? I’m sorry, I didn’t notice! You should have called me TT_TT*

*Don’t be mad TT_TT*

*I’ll buy you bubble tea next time, I promise… forgive me? <3<3<3*

Jeongguk scoffs when he reads Taehyung’s messages. He’s tempted not to reply because the texts came an hour too late.
He hides his phone under his duvet so he doesn’t because it’d serve that asshole right if he gets a taste of his own medicine. He props open his Physics textbook instead, ignoring the constant buzzing of his phone to read about Momentum.

He hates himself a little bit more when he finds himself grabbing his phone and reading the messages anyway. 20 seconds. That’s apparently how long he can hold out before giving in to Kim Taehyung. Fuck.

Prince Guk: HOW DARE YOU

TaeTae: SORRY I LOVE YOU <3

Prince Guk: IGNORE MY TEXTS AGAIN AND I WILL BURN YOUR MANGA COLLECTION YOU ASSHOLE

TaeTae: I promise I won’t

TaeTae: Why didn’t you come over??

Prince Guk: =_=  

Prince Guk: you know why

TaeTae: hongbin?

Prince Guk: =_=  

TaeTae: U could’ve just talked to me and ignored him. That’s what you usually do with everyone else O.o

Prince Guk: wanted to but that little shit jimin stopped me

TaeTae: Awww

TaeTae: wanted to introduce you to hongbin. He’s not a bad guy, I promise

Did he just seriously—okay, he is going to smack him on the head first thing tomorrow.

Prince Guk: …..how about no

TaeTae: fiiiine. Tell me if you change your mind

Prince Guk: I won’t
**TaeTae:** you will

Prince Guk: won’t

**TaeTae:** you’re so cute

Prince Guk: STOP. did you read the physics notes I gave you

**TaeTae:** IM READING IT NOW PROMISE

Prince Guk: I’m quizzing you tomorrow if you get more than 3 answers wrong THERE WILL BE CONSEQUENCES

**TaeTae:** don’t take away my dvds again TT_TT

Prince Guk: NO PROMISES. NOW GET TO WORK

**TaeTae:** kk <3 xoxoxoxo

Jeongguk dumps his phone on his nightstand then groans into a pillow.

Why didn’t he ask him about Hongbin? He should have just asked. It’s going to drive him crazy now, wondering what the hell is actually going on with Taehyung and that guy. Wants to ask if he’s treating him right. Is he giving him all his strawberries and holding his hand in case he sees a butterfly and runs after it again? Is he letting Taehyung stop to pet all the dogs they meet on the street? These are important questions he needs answers to asap.

Jeongguk scowls at the photo of Taehyung beaming at him on his home screen.

(Why the hell his cousin feels the need to change his wallpaper into a photo of Taehyung every single time he still doesn’t understand. It’s gotten to the point where he doesn’t even change the photo anymore so he has to suffer seeing Taehyung’s wide, toothy grin every time has to use his phone.)

Tomorrow. He’ll ask tomorrow.
He lied.

He doesn’t ask.

Instead he tries to avoid Taehyung and all of his incessant clinginess. You know, to prepare himself mentally for when his best friend won’t even have time to watch Big Bang concerts or bitch about asshole substitute teachers with him anymore because he’s too busy texting or dating or doing god-knows-what with his…whatever.

He lasts about an hour and only because Taehyung was asleep for 50 of those 60 minutes.

An hour’s good. An hour is progress. He can share about an hour of his time with Taehyung with his…whatever. Good.

“So…” Taehyung interrupts his staring match with his tuna cheese sandwich.

“Dammit, I was winning.”

Taehyung chuckles and grabs the sandwich, removing the package and pressing it into his hands. “You don’t need to assert your dominance over your food before eating it,” he says. “It’s not going to fight the power in your tummy.”

“I’m not five years old,” he huffs, glaring at the amused smile on Taehyung’s lips. He bites the sandwich as aggressively as he can, earning him a disgusted look from the guy. What, it’s not his stomach that riots when the tuna refuses to cooperate with it.

“So…prom night tomorrow.” Taehyung leans against the cafeteria table, perching his chin on his palms. “What’s the plan?”

Jeongguk shoots him a confused look while chewing. “What? What do you mean ‘what plan’?”

“Our plan for tomorrow? Because we’re not attending prom?” Taehyung prods. “Are we spending
Has he gone insane? What is he talking about?

He stares at him, unimpressed. “Aren’t you going with Jimin and the others? And you know… whoever you were planning on inviting?” he asks, using his eyebrows to fill in the blanks.

Taehyung just looks at him like he’s the one who’s gone insane. “What are you talking about? There’s no way I’ll let you spend prom night alone.”

Jeongguk sighs. God, he feels a migraine coming on. “Tae, I know you’re very…naïve and innocent in the ways of the world but there’s a limit to how oblivious a person can be.”

“I’m oblivious?” Taehyung sputters. “Me?”

Seriously, does he have to do all the thinking around here? Jeongguk takes another bite of his tuna sandwich, letting Taehyung stew in his bafflement for a moment.

“When you have a…significant other,” he starts to explain, spurring a fit of coughing from Taehyung. He gives him helpful pats on the back. “You need to spend important milestones of your life with them. And that includes prom, which, I heard from Jimin and your teen-oriented TV shows, is a rite of passage for all kids.”

"Jesus Christ.” Taehyung swipes a hand over his face, groaning. He turns to him, face uncharacteristically serious. “Fine. I’ll spend prom night with my ‘significant other.’”

Jeongguk stares right back, and for some reason, it feels like something’s lodged in his throat, making it difficult to swallow. He takes a long gulp of orange juice. Doesn’t help. “Good,” he mutters, before clearing his throat. “Good. That’s great. You should do that.”

Taehyung sighs and nudges his head against Jeongguk’s. “You’re so stupid,” he just says, before letting the topic go and focusing on quietly finishing the rest of his life.

Jeongguk would say something snarky in return, except he’s starting to feel like Taehyung might be
right.

And that’s not right.

+ 

The next day he wakes up—wait, does it count if he barely slept two hours—feeling like he’s missing something very vital and thus the world has gone sideways because of it.

He starts the day with his morning playlist (Big Bang, Tori Kelly and Radiohead, of course), his daily workout routine and his mom’s usual Friday breakfast menu. Nothing new there.

He exchanges the usual nonsense with Taehyung, ignores Jimin’s, Hoseok’s and Yoongi’s texts and saves the rest of the messages for when he needs a good laugh (Namjoon’s) or when he has time to try out a new strawberry recipe (Seokjin’s). Nothing new there either.

Maybe he’s just worried about Taehyung’s prom date. Logically, it should go pretty well, seeing as it’s a chaperoned event and everyone else is going to be there, including Jimin who’ll probably be watching Taehyung like a hawk. If he’s not busy making out with Hoseok, that is.

Shit, he should have just told Taehyung he’d go with him. As a best friend supporting his best friend in what should be an important rite of passage for him. Granted, he’d probably spend majority of the actual prom outside drinking juice, but that doesn’t mean he can’t be there for when Taehyung needs someone to talk to about moon rabbits or to punch his date if he does something untoward. Which is a very real possibility.

Okay. He’s going. It’s going to be okay, he just won’t go inside the actual gym where the prom’s being held. He can just stay outside where the air is fresh and there aren’t hundreds of rabid, hormonal teenagers and irritable parents to make him question his conscious decision to get out of bed and go out of his house. It’s going to be fine.
He needs a minute to just sit down and try not to hyperventilate at the idea of being in a compact space with about a billion people.

When he doesn’t feel like vomiting anymore, he bids a hasty goodbye to his mother, telling her he needs to run to the convenience store for a bit. He feels bad for lying but the guilt is a small price to pay for the shitstorm that would have ensued had his mother caught wind of the fact that he’s considering actually renting a suit to go to a social event. He’s not emotionally stable enough to handle his mother’s tears right now.

It takes about four hours and ten stores before he manages to find a suit that actually fits and doesn’t look like it came from someone’s grandfather’s closet. Apparently, it was prom week, and most suits and tuxedos had been rented or reserved days before and he should have booked something early if he wanted the good stuff.

Yeah, well, maybe Taehyung should have warned him ahead of time that he was going to be dating some asshole and taking him to prom. Then maybe he could have had his mini crisis and panic attack earlier and had enough time to rent a good suit.

He finally decides on an all-black outfit with a red tie. He considers taking a photo and sending it to Taehyung, but decides against it because there wasn’t any point anyway. It’s not like he’s Taehyung’s date anyway.

He’s just crossed his arms against his chest, leaning against a table displaying a wide variety of ties and bowties while waiting for the suit to be packed, when he sees a very familiar person walking into the store.

It’s that tall, chiseled motherfucker that should be Taehyung’s date and…he’s got a girl hanging on his arm.

What.

No. No. It’s probably his sister. Or cousin. Cousins can be that close to each other. Jimin always clings to him like that, it doesn’t mean anything. Of course, Hongbin wouldn’t be cheating on Taehyung because that’d be preposterous—

Okay, cousins do not link their fingers together and kiss on the lips. That is just—no.
Jeongguk marches up to him, fuming, just as the oblivious pair approach the counter.

“Hi,” he greets (because his mother raised him to be well-mannered, even to lying, cheating bastards), startling them both.

“Oh, hello,” Hongbin says, his smile hinting a tinge of confusion. He squints at Jeongguk, glancing at his girlfriend who also smiles politely at him in greeting, before turning back to him. “Wait, aren’t you—"

“Yes, I am Taehyung’s best friend. Thank you for noticing,” he grits out, his fists clenched tight. He really wants to punch the guy but not in the presence of a lady and old people (his mother would throw a fit). “May I just ask what the hell do you think you’re doing?”

Hongbin’s eyes widen, while his girlfriend frowns, confused. “Uhm, picking up my suit? Is something wrong—"

“I— Jeongguk cuts in, gesticulating wildly, but he’s so mad he almost chokes on the words. “You! I trusted you! I was willing to let you have an hour of his time everyday and I don’t do that for anyone! How can you—how can you just—"

His angry rant, which is starting to attract attention from the few other customers in the small shop, is interrupted when the tiny old lady who packed his suit taps him on the back. “Jeongguk-goon?” He throws a nasty glare at Hongbin before turning to her, plastering a friendly smile on his face. She reminds him of Taehyung’s grandmother so it doesn’t feel that much forced. “Here’s your suit.”

“Thank you,” he replies, waiting for her walk away before whirling back to Hongbin who still looks like he got run over by a truck. “You!”

“Me?” Hongbin echoes weakly. His girlfriend’s starting to look annoyed and Jeongguk can’t deal with angry women so he steps back a little away from her.

“Is she your girlfriend?” he demands.

“Yes?” he replies, then after a hard nudge from the girl beside him along with a sassy raised brow, he adds, much more convincingly, “I mean, yes! She’s my girlfriend, Yura. We’ve been dating for almost a year.”
“Nice to meet you, Yura,” he says, automatically, giving her a polite bow before turning back to Hongbin. “Now, you. Don’t you dare approach Taehyung again, I don’t care how good looking or good at English you are. You. Do. Not. Approach. Taehyung. Got it?”

“Uhm…what? Taehyung—what?” Hongbin appears to be even more confused by his demands—which means he must not have been as smart as Taehyung thought. He’s not surprised—dude must be stupid as fuck to cheat on his girlfriend and play with his best friend’s affections. His Taehyung’s affections.

Jeongguk presses the bridge of his nose. “God, I can’t even get mad at you. This is all my fault. I shouldn’t have trusted you. I shouldn’t have trusted anyone with Taehyung’s heart. You are all obviously inferior and incompetent.”

He throws one last dirty look at Hongbin and a polite nod of his head towards Yura before leaving the rental shop.

God, he shouldn’t have wasted one minute on that asshole. It’s almost time for prom and Taehyung’s going to be expecting someone on his doorstep soon.Fuck, his parents and grandma probably have all their cameras ready to take a million photos of him and his date.

He washes up and puts on the suit in record time, sending a quick prayer to whichever higher power is responsible for his mother being caught up in her primetime soaps so he can leave the house without anyone making a fuss.

It’s difficult riding his bike in a form-fitting suit but somehow he manages to do it all the way to Taehyung’s house four blocks away. He nearly runs to Taehyung’s doorstep, opening the door without warning (knocking has been trained out of him since age 13 after he was forcibly adopted by Taehyung’s grandmother).

“Hello? Taehyung?” he calls out, not too loudly but enough to catch the attention of Taehyung’s younger siblings.

“Gukkie!” Soohyun calls out, immediately latching onto his legs. He gives her a cursory noogie before another tiny body wraps itself on his other side, nearly sending him toppling down.

“Hyung!” Daehan chirps, smile equally as wide and bright as his twin sister’s. “Are we playing a
“new video game today?”

“No!” Soohyun protests, glaring at her brother. “We’re gonna play murder mystery house! Gukkie’s supposed to be my Dr. Watson!”

“Guys,” he interrupts before they can start fighting. “I didn’t come here to play with you. I’m taking your brother to prom.”

Both six-year-olds look up at him with wide, doe eyes, confused.


“Taetae oppa! Gukkie’s here to take you to prom!” Soohyun screeches towards the direction of the stairs without detaching herself from Jeongguk, who sighs in resignation. He wonders if he can grab Taehyung before his mother winds up hearing about this from Mrs. Kim.

True enough, Mrs. Kim peeks out from the living room. “Prom?” she asks, then gasps when she sees Jeongguk. “Oh my lord…look at you, my darling! Mom, look at Jeongguk!”

Jeongguk lets himself be poked and prodded lovingly by Mrs. Kim and Grandma Kim as well as the tiny tots still trying to convince him to hang out with them, until Taehyung comes thundering down the stairs in...a hoodie?

“Uhm, what?” is the only thing he can say as he and Taehyung both stare at each other with mirrored shock.

“Oh my god,” Taehyung breathes out, eyes wide as they scan him from head to toe. Jesus Christ, it’s like he’s never seen him in a suit before. “Jeongguk. You—why—what—"

“Can we save this for later?” he cuts in. “Why aren’t you dressed? We’re going to be late!”

Taehyung forces his gaze away from Jeongguk’s blood red tie. “What? Where are you—oh my god, are you taking me to prom?” he asks, like it’s not completely obvious that he’s the only person here in a suit and hastily gelled up hair.
“Baby, Jeongguk’s here to come get you. Why aren’t you dressed?” Mrs. Kim asks, frowning. “Didn't you say you weren't attending prom?”

Taehyung looks utterly lost and confused when he glances at his mother. “Uhm, I—” he stutters. “I don’t have a suit so—Mom, do I have one or—”

“Baby, you do have a suit. The one you wore to your cousin Sojin’s wedding last year,” Mrs. Kim pipes in, and just as quickly turns to the stairs. “Oh dear, it’s not pressed. Oh dear, where did I put it? Baby, you should tell mommy these things ahead of time!”

Daehan and Soohyun, apparently figuring out that they’re not going to be able to drag Jeongguk with them today, rush after their mom, probably thinking that something fun is happening upstairs.

Grandma Kim herds a still confused Taehyung up the stairs, and it takes about 40 minutes and 300 photos before he and Taehyung are finally free to go.

Taehyung quietly follows him to the bike and dutifully sits on the back, wrapping an arm around Jeongguk’s waist before they go.

“I’m so confused right now,” he remarks out of the blue. Jeongguk bites his lip, hesitates for a moment: should he tell him about Hongbin? He probably should, otherwise Taehyung’s going to keep associating with him and that is not ideal.

“That asshole wasn’t coming,” he replies after a long silence, keeping his tone gentle. “He has a girlfriend.”

Taehyung’s grasp on his waist tightens a fraction. “Wait…what?”

Jeongguk stops the bike a block away from the school, more out of habit than anything else, letting Taehyung get off first then following suit. “Hongbin. He’s a total fucking asshole. He was going to stand you up!”

“What?”
"I saw him with his girlfriend Yura when I went to this shop in Hongdae to rent a suit because I figured you needed me there in case something happens and I was right—"

"Wait, you were planning on going to prom—"

"—I was so right, something did happen. I knew I couldn’t trust that hipster. I was even considering sharing you with him! God, I fucking trusted him. He was supposed to make you happy and shit and look how it all turned out—"

"Oh my god, Jeongguk—"

"Well fuck this shit, if this is how everyone’s going to treat you, I’m going to be your boyfriend and marry you myself, Jesus Christ. Obviously everyone is inferior to me when it comes to loving you and making you happy, I shouldn’t have even considered letting you date anyone else—"

His (incredibly epic) rant is interrupted when Taehyung wraps his arms around him from the back. "Uhm. What the hell are you doing?"

"Hugging you," the little shit replies, breath warm against Jeongguk’s shoulder where he’s pressing his face.

"I can see that. The question is why."

"You're too adorable."

"No, really. Why."

"You’ve never questioned my motives for hugging before."

"Yes, I have. All the time. Remember three days ago?"
“Well, don’t question it this time. We’re engaged now. Also, I love you.”

Jeongguk squeezes his hand briefly. “Are you sad about your—He Who Shall Not Be Named?”

He shakes his head, nose brushing against his neck. “No. I keep telling you he’s not my boyfriend. And you shouldn’t call him names either, none of this is his fault.” Taehyung chuckles. “I’m not sure if you’ll believe me, but I wasn’t planning on going to prom tonight.”

He smacks him on the arm. “Don’t lie, asshole.”

Taehyung squeezes him in retaliation. “I’m not, jerkface. I was gonna come over to your house tonight. Did you not see me wearing a hoodie? No one goes to prom in a hoodie.”

Jeongguk stills, brows knitting in confusion. “Wait. Weren’t you going to go to prom with your boyfriend?”

“No. I said I was going to spend prom night with my significant other.”

“But you were gonna come over—oh.”

Oh.

“So you weren’t going to lock yourself in your room and cry over cookie dough while binge watching Free! if Hongbin didn’t show up?”

“No.”

“…because you weren’t going to prom with him in the first place?”

“Yes.”
Well.

Just give him a moment to process how he feels about this.

It’s not like it’s anything especially enlightening or life affirming to know that Taehyung would prioritize him over anyone else. Okay, so maybe re-confirming this fact makes him a little bit happy. Just a little.

Huh. So maybe he actually doesn’t have to share Taehyung’s time with anyone after all.

“Now he gets it. You dickhead.”

“You should have just told me, you stubborn piece of lint.”

“Oh my god—” he groans into his back, squeezing him tightly once. "Okay, you know what, I won’t even dignify that with an answer. I'm just gonna hug you."

Jeongguk rolls his eyes heavenward, completely done with Kim Taehyung. Is this what he has to look forward to in life? Being randomly hugged in public places by his best friend for no apparent reason? Being called a dickhead by the same person who would have stood up a hot, muscular dimpled hipster so he could eat Cheetos with him on prom night?

Well, it’s not the worst thing that could happen.

“We are going to that prom. I rented this expensive ass suit for a reason, you know.” He tries to wriggle out of the embrace. This is getting embarrassing.

“Yeah, you did. ‘Coz you love me.” He can feel rather than see Taehyung smiling, the unusual shape of his grin pressed into the skin of his back, warm even through two layers of clothing.

“Aside from that," he retorts, squeezing Taehyung's forearms in retaliation when he doesn't let go. "I wanna show Jimin up tonight. Little fucker’s been talking about prom for weeks now, saying he’ll win Prom King hands down without us there.”
Taehyung finally lets him go, chuckling the entire time. It doesn’t feel right though, not touching him, so Jeongguk entwines their fingers together like he saw Hongbin did with his girlfriend earlier. Taehyung looks pleasantly surprised by the action, which isn’t all that different from all the times they’ve held hands for the past 11 years really, so Jeongguk keeps holding his hand all the way inside.

Taehyung may not have gotten the prom night he wanted but he deserves all the nice things and if that means Jeongguk has to hold his too-warm hand and mingle with inferior species of mankind (also known as majority of the high school student body) then so be it.

+  

Turns out, none of them wins Prom King because Yoongi abused his powers as student council president so Seokjin could win the crown.

(Apparently, Jimin cried and attempted to assassinate the president using ketchup. Hoseok helped and succeeded in ruining Yoongi’s lame ass white tux. Seokjin was suitably offended because of course he’d win just by showing up, what the fuck is Jimin talking about with these crazy conspiracy theories of his. Namjoon, apparently, did not give a single fuck.)

It’s not like Jeongguk saw any of it anyway. He’d spent nearly the entire prom night outside with Taehyung, chilling in the bleachers with pizza and several bottles of soda.

Taehyung, of course, got intense sugar rush from all the caffeine and started listing all the kings, prime ministers and presidents their country has ever had, before rapping Coup D’état when he got bored of it.

Jeongguk, of course, spent half the time laughing at everything that comes out of Taehyung’s mouth and the other half wondering if his mother would approve of him getting engaged without informing her first.

Probably, seeing as she raised his allowance when she found out he took Tae to prom.
And, well, she’s been trying to adopt Taehyung for years—she’ll probably approve just so she can have Taehyung’s last name changed to Jeon.

Jeon Taehyung.

Now that he's had a few nights to sleep on it, it doesn’t sound so bad.

“Why so serious?” Taehyung says as they’re walking to school three days later. He’s been so busy thinking that he didn’t notice Taehyung’s removed his headphones and has started making Joker impressions again. “No, seriously, you’ve been staring angrily at thin air for more than two minutes. What’s up?”

Should he tell him? Yeah, he probably should so they can get this out of the way and so maybe Jeongguk can reconsider this whole boyfriend thing if this doesn’t work out.

“So, when we get married,” he starts and Taehyung promptly breaks into coughing fit. He shoots him a frown, patting him on the back. “You okay? What’s wrong? I told you not to drink so much chocolate milk in the morning.”

“When. When we get—” Taehyung repeats, pounding his chest before continuing, “Okay. Wow. Yeah, go on, what is it?”

Jeongguk eyes him dubiously, but doesn’t stop rubbing circles on his back. “Right. Well, when we get married you should change your last name to mine.”

Taehyung pouts in protest. “What? Why can’t you change yours to mine?”

“Kim Taehyung, my mother’s dream is to adopt you. This is the closest she's ever going to get to doing that. Do you want my mother to be sad?” No one ever said he's not above a little guilt-tripping. His mother would approve.

Taehyung looks torn for a moment, then shrugs. "I don't really mind. Sure, I guess," he consents. "As long as you change yours to Kim."
"Fine. Okay, we're good." He nods decisively, grabbing Taehyung’s hand and squeezing. Taehyung beams at him, smiling his biggest, happiest smile and there's that tight feeling in his chest again.

His chest only gets this way around Taehyung so he must have some kind of weird condition.

He should probably get that checked out later.

"Also," he continues, before he forgets. "Now that I'm your official keeper, can I borrow your phone?"

Taehyung immediately drops his hand and runs like his life depends on it, screeching, "Never! I won't let you reset all my games again! I don't love you that much!"

Instinct makes him run after Taehyung who pelts a strawberry at him when he tries to grab him. "You little shit!"

Jiminie @youngbaefan88
@kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 I AM THE MATCHMAKING GOD FEAR ME

Jiminie @youngbaefan88
@kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 I CONQUERED JEON JEONGGU K FEAR ME

Jiminie @youngbaefan88
@kingyoongi @rapgod94 @hobistyle @pinklover92 taetae's boyfriend. for real this time kekeke~
I've recently deleted all of my old Taekook fics because of reasons which would take me entirely too long to explain here and I just don't have the time because I'm on mobile.

But if you guys want them on PDF form, I'm making some of them (not all of them) available so just gimme a heads up on tumblr: bulletproofmaknaeline.

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