

all i want for christmas is you

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all i want for christmas is you

by [islandbreeze](#)

Summary

When Namjoon turns back around, Jungkook is looking at him in wide-eyed horror.

“Oh my God, I’m so rude. I didn’t even offer you anything to drink. And you’re probably freezing. Look at me, just decorating my tree like you aren’t even here?! Why am I the worst? Can I get you anything? Tea, or coffee, or something?”

Jungkook practically sprints out of the living room. “Do you want a cookie?” he calls, halfway down the hall by now, disappearing towards what Namjoon assumes must be the kitchen.

“Are they chocolate chip?” Namjoon calls after him hesitantly.

“What other kind of cookie is there?” Jungkook shouts back.

This man might be my soulmate, Namjoon thinks to himself.

It’s kind of weird how comfortable he feels, sitting here in a stranger’s home — but there’s something about Jungkook’s unassumingness, the way he’s flitting around the house like a bird with too much energy, fetching treats like some sort of angelic cookie fairy. Namjoon has lost all motivation to leave.

Notes

hello friends! i’ve been dealing with a bit of writer’s block lately and i really wrote this as an exercise to try and get the words flowing again. i’ve been wanting to write a namkook story for ages, and this felt like the perfect opportunity. those of you who are familiar with my works probably know me for jikook, but i hope you will enjoy this little divergence from my usual ☆☆

“Bomi, please slow down,” Namjoon calls out, firmly pulling back on the leash he’s clutching tightly in his gloved right hand. The fluffy white Samoyed attached to the other end turns around and cocks her head at him, as if to say, *yeah, you wish*.

She’s on a mission tonight, sprinting down the sidewalk, ridiculously overexcited about the abundance of snow drifts lining both edges of the street. Snow is her favorite thing in the entire world, and her favorite pastime is to dive into the snow piles like a little kid might jump into a pile of leaves on a crisp autumn day. Except it’s not leaves — it’s snow, so it’s cold and wet and usually dirty, and Namjoon typically has to give her a bath once they get home, after her silky white fur has transformed into a soggy and grimy mess. But he can’t deny her the joy of it. It’s been a long time since he felt childlike delight about anything at all.

It’s a dangerous game this evening, though, because fresh snow is falling on top of hardened ice, and Namjoon is walking like a penguin in an attempt to not completely bust his ass in front of the whole neighborhood. That’s not easy when you’ve got an overenthusiastic 50-pound weight yanking on your arm, eagerly ushering you towards an early demise. But she looks oh-so-lovable as she does it, dark eyes sparkling and tongue lolling out of her mouth happily, her body camouflaged against the snow.

Namjoon tries to take her on a long walk like this every single night, no matter how cold or snowy it may be. It forces him out of the house, even when he doesn’t feel like it, and the exercise is good for her — and him, really. He’d stopped going to the gym a few months back, opting to lift weights and exercise at home instead, and while ironically that’s led to him getting more buff than he’s ever been, it does mean he misses out on the opportunity for cardio. Keeping up with this whirlwind snowball of a dog as she roams wherever she wants to certainly qualifies as a workout.

He’s lost track of how long they’ve been walking now, but he knows they’re at least several blocks from home. He tends to space out and daydream when they’re on their walks, and that’s easy to do tonight, considering how picturesque the atmosphere is. It’s so pretty that it almost makes him sad — it makes him feel an inexplicable longing in his chest that he doesn’t quite understand. That’s not unusual for him, though. He swears his brain is constantly inventing a feeling for him on a whim, just for the sake of feeling it. He just wishes those feelings were happier sometimes.

The sun went down a few hours ago, and it’s pitch black by now, a dim blanket of stars dotting the sky. The only real sources of light are the nearby street lamps and the Christmas lights strung up on the houses they’re passing by. It’s December 1 — a day which many people dedicate to putting up their Christmas decorations, and lots of houses are already completely decked out, with lights and wreaths and ridiculous lawn ornaments.

It’s peacefully quiet, late enough that there aren’t many cars on the street, and snow is falling gently, giant flakes landing in Namjoon’s hair. He’s humming softly to himself as they make their way down the sidewalk, Bomi shuffling her feet eagerly ahead, Namjoon waddling along as quickly as he can.

And then it happens.

Honestly, it was sort of inevitable.

Let's be clear, Namjoon has a lot going for him: he's ridiculously intelligent and very kind. He has a big heart, and big hands, and a big... well, everything, really. But there is one thing he does not have, and that's hand-eye coordination.

Frankly, he's probably the clumsiest person alive. His friends lovingly refer to him as a walking tornado — if Namjoon is around, there is bound to be some sort of accident. A minor injury, or a spilled beverage, or an object left inexplicably missing or broken. So when you take Namjoon and you place him on a perilously icy sidewalk, being hazardedly dragged along by Bomi, well... really, he should have expected this.

The moment that seals his fate happens in a quick flash: a calico cat bolts across the street, about a block away, and Bomi absolutely loses her shit. She starts barking up a storm, tugging on her leash with all the physical force she can muster from within her absurdly fluffy body, and it catches Namjoon completely off guard. His feet slip out from under him on a particularly rough patch of ice, and he goes crashing down onto his knees, catching himself with his hands. Most of his weight lands on his right knee, and somehow, he manages to not let go of Bomi's leash.

"Fuck," Namjoon swears under his breath, searing pain shooting up his right leg. He shifts his weight a little bit, pivoting back onto his butt on the cold, wet ice, not really caring about soggy pants at this point. Bomi seems to sense that something is wrong — she turns around, eyes searching, and when she spots Namjoon on the ground, she comes trotting over, nosing at his shoulder with concern.

Namjoon peers down at his knee, wincing once the sight registers: the thin fabric of his sweatpants has torn right open, and his knee is scraped and bloody, tiny ice chunks clinging to the wound. Before he's had much of a chance to do anything else, he hears the creaking sound of a screen door opening, and his head snaps up, looking towards the source of the noise.

The spot where he's fallen is directly in front of a small house. It's cute, with a tasteful amount of white string lights hung around the edge of the roof, a giant wreath on the door, and a hanging porch swing for two. The house is made of old brick, and the shutters are blue. And now, notably, there's a body silhouetted in the light coming through the open front door, calling out to him.

"Are you okay?" the voice says. "I heard a loud noise, and barking, and I— are you hurt?"

Namjoon blinks, trying to make out the shadowy figure, but the light coming from behind is too bright.

"Oh, I'm fine," Namjoon says back, feeling a little embarrassed and hoping he's loud enough to hear. "I just fell. I'll be okay. I just... uh. Probably need a minute. I'm sorry to disturb you. Bomi, sit," he adds, and she stops tugging on her leash and trying to run to the stranger, instead sitting down obediently next to Namjoon, her tail wagging.

“Are you sure?” the voice asks, sounding uncertain. “Wait, are you bleeding?”

There’s the sound of boots crunching on freshly fallen snow as the man steps onto his porch and down his front steps, then down the path to the sidewalk. Namjoon glances up at him sheepishly, then feels his eyes go a little wide once he actually *registers* him.

Of course. Of course he’s made a fool of himself in front of the cutest guy he’s ever seen. Cool. Thank you, Universe.

The stranger has long, dark, wavy hair. It’s tucked behind his ear on one side, and a dangling silver earring glitters under the light of the street lamp. He’s got on a baggy white hoodie, and the pushed-up sleeves reveal that his right forearm is covered in tattoos. His pants are loosely tucked into a pair of chunky black boots, which he appears to have thrown on haphazardly, as they’re not actually laced up.

It’s his face, though, that really captures Namjoon. Expressive eyebrows frame his big, round eyes, and he’s staring down at Namjoon with marked concern, a crease in his forehead. He’s cute — really, terribly fucking cute, but somehow also really hot at the same time, and it’s confusing, and Namjoon’s butt is currently soaked and half-frozen, and his knee is stinging, and he kind of just wishes he could disappear on the spot.

Suddenly, Namjoon remembers he was asked a question. “Oh, yeah, bleeding a little bit, I think. Just busted my knee on the ice... I’ll be fine, though, really, I don’t live far from here.”

Bomi hops up and saunters over to where the other man is standing, and he offers out his hand for her to sniff for a few seconds before he leans down and scratches behind her ears, momentarily abandoning his worried expression to smile at her warmly.

“Bomi, be gentle,” Namjoon warns, knowing she has a tendency to jump when she gets too excited. “Sorry, she just really likes people—”

“No, no, it’s okay,” the stranger says, delivering a final pat to her head and righting himself again. He gazes down at Namjoon. “What’s her name?”

“Bomi.”

“Bomi... cute. And yours?”

“What?”

“Your name.”

Namjoon blinks. “Oh. Uh, right. Namjoon. My name’s Namjoon.”

“Hi. I’m Jungkook. Can I help you up?” He sticks out his hand.

Namjoon stares at Jungkook’s hand hesitantly for a second before reaching out and grabbing it. He’s surprised at the strength of Jungkook’s grip, warm fingers wrapping tightly around Namjoon’s frozen ones and hauling him to his feet easily. As he pulls away, Namjoon notices that Jungkook’s hand is covered in tattoos as well.

Once he's fully upright, Jungkook glances down at Namjoon's knee with that same concerned, soft expression. "Are you sure you don't want to come inside and clean up your knee? Are you even able to walk okay? How far do you live? Maybe you should just sit for a bit before you go? Really, you should probably come in. I just— um, I guess, I mean, if you're not comfortable, I don't want to force you or anything. Sorry, uh... I'm being awkward. You know what, maybe you can just stay here and I can go get—"

Namjoon makes a split second decision, which is unlike him. The words actually surprise him as they escape his lips. "No, it's okay. I'll come in."

Jungkook looks a little surprised, too. "Oh! Okay. Great."

To be honest, Namjoon's knee is really hurting, and the idea of being able to get it cleaned up, plus being able to wait a little while before he has to trudge back home, is very appealing. Is there a chance that this strange man might actually be a serial killer and Namjoon is currently being lured to his death? Sure. Possibly. But Namjoon's life has been a little dull lately, and at least that would be exciting. Maybe he'll end up in a documentary one day. Like, you know, after he gets sawed completely in half.

Namjoon shakes his head a little bit, rolling his eyes at himself as he follows Jungkook up the path to the front door. "Are you sure I won't be disturbing your family or anything?"

"Nope. No family," Jungkook says cheerfully, stomping the snow off his boots outside the door. "It's just me. God, if I lived with anyone else in this tiny house, I'd go insane."

Okay, so he lives alone. Just like a serial killer would. Which is fine.

Namjoon follows him into the house, kicking off his boots in the narrow entryway and following Jungkook down the hall until they emerge in his living room. Bomi trails behind them happily, seemingly unfazed by this turn of events.

The space is cramped but cozy. An old but very comfortable-looking brown leather sofa takes up a good portion of the room, the wall behind it filled from top to bottom with various black and white art prints of different sizes that Namjoon can't quite make out from this far away. A wooden coffee table that's strewn with books and art magazines sits in the center of the room, and there's a small brick fireplace, too, currently aglow but on its way to dying.

The room is warm and dimly lit, and a Christmas tree — a live one, Namjoon deduces, since he can smell the fresh pine — sits near the doorway. White lights are wrapped around the bottom half, but the top half is naked. A giant cardboard box overflowing with more lights and various glass ornaments is sitting haphazardly atop one arm of the couch.

"Did I interrupt your decorating?" Namjoon guesses, heading over to the couch and plopping down on the opposite end, away from the box. He winces as he sits down, his knee bending painfully.

Jungkook sees it happen, and his eyebrow creases in worry again. Namjoon is a little taken aback by how concerned he seems. He's not used to having people worry about him at all.

“Yeah, I finally got my tree today. I was decorating when I heard you take your tumble. You just wait there, okay? I’m gonna go grab some first aid stuff.”

Namjoon nods, glancing around the room as Jungkook leaves.

Bomi has already settled down on the rug in front of the fireplace, laying on her belly, eyes squinting shut from the warmth. An evergreen garland has been draped across the hearth, dotted with twinkling lights, and two stockings hang from the fireplace: one initialed with a J, and another with an H. Namjoon raises an eyebrow, wondering. Girlfriend? Sibling?

Although the tree’s in an awkward state of half-completion, the rest of the room is thoroughly decorated. Mistletoe hangs in the doorway — which seems odd, since Jungkook lives alone, but whatever. Lo-fi instrumental Christmas music is playing softly from a Bluetooth speaker on the coffee table. This is actually way more Christmas spirit than Namjoon would expect from a guy in his twenties who lives by himself, but hey, to each his own. It’s actually kind of nice. It feels... homey.

Namjoon is thinking about how sad and bare his apartment feels in comparison when Jungkook emerges a few moments later, hands filled with various supplies. He bends down by the coffee table and deposits it all on the surface in front of Namjoon: gauze pads, tape, band-aids, antibiotic cream, antiseptic wipes. “Do you think you’ll need anything else besides this stuff?” he asks, glancing up at Namjoon.

God, it’s so stupid, but Namjoon is absolutely gobsmacked by him. His eyes are shining a little, reflecting the Christmas lights, and his lips are kind of pouty, and he’s just so... honestly, Namjoon can’t think of any word to describe him that would actually do him justice. It’s been a long time since Namjoon had anybody, so maybe the overwhelming loneliness is just catching up to him, but there’s something about Jungkook that’s reeling him in, and he doesn’t understand it. They’ve barely even exchanged four sentences.

Namjoon realizes he’s been staring for a beat too long, and he snaps himself out of it. “Oh, no, this should be good. Thank you so much. I just... you really didn’t need to do this. You’re very kind,” he says, reaching out to pick up one of the pre-packaged wipes from the table and ripping it open.

“It’s really nothing,” Jungkook says with a shrug, walking over to the open box of Christmas decorations and carefully untangling another string of lights. “It was actually kind of lonely decorating by myself. I’m happy to have the company.” He laughs softly to himself, kneeling down by the tree and beginning to wrap the lights around the middle section. “You aren’t exactly the company I was expecting, but that’s okay.”

Namjoon half-smiles, half-winces as he finishes wiping his knee, which is now stinging quite impressively. “Well, I wasn’t expecting to be anyone’s company either,” he says. He grabs a packet of gauze, the wrapper crinkling in his hands as he tears into it.

“I’m not surprised to hear that busting your knee open wasn’t on your itinerary for this evening,” Jungkook says, back now turned away from Namjoon as he strings the lights around the rear side of the tree. “So. What’s your story? You live nearby?”

Namjoon nods, then shakes his head once he remembers Jungkook isn't looking at him. He's always so smooth... *so* smooth. "Yeah, just a few blocks away from here. I don't usually walk out this way when I take Bomi on her walks, though. For some reason, I felt compelled tonight."

"It's a nice neighborhood to walk through at this time of year. Some of the houses really go all-out with their Christmas decorations. I can hardly compete."

"I did notice that," Namjoon says. "That ten foot tall inflatable Santa up the block is really... uh, something."

Jungkook giggles, and it's heart-stoppingly adorable. Namjoon scrunches his eyes shut, willing himself back to sanity.

"Yeah, that's not really my style either. I like more traditional stuff. I bought this house a couple of years ago, and I think I probably go overboard with the decorating, but... it's one of my favorite things about having a place of my own."

"I noticed. Um, I mean, it looks really nice, though. It feels really cozy. I wouldn't say it's overboard, it's just... well, what's up with the mistletoe?" Namjoon blurts out before his brain-to-mouth filter can kick in. "I mean, if you live by yourself—"

Jungkook laughs, running a hand through his hair sheepishly. "Ah, that's not really for me. I'm, uh... there's nobody for me to have under the mistletoe at the moment. But I have a big Christmas party here every year. It's kind of a tradition ever since I bought the house. A bunch of my friends come over, and my brother, too, usually, and we have a potluck and get really drunk and play games and stuff."

Jungkook pauses to wiggle out from behind the tree, emerging with a few pine needles in his hair. "The mistletoe is sort of a running joke. We're very strict about it, so no matter who you are, if you end up underneath, there's no getting out of it, and... anyway, it's probably dumb, but the amount of hilarious and awkward situations I've witnessed, you would not believe."

Namjoon is more than a little happy to hear about Jungkook's lack of a mistletoe partner, which makes him feel kind of guilty, so he shoves that feeling aside quickly.

"So what do you do?" Jungkook asks, now stationed back over at the box and untangling another string of lights for the rest of the tree.

Namjoon is taping up the gauze over his knee, avoiding eye contact with Jungkook, deciding this is the best way forward. If he does not perceive him, he can avoid coming to terms with the fact that Jungkook actually *looks* like that, while simultaneously being so... *nice*.

"I'm a professor," Namjoon tells him, settling back into the couch cushions. He pushes his half-rimmed glasses up his nose, a well-timed move.

"Oh?" Jungkook sounds surprised. "You don't look that old."

"Believe it or not, being old is not a requirement."

“Right! Of course. I didn’t mean—” Jungkook looks mortified, and Namjoon laughs, easing the tension.

“No, it’s okay. I haven’t been for very long. I only got my PhD two years ago. I teach literature courses.”

“Oh, wow. That’s cool,” Jungkook says, reaching up on his tip-toes to string the lights around the top of the tree. The stretch results in his hoodie rising up a little, revealing a few inches of his stomach, and Namjoon nearly chokes when he realizes there’s an eight-pack hiding under that sweatshirt. Of course there is. Great! Fantastic. This is fine.

Namjoon wonders if he might have actually hit his head on the way down to the sidewalk and he’s somehow forgotten about it now. That would certainly explain his out-of-character floundering.

He’s not exactly the type to, well, *pine*. It’s rare that anyone even catches his eye at all— he’s kind of surrendered himself to a life of solitude lately, throwing himself into his work and cuddling with Bomi whenever he feels particularly touch-starved. Fantasizing about strangers isn’t exactly par for the course, but his mind is inventing all *kinds* of fun scenarios involving Jungkook the second he allows his thoughts to wander. He’s got to snap himself out of it.

“I have an art degree, but it ended up being totally unrelated to my job,” Jungkook continues, now examining the placement of the lights and making small tweaks. “I work in IT at a big company. It’s as boring as it sounds, but I actually really like it.”

“What exactly does that entail?”

“Asking people to try turning things off and on again. Explaining that laser printers don’t have white ink. Cleaning up viruses after people download sketchy porn onto their work computers. Mainly just asking people to turn things off and on again, though. I’m kind of at the bottom of the food chain, so I don’t have very many serious responsibilities. I just wander around and get to talk to people all day. Honestly, I’m kind of overpaid.”

“That sounds like a pretty sweet gig, actually.”

Jungkook nods, pulling a rabbit-shaped ornament out of the cardboard box. “It is. And I still draw in my spare time, so it’s not like all the creativity has been sucked out of my soul or anything.”

“Are these yours?” Namjoon asks, turning around slightly and gesturing towards the wall of artwork behind the couch.

“Oh, absolutely not,” Jungkook says, laughing. “I would never hang my own work in my house. God, that would be awful, I wouldn’t even be able to look at it. No, these are just things I’ve collected over the years — some are by friends, some were done for me, and some I’ve bought at art shows and stuff.”

“Huh,” Namjoon muses, craning his neck to examine the art on the wall. Despite the fact that he knows next-to-nothing about Jungkook, it all seems to suit him, somehow. Some pieces

are in black and white, others are in muted tones — browns, tans, blues. It's mostly abstract stuff. They're warm and inviting, mounted in mismatched, yet complementary frames.

When Namjoon turns back around, Jungkook is looking at him in wide-eyed horror. "Oh my God, I'm so rude. I didn't even offer you anything to drink. And you're probably freezing. Look at me, just decorating my tree like you aren't even here?! Why am I the worst? Can I get you anything? Tea, or coffee, or something?"

Namjoon waves him off. "Don't even worry about it. It was kind enough of you to invite me in at all. Coffee actually sounds amazing, but don't go out of your way—"

Jungkook practically sprints out of the living room. "It's not a problem! Do you want a cookie?" he calls, halfway down the hall by now, disappearing towards what Namjoon assumes must be the kitchen.

"Are they chocolate chip?" Namjoon calls after him hesitantly.

"What other kind of cookie is there?" Jungkook shouts back.

This man might be my soulmate, Namjoon thinks to himself.

It's kind of weird how comfortable he feels, sitting here in a stranger's home — but there's something about Jungkook's unassumingness, the way he's flitting around the house like a bird with too much energy, fetching treats like some sort of angelic cookie fairy. Namjoon has lost all motivation to leave.

"I brought you two," Jungkook says when he returns a couple minutes later, coffee mug in one hand and a stack of cookies in the other. He places them on the table in front of Namjoon after grabbing a coaster made of blue agate for the mug.

"It's actually good that you're here to help me eat these. Otherwise I would eat them all, and that's not good for the... you know. Physique." Jungkook gestures at himself vaguely, returning to the box of ornaments and pulling out a llama.

"Did you bake them?"

"Mmhmm," Jungkook nods, mouth half-full of cookie. He covers his mouth as he continues. "It's kind of a tradition. You know, I actually didn't realize how crazy obsessed with traditions I am until I started telling you about all my Christmas traditions, but, yeah. Usually my brother would come over and help me decorate the house, and I'd bake cookies for us. But he's on a business trip overseas, so it's just me this year."

"I get it. There's something very comforting about a tradition," Namjoon says. "Even though your brother isn't here, if the cookies are something you usually do with him, that's a way you can manage to feel like he's still here, a little bit, right?"

Jungkook nods thoughtfully. "Yeah, I guess so."

"Is that his stocking?" Namjoon asks, pointing towards the fireplace.

“Yeah. It felt too sad to only hang up mine,” Jungkook says, sounding embarrassed. “But he’s going to be abroad for two months, so he won’t be here for Christmas at all. Usually he’d spend it here with me. It’s probably dumb that I put it up anyway, right?”

“It’s not dumb,” Namjoon says, shaking his head. “I don’t think it’s dumb at all.”

“When I was a kid, my grandparents always made a huge deal about decorating for Christmas,” Jungkook says quietly, now oscillating back and forth between the box of ornaments and the tree as he continues to extract ornaments and carefully place them on the branches. He seems to really like animals — a squirrel, moose, panda, and bear have all joined the fray. “Spending time with them was always my favorite thing in the entire world. I think that’s one of the reasons I like decorating my house so much. It’s not even really about Christmas at all, if I really think about it.”

“I know what you mean. Christmas itself has never meant that much to me... I’m not religious or anything. But I really appreciate how it gives us all a reason to come together and celebrate,” Namjoon says, finishing off his second cookie. “I’m a big fan of tradition. I feel like it’s a precious thing for families to have their own traditions, and make new ones, too. It’s part of what makes family *family*. You should be proud that you have so many traditions that are important to you.”

Jungkook doesn’t reply for a moment, chewing on his bottom lip thoughtfully. “Yeah. Yeah, you’re right. You know, I really like you, Namjoon. Thanks for busting your knee outside my house.”

“Oh,” Namjoon says, feeling his face flush a little bit. “I’m— I mean. You’re welcome?”

“Do you have any Christmas traditions?” Jungkook asks, reaching up to hang a tiny bird near the top of the tree.

Namjoon shakes his head. “No, not really. I don’t really have much family that lives nearby, so... it’s usually not much of an event. I did buy a Santa hat for Bomi one year, though, which was like, *super* cute. Wait, I think I have a picture on my phone.”

He pulls his phone out of his pocket and scrolls for a moment before he finds it. “Aha! Here it is.” He turns the phone around for Jungkook to see.

Jungkook leans over, peering at the screen. His eyes go wide once he sees the photo and he grins. Bomi stares back at him on the screen, smiling wide in her too-big Santa hat. “Are you *kidding* me? That is the cutest thing I have ever seen. She doesn’t even look mad about it.”

“No. She’s basically a saint in dog form. She does whatever I ask her to with no complaint. When I fell on the ice out there, she immediately ran over to check on me like Lassie.”

Bomi opens her eyes a little bit and rubs at her nose with her paw, like she knows she’s being talked about.

“How long have you had her?”

“Five years,” Namjoon says. “She was a rescue. I always wanted a dog when I was a kid, but my dad was allergic, so we couldn’t have one. As soon as I graduated from university and I was living on my own, I wasted no time. I think I had been living in my apartment for like a week when I brought her home.”

“Cute,” Jungkook says, his nose scrunching a little bit. It’s so adorable that it makes Namjoon’s stomach hurt.

A brief silence falls over them as Jungkook carefully places the final few ornaments on the tree and Namjoon sips down the last of his coffee. It’s not awkward, though — Bomi’s quiet snoring, the crackling of the fire, and the soft Christmas music blend together in the background, and Jungkook is humming along as he preens at the branches, adjusting their position.

An unexpected wave of anxiety washes over Namjoon as he realizes it’s probably an appropriate time for him to go. The tree is decorated, his coffee is gone, and he already finished bandaging up his knee ages ago. But he feels panicked, because he’s not *ready*. He wants to sink into this leather couch and curl up under a blanket and talk to Jungkook for hours. Bonus points if Jungkook is under the same blanket.

He registers that these feelings are ridiculous, but he can’t help it. What if he just leaves here and it’s like none of this never happened? What if he never sees Jungkook again? What if whatever strange connection he’s feeling is just a one-sided thing, and Jungkook is only being kind to him out of some sad sense of obligation?

“You don’t have to leave right away,” Jungkook blurts out, as if he’s reading Namjoon’s mind. Namjoon glances up at him, feeling alarmed, yet massively relieved.

“I mean, of course you can leave whenever you want,” Jungkook backtracks, sounding shy. “But if you want to stay, we could watch a Christmas movie?”

“That sounds kind of nice,” Namjoon says, trying not to let on just how delighted he is by this development. “Do you have one in mind?”

“Well, um.” Jungkook pauses, tucking his hair behind his ears. “My favorite is *Love Actually*.”

Namjoon stares at him. “Your favorite is *Love Actually*?”

Jungkook’s cheeks go a little pink. “Yeah, but, I know that’s kind of, uh. We don’t have to watch that one—”

“No, I love that movie,” Namjoon says sincerely.

Jungkook just blinks at him. “You— you do?”

“Of course. *To me, you are perfect*? Come on, that’s one of the most romantic scenes in cinematic history. I am admittedly a literature snob, but I can fully get down with a good romcom.”

Jungkook bursts into laughter. “You can’t be real. There’s no way you are real. Are you some kind of apparition? Is this some sort of Christmas Carol situation? Are you haunting my ass right now?”

Namjoon very pointedly does not look at Jungkook’s ass. “I am not a ghost, although sometimes I wish I was. Imagine all the eavesdropping you could do. Wreaking havoc without a care in the world. Not having to worry about dying. Seems kind of fun.”

“True,” Jungkook concedes, plopping down on the couch a few feet away from Namjoon and grabbing the TV remote. He pulls up Netflix, finds *Love Actually*, and presses the play button. He puts the subtitles on and keeps the volume kind of low. Since they’ve both seen it before, they find themselves only half-paying attention, talking through most of the movie.

“Is there anyone waiting for you at home?” Jungkook asks cautiously.

Namjoon shakes his head. “It’s just me and Bomi.”

“Do you like living alone?”

“Sometimes,” Namjoon answers honestly. “I like having the freedom to do whatever I want, whenever I want. But it does get lonely sometimes. It’s a trade-off.”

“Mmm,” Jungkook agrees, nodding. “I’m really introverted, so most of the time, I like being by myself. But I definitely feel lonely at times, especially this year, with my brother out of town, it’s been a little rough for me, to be honest. I don’t have very many people that I’m close to, so I’ve been spending more time by myself than usual.”

“If you spend more time alone than you *want* to, I think that’s what can really make you feel lonely,” Namjoon says. “It’s one thing to be alone by choice, but when you desperately want to spend time with someone else, and there’s no one there... that can hurt a lot, sometimes.”

Jungkook nods. “Yeah. And that— I think that would have been me, tonight, honestly. I don’t know what kind of weird coincidence this was, but... it’s nice having you here. Thank you for hanging out with me.”

“Of course,” Namjoon says softly. “You don’t have to thank me. If I didn’t want to be here, I wouldn’t have stayed.”

And it’s true — if not for this, Namjoon would have been sitting on the couch at his own apartment, alone, staring at a book mindlessly, eyes roaming over the page but not really reading. He’d be shivering under a blanket, because his apartment always gets too cold at night, and his heater doesn’t cooperate.

Instead, he’s curled up on a cozy couch, sitting next to a warm fireplace, talking to the most compelling person he’s met in years, watching a cheesy Christmas movie and eating cookies. If you asked him what his idea of the perfect night would be, he never would have described this, but now that it’s happening to him, he’s pretty sure it would be exactly this.

“Why did you decide to become a professor?” Jungkook asks him suddenly, interrupting his wandering thoughts.

“Books are dying,” Namjoon declares. There’s a hint of sadness in his voice. “I felt this overwhelming pull, this personal sense of responsibility to do my part to help keep them alive.”

“What do you mean books are dying?”

“People aren’t reading anymore, not like they used to. Especially not physical books. Authors are still publishing amazing, incredible works, but no one is reading them. It’s a great loss. It makes my heart ache. Sorry, I know that sounds dramatic. So, anyway, I teach courses on modern literature. Not about the same old books that have always been recognized, but about the new stuff that should be appreciated now — the books that, hopefully, our kids’ kids will be reading in school.”

“I don’t think it’s dramatic. It’s nice to be that passionate about something.”

“Oh. Um, thanks. Usually people just laugh at me. I’m very... serious about it, I guess. I really feel like it’s my calling. I know I can’t make *that* much of an impact, since I’m only one person, but if I can help teach young people to appreciate literature, I feel like I’ve made a difference, in a small way.”

“Well, it’s true that you’re only one person, but think about all the people whose perspectives you can change,” Jungkook says, nibbling on another cookie. “Sure, you might have a class with like, twenty students, or whatever. But they might tell their friends or their parents about the books they read, and then those people tell other people, and then before you know it, that’s hundreds, or maybe even thousands of people who are reading books because you taught about them.”

Namjoon feels like he’s being seen in a way that no one has bothered to see him before. He swallows audibly.

“That’s true. I guess I’ve never really thought about it like that.”

Jungkook nods. “I think most people go through life not really sure why they’re here. I mean, I’ve always felt that way. I’m not sure what I’m supposed to have done by the time I leave. So I actually envy you, a little bit, because you’ve figured that out. I think that’s really important.”

“Well, I think an important mission for *everybody* while they’re here, is to help other people as much as they can. And you seem to be doing a pretty good job at that. From what I’ve seen.” Namjoon gestures down at his knee, smiling. “Maybe you’re not as lost as you think.”

Jungkook smiles back at him. “Maybe not.”

By the time the movie ends, it’s past midnight, and Namjoon knows he can’t put off leaving any longer. Despite the magnetic pull tempting him to stay here for the remainder of his earthly lifespan, and the pit of dread in his stomach that forms when he thinks about saying

goodbye to Jungkook — all the uncertainty about what tonight meant to him, wondering anxiously if he'll ever see him again — despite all that, Namjoon musters the courage to initiate his departure.

"I should probably go," he declares with a loud sigh, rising to his feet and stretching his arms above his head. "It's getting pretty late."

"Yeah, no worries. Let me walk you out," Jungkook says, standing up and delivering a gentle pat to Namjoon's shoulder before pulling away. He walks toward the hallway, and Namjoon follows.

"Come on, Bomi," Namjoon calls, stopping in the doorway and turning to look at her once he realizes she's still lazing by the fireplace and hasn't gotten up to follow him. She yawns a big, lazy yawn, slowly stretching as she climbs to her feet.

When Namjoon turns back around, Jungkook is only a couple feet away, and he's staring at Namjoon with wide eyes, looking completely caught out.

"Wha—" Namjoon starts to ask, and then he glances up and realizes, and his heart leaps into his throat.

They're standing under the mistletoe.

The green bundle hangs perfectly centered above their heads, tied neatly with a red ribbon, presenting an absolutely terrifying opportunity.

His breath quickening, Namjoon immediately realizes there's two directions he could take this. He could chicken out: laugh, brush it off, step away. Lose the moment forever. Walk out the door and leave this behind. It wouldn't be brave, but it would be easy.

The other option, the thought of which currently has Namjoon's stomach flipping upside down, would be to actually make the move. To step in close, gently cradle Jungkook's face in his hands, and kiss him square on the mouth — the way he's been wanting to kiss Jungkook ever since he laid eyes on him, glowing like an angel under the street lights.

And it's the way Jungkook is looking at him that leads Namjoon down his chosen fork in the road. The lights strung on the Christmas tree are reflected in his eyes, his lips are parted slightly, and his head is tilted up as he meets Namjoon's eye, calmly rooted to the spot as he waits for Namjoon to say something.

"You said... you said there's no getting out of it. Right?" Namjoon asks quietly, his heart pounding. He's being brave, sure, but he's still looking for an excuse.

"I'm very strict about it," Jungkook whispers.

Apparently he doesn't need one.

Jungkook steps forward at the same time Namjoon leans down, and then their lips are pressed together in a soft kiss.

It's cautious at first, both of them frozen for a moment as they realize they've actually done it. For a second, Namjoon wonders if this will be it — if it'll just be a peck, if they'll pull away from each other and leave it at that.

But Namjoon doesn't want to pull away. The kiss ignites a spark in him, lights up a feeling deep in his chest that he'd forgotten how to feel, and now that Jungkook's lips are on his, all he knows is that he needs more of whatever this is.

The moment hangs in the balance, and Namjoon wonders breathlessly, but then Jungkook leans in.

He steps even closer and lays his palms flat against Namjoon's chest, running them softly up towards his shoulders. Warm breath ghosts across Namjoon's lips as Jungkook tilts his head and deepens the kiss, sucking gently on Namjoon's bottom lip.

Namjoon feels like all the air has been punched out of his lungs.

He reaches down to settle both hands on Jungkook's waist, and he's surprised by how small it is, the shape of it disguised by the baggy fit of his oversized sweatshirt. Jungkook's body feels strong and solid underneath the soft fabric, and Namjoon slides his hands up Jungkook's back, pulling him closer.

The kiss is changing fast: it isn't chaste or careful anymore. It's hot and hungry, and when Jungkook moans softly into Namjoon's mouth, Namjoon wonders momentarily if he might actually die from this. He can't remember the last time he felt like this. But they're both clearly into it, so he lets himself feel it, this new and frightening desire that's urging him to lay hands on every inch of Jungkook's body.

Namjoon has never been kissed in the sweet, urgent way that Jungkook is kissing him, and he feels like he's falling apart slowly as Jungkook touches him everywhere, lips so soft as they press against his. Jungkook deepens the kiss further, one hand on Namjoon's jaw as he coaxes his mouth open, and the first swipe of Jungkook's tongue across his own feels like taking the first hit of a terribly addictive drug.

Time seems to stop completely as they cling to each other in the doorway, hands everywhere, hearts hammering, Namjoon's palms sliding up the inside of Jungkook's sweatshirt and trailing over his bare stomach. He wants to memorize the taste of him, wants so much more than this, but also doesn't know how much more of this he can actually handle before he'll burst into flames.

"This is probably crazy, right?" Jungkook gasps quietly against Namjoon's mouth, fisting the front of his sweater and pulling him backwards towards the couch.

"Unhinged," Namjoon agrees, obediently following Jungkook's lead, sidestepping the coffee table and the dog as he lets himself be dragged across the room without really pausing their kissing. Once the backs of Jungkook's knees hit the sofa, Namjoon grabs Jungkook and pivots them 180 degrees, turning around to sit down on the couch and pulling Jungkook down on top of him.

Jungkook straddles his lap easily, naturally, without missing a beat. His nose brushes against Namjoon's as he pulls away, gaze traveling over Namjoon's face for a moment before he starts trailing sweet kisses downwards: against the corner of his mouth, down across his jaw, over his neck, to the sensitive spot just underneath his ear. He pauses there, his tongue trailing gently across the soft skin, breath hot against Namjoon's neck. Namjoon shudders, fingertips digging into Jungkook's thighs as a tiny groan escapes his throat.

The solid weight of Jungkook on top of him is intoxicating, and Namjoon feels a little dizzy, heart beating a million miles an hour as he slides his hands slowly up Jungkook's thighs, up to his hips, thumbs pushing against his hipbones and fingers splayed across his lower back. In a swift motion, he pulls Jungkook in closer, all the space between their bodies eliminated as Jungkook's hips press firmly into Namjoon's lap.

They can both feel, then, what they're getting into. It simultaneously snaps them both to a realization — Jungkook gasps, and Namjoon bites back a moan, and Jungkook's mouth pulls away from Namjoon as he looks at him questioningly, threading fingers through the hair at the nape of his neck with shaky hands.

"We should slow down," Namjoon manages, breathing heavily and keeping his hands very still on Jungkook's waist.

Jungkook nods. Now that he's pulled away, Namjoon notices how flushed his cheeks are.

"Namjoon, I... I like you a lot," Jungkook whispers. His voice is a little raspy, and the words make Namjoon's heart feel like it might explode.

"Oh. Well, I like you too. If you couldn't, um... tell."

Jungkook's nose scrunches. "I can tell."

"Good," Namjoon says, laughing, his breath slowly evening out.

"I usually don't... um. Usually I like to get to know someone before..." Jungkook trails off.

"Of course," Namjoon says immediately, hands reaching up to rub the outsides of Jungkook's arms soothingly. "We can stop."

"Honestly, I don't really... *want* to stop?" Jungkook says, swallowing. "That's the part that's kind of scary. I don't think I've ever felt like this? I know that probably sounds absurd, I know I barely know you, but somehow it feels like I've known you my whole life. Do you know what I mean?"

Namjoon nods solemnly. "I know exactly what you mean."

"But that's why I think we probably *should* stop. I want to... I think we should take our time with this. I want to know you. Like, actually know you, not just feel like I know you. Can I get to know you? I want that so badly. You have no idea how much."

"Of course you can," Namjoon tells him, smiling softly, dimples poking into both cheeks. "I want to know you, too. I want to know everything about you."

“Okay,” Jungkook says, still a little breathless. He leans in and presses his lips sweetly against Namjoon’s mouth, hands still wrapped in his hair, kissing him softly for one last, tender moment before pulling away and sliding off his lap, moving beside him on the couch.

“I’ve held you hostage here until the wee hours of the morning, so the least I can do is drive you home,” Jungkook says.

Namjoon laughs, shaking his head. “You have no idea how much Bomi sheds. Her fur is worse than glitter. You’ll never get it out of your car.”

“I see,” Jungkook says, expression creasing thoughtfully. “Well, can I at least walk you back?”

“Will you catch me if I fall?” Namjoon teases.

“There’s a 50/50 chance I’ll go down with you, but I’ll be damned if I won’t at least try.”

Namjoon laughs softly. “Okay. Yeah, you can walk me back.”

And so he does. Jungkook dons his chunky black boots again, actually lacing them up this time, and he layers up with a black puffer jacket and gloves before following Namjoon and Bomi out into the night.

“This way,” Namjoon nods, gesturing for them to make a left once they reach the sidewalk. His breath puffs visibly into the air.

It’s quiet, even quieter than it was when Namjoon was out on his walk earlier, and the only sounds are of Bomi gently panting as she trots along in front of them, plus the crunching of their boots against the fresh snow that’s fallen over the past few hours. The stars are twinkling brighter than they did before.

Jungkook walks alongside Namjoon, hands stuffed into his pockets for warmth, and he tells Namjoon stories about the neighbors as they pass by their houses.

“What I really want to know is the scoop on the inflatable Santa people,” Namjoon tells him.

“Oh! You’re in luck, because I actually know them,” Jungkook says. “It’s a husband and wife. The wife is absolutely nuts. She collects Santas. I went inside their house once because they’re kind of old and I saw them carrying in a bunch of heavy boxes from outside and I offered to help. Anyway, it was last year around this time, so I witnessed the collection. Namjoon, when I tell you it was unlike anything I’ve ever seen...”

Namjoon’s hanging on every word. “Go on.”

“Santas lining the walls from top to bottom. Santas atop every surface. Stuffed Santas, carved Santas, ceramic Santas, plastic Santas, doll Santas. Santas in the living room, Santas in the kitchen. Santas that sing, Santas that dance — there was even an animatronic strip-teasing Santa.”

“You’re kidding.”

“I could not have made that up if I tried.”

“Where do you think she keeps them during the rest of the year? Or do you think they’re just out all the time?”

“I assume she keeps them in the basement or something,” Jungkook shrugs. “I didn’t think to ask. I was more concerned with getting out of there alive.”

“I’m glad you did,” Namjoon says, his eyes sparkling.

The walk goes by fast — too fast for Namjoon’s liking — and although Jungkook’s house is about five or six blocks away from Namjoon’s apartment, it feels like they arrive at his doorstep in just a couple of minutes. Bomi bounces in place eagerly, clearly excited to go inside as she patiently waits for them to say their goodbyes.

“Well... this is where I get off,” Namjoon says lightly, digging around in his pocket for his keys. “You sure you don’t want to come in for a 2AM nightcap?”

“Don’t tempt me,” Jungkook says, laughing. His cheeks and nose are flushed red from the cold, and Namjoon’s never wanted to kiss anyone so badly in his life.

It must be written all over his face, because Jungkook quietly asks: “Can I kiss you?” and Namjoon’s heart does a somersault inside his chest.

“Maybe if you let me put my number in your phone first,” Namjoon tells him, playfully serious.

“Oh! Well, if you insist,” Jungkook says, doing that terribly adorable nose-scrunching smile thing that Namjoon’s already started to fall in love with. He pulls his phone out of his pocket and hands it to Namjoon, who slips off one glove so he can type and add a new contact entry for himself.

“Here you go,” Namjoon says, handing it back to him. “Please text me when you get home, if you don’t mind. It’s late. I wish I could send Bomi with you for protection.”

Jungkook glances down at Bomi. “No offense, but she’s not exactly intimidating.”

“Bomi, don’t listen to him,” Namjoon says, reaching down to cover her ears.

Jungkook laughs, reaching out to grab Namjoon’s arms. He pulls them away from Bomi and then steps between them, pressing closer into Namjoon’s space, tilting his head up to look at him.

“I think you’re forgetting something,” Jungkook says.

“I assure you, I haven’t forgotten.”

Namjoon closes the distance between them, pressing his mouth to Jungkook’s in a warm, lazy kiss. Jungkook leans into it, shifting up onto his tip-toes — kind of unnecessary, considering

he's only, like, one inch shorter than Namjoon, but Namjoon still finds it awfully endearing anyway.

When Jungkook pulls away, he smiles, taking a couple steps backward. "Goodnight, Namjoon."

"Goodnight, Jungkook," Namjoon says, smiling like an idiot. He shakes his head, unlocks his door, and steps inside his apartment.

"Hey," Jungkook calls, just as Namjoon is about to close the door behind him.

"Hmm?" Namjoon opens the door a crack, peering out at Jungkook, who's now standing down by the sidewalk.

"Do you want to come over tomorrow and help me eat the rest of the cookies I made?"

Namjoon laughs.

"I would absolutely love that."

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