Sonder

by obsobing

Summary

Sonder - n. The realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own - populated with their own ambitions, friends, routines, worries and inherited craziness.

"... some stories just don't have a happy ending." - Jodi Picoult

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I'll update the tags as I go.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.
“Don't you ever wonder?” He trailed off, looking sheepishly at his best friend, Namjoon, as the other gave him an exasperated look.

“We're supposed to be doing our work, Hoseok,” Namjoon said after a moment of studying the dancer.

“I know but I couldn't help it! Don’t things ever come to you as the harsh truth that you want to do nothing but get rid of or try to change? It's just… I can't help it every time I think of this,” Hoseok replied as honestly as he could. “It’s this feeling of being absolutely no one to some of these people. It's the feeling of knowing that they have their own lives but inexplicably feeling sad at not being a part of them. At least, for me… Especially because some of them seem so sad that I want nothing more than to hold them close and tell them everything will be alright because it could be…” he trailed off as his best friend answered.

“Or it could not be, you're right. Where are you going with this?”

“Well, you know how I'm a part of the Writing-”

“Stop right there. This would suggest that you actually bothered to go to your professors and talk to them about your major and we both know that you don't,” Namjoon scolded lightly, biting back a sigh when he was met with a pout.

“Because I don't have nearly as much time as you believe, Namjoon. Professors don’t exactly look up to me as an example for being a double major in Dance and Literature. I just want… to do something for the world, you know? It's what everyone wants but I know- it's not enough right now,” Hoseok whispered, turning back to his notebook and drawing random patterns on the edges of the paper.

Namjoon sighed before nodding, “Fine, okay… Do you want me to help you then?”

Hoseok turned his gaze back to the younger and shook his head, a small smile playing on his lips, “No but thank you, Nammie. Just this once, I want to do something alone… without feeling like I'm a porcelain doll of sorts.”

Namjoon snorted, “To be a porcelain doll, you'd have to be quiet and fragile.”

Hoseok rolled his eyes, “It's a good thing I'm not quiet because everyone else treats me like I'm fragile.”

“Hoseok… you know there's-”

“Not today, please?” Hoseok bit his lip and Namjoon frowned at the interruption then shrugged.

“I didn't say anything.”

“Yeah, I know.”
"Has anyone actually stopped by?" Namjoon teased Hoseok when he had walked by and noticed the table the elder had set up in the middle of the lobby, where most of the student population passed by throughout the day regardless of what their classes or majors were.

"Actually, many people have stopped by but very few have chosen to share their stories. I guess I'll see if this works or not once I get it going," Hoseok answered happily, fiddling around with the sleeve of his shirt as people passed by and stared at Namjoon warily. "Dude, they seriously think you're a gangster or something. You know that nothing will happen if you smile at them, right?"

"You mean, besides them falling for my good looks, right?" Namjoon laughed then rolled his eyes. "I actually like my privacy. If you smile at them, then they think of you as approachable and the next thing you know, you're being asked relentlessly for a pencil from an imbecile who must have forgotten that he was coming to school since he doesn't have a notebook or book either."

"... Was it Calculus again?" Hoseok sighed, shaking his head at his younger friend. "I told you to smile at people out here not in the classroom. Besides, you should have gotten that class done with in high school so you didn't have to suffer here."

"Yeah, well, I had a bunch of other classes I was taking to add that one to the pile," Namjoon harrumphed.

"And did it work? Because I see like maybe only three of those classes helping you towards your major," Hoseok grinned. "Shoo, go study in the library like the good boy you are."

"... Sometimes I regret talking to you, you know?" Namjoon huffed, already walking away and causing Hoseok to stare at him in a mock scandalized manner.

"Sure you do," Hoseok sighed softly, looking at his wrist and then turning to look at another person as they approached. "Oh, are you interested in this?"

The newcomer smiled and nodded, "I am... This is very different from the usual booths. You don't belong to a particular club, do you?"

Hoseok chuckled, "If I did, I think everyone would know... But I can't join the one club I want to be a part of so... here I am."

"Is that why this word is the main subject of your table? It's not a word people would hear about often. Heck, most words that are too complex wouldn't be talked about by others. Oh, I'm Sehun, by the way."

Hoseok hummed, shaking the other's hand, "Well, that's basically one side to the word but only in relation to language. What Sonder is, is basically this feeling of realization in which you finally learn about how there are people out there whose own lives have little to almost no relation to your own. It's basically where you think about the outside world more than yourself in that moment because you know..."

"The world doesn't revolve around you," Sehun nodded, smiling at one of the flyers that lay on
the table. "So, is this a project for a class then?"

"Not really. I just thought it would be kind of awesome to have people share memorable stories from their lives and see if there's other people who know who the person sharing the story is and if others will see themselves as just a passerby in the background or not. As well as if people are willing to empathize and try to understand a complete stranger."

"So you want them to see if they could bond with and understand one another through the stories...? I feel like I'm missing something here. Is there anything else the stories would have to them? Or simply more to the project? Because I sincerely doubt that the stories are only going to be feel good or something of the sort. Would you be trying to encourage people to share the not so good stories as well? Since you mentioned them being *memorable* stories and not their happiest memories around," Sehun prodded, eyes lighting up just a bit when he heard Hoseok laughing lightly.

"You are definitely right in that respect. I don't want just the happy stories to be shared. The world isn't a happy-go-lucky place, so why should we be? I just want it to be something to help everyone see that yes, everyone has their own lives but that when something happens - while it may seem cruel - the world doesn't stop moving for one of us. There are countless people out there who might have been through worse and they're still moving, so why shouldn't we? And I know we're not all the same, but isn't that the beauty in it all?" Hoseok grinned, tapping on a specific link on the flyer and shrugging. "That is, if people bother to pay attention to this little *project* of mine, it would be worth it, don't you think?"

"Yes... it would be," Sehun whispered with a nod as he picked up the flyer, but not before setting a bag of chips on the table and a water. "I've seen you in dance, you know. This... I mean, I looked up to you before but this is just... Wow. So, you deserve this. I'll see you later, Hoseok."

Hoseok blinked then smiled with a tilt of his head and a small nod, "I'll see you, Sehun."

Sehun chuckled, waving a hand and walking away while Hoseok hummed to himself softly, "Just passerby, huh..."

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**Chapter End Notes**

I asked what ship people may want on wp but no one asked answered, so... which ship may you all want?
“Hoseok, a little birdie told me that you were doing something special?” A voice startled him out of the silent concentration he had immersed himself into for the time being. Hoseok had jumped before he turned to look at the founder of the Writing Club and sighed, “I just… It's allowed right? I mean, I didn't ask but at the same time, it has nothing to do with the rest of the-”

“Breathe, Hoseok. I don't think it's bad, if anything I'm envious of your ability to come up with ideas such as this. It's wonderful to know that there's people like you out here in the world and that I get to be one of the lucky few to know you,” the other replied with a small grin.

“... Thank you, Minseok. You really don't know how much this means to me. I just wanted to be some sort of change in the world, you know? I didn't think I could be of help even right now, until I thought about how words can be the most dangerous weapon or the most helpful band-aid… Okay, that sounded a lot better worded in my head,” Hoseok pouted, turning back to his laptop when he heard Minseok’s laughter echoing through the room. “It’s not funny~”

“It kind of is funny. Rather, it's more endearing than funny but still,” Minseok hummed. “So… this little project, can I help?”

“You would want to help? I mean, it's not like we're going to gain real world experience. You would also have to talk to people and I know how you like to keep to yourself,” Hoseok frowned. “Would you be willing to do it even with that?”

“You make it sound like I'm some sort of horrible person who would never think even once about helping others. But yeah, I wouldn't mind. Besides, don't you need all the help you can get? I think it's going to be a lot to handle once more people find out about this.”

“More people? How would- Minseok… what did you do?”

“I might have had Sehun go around passing flyers out,” Minseok admitted sheepishly.

“Minseok!” Hoseok jumped out of his seat, scrunching his nose and glaring at the other.

“Hey, you would be helping a whole lot more people than ten,” Minseok chuckled softly, backing up slightly so the younger wouldn't try to attack him. “Just please let me help? I bet you even Sehun wouldn't mind helping. He looks up to you, you know.”

Hoseok stifled a sigh as he stared at Minseok for a moment then nodded slowly, “But for the record, you're both dead later. And Sehun… he's a wonderful person, he needn’t look up to me. I mean, he's amazing himself so it's kind of weird for the both of us to look up to one another, isn't it?”

“Actually, that's really sweet,” Minseok shrugged, stumbling back and running out of the room as Hoseok chased him out. “Call me later, kit.”

“I'm not your kin, Minseok!”

“Not yet~”

Hoseok blinked, laughing lightly as he turned back to the laptop once more and hummed.
Replying wouldn't take too long but posting each individual story would certainly take him some more time… not that he minded. Minseok was right, he would really love helping more than ten people and if that meant being swamped by messages then he would gladly take them all. After all, helping people was the one thing he knew he had always been born to do.
The Anticipation In The Air Surprised Me But Nothing Surprises Me More Than You

Chapter Summary

Things… They would be okay; today, tomorrow and onwards.

A letter to the world from a lost soul:

To be truthful, I thought long and hard about whether posting this was worth it. Even sharing it didn’t seem like it was something that would help me in the long-run but even as I begin writing; my chest feels lighter. It’s not like what I want to share is something that’s entirely sad but it’s something that I want to share with the world.

You see, a while ago it seemed to everyone I knew that I no longer smiled and there’s a reason for that but when the whole world begins to bother you - that’s the last thing you want to share with anyone. It’s not that I suddenly began to hate the world but that I couldn’t be happy for too long. Everyone collectively agreed that I was depressed but I wasn’t, I was only grieving because that’s what you do when you lose someone special to you… but could I share that with the world? No, of course not. I didn’t want the pitying looks I would undoubtedly receive, in fact that was what I least wanted. However, what I did want was for the world to leave me alone. All the time I didn’t force a smile, I felt targeted but now that I do… I’m called fake?

Please tell me what it is you want from me? I cannot give you one version of myself because you cry for the other. I cannot be who you want me to be.

If my ‘friends’ are reading this, I’m sorry but nothing I said ever got through to you. Maybe this will finally open your eyes.

Sincerely, K.T.

“Wow, that certainly was something, wasn’t it?” Minseok raised an eyebrow as he watched the comments rolling in with Hoseok. They had only just finished posting things online so they thought it was going to take a while before the page they were on got any traction but it seemed like people were already waiting for this moment.

“Did you tell anyone when we were planning on doing this?” Hoseok frowned in confusion, unsure of whether this was a good thing. He would have really liked to think so but he couldn’t help some insecurities within him to begin trying to burst their way out of him. “I… I didn’t think anyone would honestly care for the first couple of days so this is kind of really new to me? I also am not the most popular person on campus or in general so this is… Whoa…” He trailed off, his eyes wide as he noticed how the number of comments was growing very quickly.

“Well, I don’t think I did anything but I did tell Sehun we would be here, if that’s any help?”
Minseok shrugged. “He probably told his friends to keep watch and then had them share as soon as something was posted. I told you he was a good kid, he only wants to help and he already is. Look at the top comments. They seem to know this person very well.” Minseok pointed at the screen before clicking on it with his mouse and smiling as Hoseok leaned forward to read what the comments said.

“Oh wow, they’re apologizing for the most part. See, I think this is what the campus needed. It’s like a place to come and vent while also gaining some sort of understanding from the rest of the world. Thank you so much for helping me on this, Minseok. I truly don’t know how I would have done this if it weren’t for your help,” Hoseok smiled widely at the elder and laughed when the other saluted him. “Are you going to work on the-”

“Oh, crap! Thanks for reminding me, Hoseok,” Minseok almost jumped out of his seat as Hoseok watched in amusement. It was honestly the most hilarious thing he’d seen that week so he could say that when his laughter broke it, it was justified. “Hey… I’ll allow that because I have no time to scold you. Have a nice day!” With that, the elder ran out of the room and left Hoseok an almost crying mess before the computer. One that jumped when his phone beeped from a notification.

From: Nammie

I saw the article. You’re really doing a great thing here, Seokkie.

I know I made fun of it but I trust you, you’re helping a lot of people here.

I hope you know that and that it sticks with you, forever, ya know?

To: Nammie

Thank you, Nammie.

And yeah, I know. Wanna help a poor soul out by helping him clean the room and then getting some food?

From: Nammie

*gasp* Is- Is this a date?

To: Nammie

If you want it to be ;)

From: Nammie

;;)

Lol, I’ll see you in 10?

To: Nammie

Haha, I’ll see you in 10 then <3

From: Nammie
Hoseok rolled his eyes, managing to not break into a wide smile but unable to help the giddy feeling that filled his chest. Things… They would be okay; today, tomorrow and onwards.

End Notes

Scream at me: on Tumblr or on Twitter

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