

Sunshine named you

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/30433782) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/30433782>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	SEVENTEEN (Band)
Relationships:	Hong Jisoo Joshua/Lee Seokmin DK, Choi Seungcheol S.Coups/Yoon Jeonghan, Jeon Wonwoo/Kim Mingyu, Wen Jun Hui Jun/Xu Ming Hao The8, Kwon Soonyoung Hoshi/Lee Jihoon Woozi, Boo Seungkwan/Chwe Hansol Vernon
Characters:	Hong Jisoo Joshua, Lee Seokmin DK, Choi Seungcheol S.Coups, Yoon Jeonghan, Wen Jun Hui Jun, Jeon Wonwoo, Kwon Soonyoung Hoshi, Lee Jihoon Woozi, Kim Mingyu, Xu Ming Hao The8, Boo Seungkwan, Chwe Hansol Vernon, Lee Chan Dino
Additional Tags:	Mafia AU, all relationships exept seoksoo are only mentioned, its dark at times, mentions of violence and weapons, There is Fluff too don't worry, Romance, Emotional Hurt/Comfort, past trauma, found family concept, this was very self indulgent so don't have high expectations, Falling In Love, next time i'll give chan a bf too, Not Beta Read, Sexual Content, yes skippable at the end, beware of the trigger warnings before each chapter, happy ending because i'm cruel but not a monster by seulrene, all the knowledge I have for the mafia is from two tv shows so beware
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2021-04-03 Completed: 2021-04-14 Words: 26,615 Chapters: 4/4

Sunshine named you

by [pinkphoeniix](#)

Summary

Joshua stares at them for a long time. He doesn't know where to look or even what to say. His shoulder hurts and there is still the metallic taste of blood on his lips.

He gets a call the next day. "Bring the money and don't try playing games or we'll kill him, God knows it would be a pleasure ."

Joshua feels his blood boiling in his body, his nails are digging into the flesh of his palm. He feels like someone is definitely going to die and it wasn't Seokmin.

Notes

It's mafia au so TW for weapons, violence, minor characters death, blood and wounds.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

I am lost looking for you.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Joshua stares at them for a long time. He doesn't know where to look or even what to say. His shoulder hurts and there is still the metallic taste of blood on his lips. It shouldn't be like this. It couldn't be like this. When he left this morning it was all supposed to be an easy job. It had been before. Go to their supplier, get everything Seungcheol usually ordered for them to pass the month and come home. That's why Joshua had thought it was unnecessary, bringing more people so he left with just Hansol and Mingyu.

Little did he know.

Now Hansol was lying in the small room in the basement they used as an improvised medical room with a bullet wound in his shoulder. He acted tough, reassuring them he was fine and it wasn't that serious while Joshua was scared he'd bleed out before he reached their home. He always did, he had to, they all had to. Mingyu is nearly crying next to his bed with what seems to be a minor concussion, refusing to be treated before Hansol was and making Seungkwan even more nervous as he was slowly trying to examine Hansol's wound. Seungcheol had come right away when he had heard what had happened, he was standing right in front of him, asking for a detailed explanation of what exactly had gone wrong. Joshua thought this was definitely not the moment, he answers his questions with simple yes or no and ignores some, instead asking Seungkwan about Hansol. A rock drops from his heart when Seungkwan tells him the wound wasn't deadly. It was bad, awful but not deadly. That is all that matters right now. He glances at Hansol one last time, the boy smiles at him through the pain and Joshua is tired. All he wants to do right now is sleep. He needs to take a shower and wash off all of the dirt and blood, take a nap after that, take Seokmin with him and have the nap in his arms preferably. He excuses himself but is stopped by a hand on his chest. Joshua looks at Seungcheol, furrowing his eyebrows, then behind him at Jeonghan wearing a worried and apologetic expression on his face.

Seokmin. He was gone?

Joshua didn't say anything to them after. He didn't have a thing to say really. At the first moment, he didn't fully assimilate Jeonghan's words. They didn't make sense to him. He is silent for a long time, feeling almost all pairs of eyes in the room on him. He wipes the blood off his mouth, pushes Seungcheol away from his path and goes out of the room.

"Where are you going?" Seungcheol yells behind him and Joshua hears his footsteps following him but doesn't turn. He finds Jihoon and Soonyoung, sitting on the floor of the room they use mainly for training, in silence. They jump at the sight of him.

"Where the fuck do you think?" Joshua opens the cabinet where they keep the new ammunition sets and takes a new one, pulling his gun and changes it. The click of the weapon is satisfying to his ears, he repeats with another.

"You don't even know who it was." Seungcheol tries to touch his shoulder but he pulls away and looks at him with blood behind his eyes. The worry had turned into confusion and then into anger really quick, getting adrenaline pumping through his body.

"I have a vague idea." Joshua grits through his teeth. He is mad, both at him and Jeonghan. There was one rule they all followed and vowed sacred. No one gets left behind. Joshua had taken a bullet for nearly all of them, had been stabbed and hit while watching their backs. And for what? Just so Jeonghan could let them take Seokmin away from him. Joshua knew he wasn't fully trained, knew he had no chance fighting four men larger than him, knew that probably running away was his last hope after they had Seokmin. Jeonghan had told him all of that while shaking at the memory and keeping his tears back. Joshua knew, however he didn't care.

"We're coming with you." Jihoon says and Soonyoung is quickly nodding in agreement. Joshua wants to refuse, has to refuse. This was his battle, however, there was power in numbers and he drank every drop of hope he could get his Seokmin home safe greedily. So he nods, hoping he wouldn't regret it later.

"I am too." Seungcheol says, Joshua expects it. Jeonghan behind him mumbles a quiet "no" and shakes his head. Joshua thinks he's smart just as much as he's pretty. He actually liked Jeonghan. He was nice, cooked well and brought them warm soup when one of them was injured. However, right now all he felt towards him was anger. Joshua threw him a look and the other held it. Maybe it was his boldness Seungcheol had fallen for, being in love with someone like them was dangerous but here he was, many years later. Truth to be told Joshua had expected him to run away the same week Seungcheol had introduced him to them. Jeonghan was either too stupid, abandoning his life as the son of a rich politician so he would come and live with them or insanely in love. Maybe both. Joshua didn't know which was worse.

He looked between the three of them as they were climbing in the car and thought about how much he was willing to risk. Everything was a big word but it came easily to mind. Joshua knew all of them liked Seokmin, it was impossible not to. In the months spent together, they had accepted him as their new brother too, they all had a warm place in their hearts for him but would they risk it all for him?

Joshua didn't know, however, what he did know was that Seokmin was everything to him, his little ray of sunshine in this cold-ass fucked up world they all had been forced to live in. No one touched Seokmin, talked to Seokmin if he didn't want it, or even breathed in his direction without consent as far as Joshua was concerned and he intended it to stay that way.



It was a cold night when Hansol had walked into his room with a big gummy smile on his lips and a mischievous spark in his eyes. He had excitedly told Joshua about a new small gang Wonwoo had spotted invading their rightful territory uninvited. Wonwoo wasn't even sure of how many people were there but they had some weapons imported illegally so Hansol really wanted to check them out.

Joshua had agreed to go with him, not so much from boredom but he had always one in mind when it came to the younger boy. Joshua thought of him as a little brother, he did for all of them but he and Hansol had always had a special type of bond. He, however, liked to mess with dangerous people just for fun and bring unnecessary headaches, to him, as well as Seungkwan. Joshua didn't know the nature of their relationship, he didn't care about their personal affairs as long as they were both happy and it didn't affect their work. However, he knew Hansol was very much into the other, it was painfully obvious to all of them except for maybe the two parties involved. Hansol liked making Seungkwan angry just to have his attention and Seungkwan always gave it to him in the form of an angry speech or a slap on the arm.

It had been easy enough, taking the three guards down when they weren't expecting it, seeking shelter into the darkness, and moving quick always worked out for them. Hansol nearly started jumping with excitement as he was opening the wooden boxes. Joshua tried looking around but the room was dark, it was more of a warehouse so Hansol had to use the flash of his phone to dig through the boxes. Joshua had decided to stand guard before hearing a muffled sob in the corner. He took out his phone as well and turned on his flashlight. As best as he could see in the dark he could differentiate two figures. Joshua slowly walked in their direction, as far as he could tell, tied on the floor were a boy and a girl.

"They are all boring, we had better ones a century ago." Hansol winced behind him, Joshua heard the loud noise of the box falling on the ground, then familiar steps behind his back. "Are they dead?" Joshua could hear Hansol's voice close. They were both tied, their limbs as well as their eyes. Hansol looked at him and Joshua nodded. Hansol knelt in front of the girl as Joshua started untying the boy's eyes. His skin was cold as ice when Joshua's fingers accidentally touched his cheek and he started shaking like crazy. Human trafficking probably, as much as he didn't like it Joshua heard about it all the time in the private sections of the clubs people like him visited. "Well she is." Hansol said and the boy in front of him sucked a breath and started shaking his head. He hadn't opened his eyes even though Joshua had removed his eyepatch.

He looked...pathetic.

The boy started to sob quietly but no tears were rolling down his face, maybe he had no more left or even worse. Joshua pulled out his knife and cut the rope around his legs and arms. He was alive at least.

"Can you open your eyes?" Joshua said. He may be a bad person but he wasn't heartless, they could at least release the boy and give him a small chance to live. It was unfair, he didn't look older than twenty-five and had probably already seen enough to not want to live anymore. Life wasn't fair but pity was for the weak, no one had given Joshua pity so why should he?"Either answer me or do as I say." Joshua said coldly. The boy flinched at his tone and opened his eyes slowly, blinking a few times, probably adjusting to the little light in the room. Then he slowly lifted his head to look at Joshua. His eyes looked tired, his face was dirty and he had many bruises over it, as well as his body, but he politely bowed to each of them. Joshua was surprised, he looked at Hansol who was already looking at him with furrowed eyebrows.

"Are you my new owners?" The boy said quietly, his voice was pleasant, like a jingle bell.

"No, we don't know who you are." Hansol answered firstly. The boy looked between them again and pressed his lips into a line. He looked at the lifeless body of the girl next to him.

"Then you better tie me quickly and hurry out before they come." The boy smiled weakly and offered his arms. At this moment Joshua felt something he doesn't know how to describe, but maybe the closest is compassion.

"Joshua-" Hansol said quietly next to him and Joshua understood. Hansol had always been soft at heart, even if it didn't seem like it at first glance.

"Get up." Joshua stood up and said to the boy. "Seungcheol wouldn't be thrilled." He said to Hansol.

"He doesn't need to know, we'll sneak him out from the back into my room and I'll talk with Wonwoo."

"Wouldn't work, we'll need Seungkwan to check his wounds and anybody could see us sneaking him in." Joshua looked down at the boy quietly looking between them and raised his eyebrows. The boy slowly tried to stand up, holding himself onto the wall for balance. He bit his bottom lip and closed his eyes in visible pain. Joshua got a text then.

Fuck.

"Wonwoo." Joshua told Hansol. "Three cars are coming this way, start the car, I'll help him over." Hansol nodded and took the keys, running out quickly. "Come on, we have to go." Joshua said and reached for the boy's arm, who flinched away.

"I-I can't leave her." He said quietly and Joshua saw a single tear roll down his cheek.

"She's dead, and if we don't leave we will be too." Joshua said and picked the boy up, he was lighter than he looked. Joshua thought it's reasonable. He hadn't probably eaten or drank water in days. He walked as quickly as he could to the car, the boy wasn't objecting, he was just silently staring back at his dead friend. Joshua helped him climb on the back seat and saw glass shards were sticking to the skin of his legs and feet.

Not happy was the least you could describe Seungcheol when he had found out Joshua and Hansol had brought a boy home. Even Jeonghan wasn't able to calm him down when they brought the boy into their living room and put him down on a chair.

"Were we supposed to leave him to die?" Hansol said, he was standing in front of the boy, acting like some type of human shield between him and their leader. Joshua was on the side, playing with his dagger and listening.

"Yes." Seungcheol yelled like it was the most obvious thing. "You don't know him, he may get us all killed." Joshua smirked under his nose and rolled his eyes.

"He's probably one of many, the possibility of someone troubling themselves to look for him is slim." Joshua said and stood in front of the boy too. He knew how that sounded but didn't care. No one answered him, they probably thought he was right, despite how awful it sounded

The boy had been very quiet too, looking at the ground the whole time. Joshua lifted his chin and he looked into his eyes then. He looks so miserably tired.

"Even if you're right, we don't have a place to keep him, we don't need him." Seungcheol's voice is firm.

"He can use my room." Hansol said. "I'll stay with Seungkwan."

Seungcheol didn't say anything more, just looked between all of them one more time and stormed out of the room, Jeonghan right on his track. Joshua helped Seungkwan and Hansol carry the boy to his new room and watched in the corner as Seungkwan examined his wounds. The boy didn't say more than a simple yes or no, didn't flinch in pain whenever Seungkwan touched one of his bruises, he just looked confused, looking between the two boys over him curiously. Joshua noticed the furrow of his eyebrows and the look in his eyes when they asked him to take his shirt off, he did it obediently but his eyes were not confused anymore, but afraid.

"Enough." Joshua said, three sets of eyes looking in his direction." He's visibly uncomfortable, treat the urgent wounds quickly and let him rest." Joshua closed the door carefully behind himself after that.

His name was Seokmin, Hansol told him a few days later. He had told them one of the times he had woken up.

Seokmin spent the first week after they rescued him in bed, mostly asleep because of the painkillers Seungkwan gave him, he couldn't really walk because the glass wounds on his feet hadn't healed yet, he barely ate because his body was still very weak. He was very kind and well-mannered despite being treated like an object for many years probably. Joshua knew all of this because he had heard it in passing from the two boys taking care of him, in the kitchen in the morning or where they were sitting on the floor of the training room resting. He doesn't ask about Seokmin and as far as everyone was concerned he didn't care about him.

However, he couldn't help but be curious. Every time he passed the door of Hansol's old room he slowed down his walking, every time he heard Seokmin's name mentioned in conversation he paid attention and listened.

One of those nights when sleep didn't find him, he was looking through his bookshelf searching for a book he knew he had. Sometimes when Hansol was bored he took books in English from him without asking first and if it was anyone else Joshua would have been mad.

It's nearly midnight when he stood in front of Seokmin's room. He opened the door carefully, trying his best to not wake or scare the boy, using the light from his phone to look through the shelves.

"Hello." A still unfamiliar and quiet voice said in the dark. Joshua sighed and turned on the lights. Seokmin flinched and blinked a few times, then brought his gaze on him.

"I just wanted to take something." Joshua ran his eyes through the room quickly but didn't see his book anywhere. Maybe asking Hansol in the morning had been the better Idea."A book actually. Sorry for waking you up."

"Please don't apologize." Seokmin said quietly and gave him a weak smile. Joshua looked over his face, neck and hands, as well as he could from this distance. Most of his wounds and bruises had healed up nicely, it was like they were never there. Somehow without them and now that he wasn't shaking and covered in dirt Joshua thought he's quite pretty actually. Then he averted his eyes quickly and shut them, wanting to slap himself for even letting a thought like that cross his mind.

"Can I- " Seokmin said timidly."Can I get your name?"

"Joshua." He said coldly and went out of the room.

A month passed quickly and Joshua started seeing Seokmin more and more around the house. Joshua noticed him having breakfast with Hansol and Seungkwan in the kitchen early in the mornings. He still ate too little and didn't say much, well at least when Joshua or Seungcheol were in the room. It didn't particularly bother Joshua but he noticed how he always looked down at the ground whenever he passed and stayed out of his way mostly, Seokmin also still didn't smile often, at least not in front of Joshua.

One night he noticed Seokmin in the living room, sitting on a chair next to Chan, who was laying on the sofa, watching movies. Chan was still young and still in training so Jeonghan didn't allow Seungcheol to assign him much work and stuff, which meant he had a lot of free time after dinner so he always liked watching movies, especially ones with dancing. He usually did it alone because most of his hyungs were busy so he had been very excited to have Seokmin. Chan was always happy to show him his favourite films and was eagerly answering the shy questions Seokmin had. Some nights when Joshua couldn't sleep and have decided to at least be productive and work out he passed Seokmin watching TV in the living room alone. The couch was empty but he still sat calmly in his chair, watching all kinds of stuff from the cooking channel to animals. Joshua saw him helping Jeonghan and Mingyu in the kitchen and they had seemed very surprised at how good he was.

Apparently, many of them had grown some level of fondness to the boy despite his short time with them and Joshua didn't really get it. That was until a quiet knock on the door interrupted his reading one night.

Joshua had told them to come in but no one did. He waited a few seconds and when no one did he just assumed whoever it was was gone and proceeded reading. Then he heard a second

knock and sighed, bookmarking his page and stood up.

"What?" He said loudly as he opened the door harshly, making Seokmin take a step back.

"I'm sorry, were you asleep?" Seokmin said after a small bow and looked at the ground as he was talking. "It's just, there was light coming from your room so I assumed-"

"It's alright." Joshua said, softer this time. "What's up?"

"I just...the book." Joshua then noticed him holding his book tightly in his arms, he had completely forgotten about it. "I found it at the bottom of the closet today and Hansol said it's yours." Joshua had noticed that too, Seokmin never said 'my', it was always 'the closet', 'the room', 'the clothes'.

"Oh yes, thanks." Joshua took his book slowly and there were a few awkward moments of silence between them, then Joshua noticed the darkness behind Seokmin and remembered it was way past midnight. "You can't sleep again?"

Seokmin looked at him a little surprised but nodded carefully. "Yes, I tried but didn't work so I got up to get myself a glass of water and remembered the book when I saw the light."

Joshua considered his words and hummed. "Do you want to come in?"

"I don't wanna bother you."

"I was bored anyway." Joshua said nonchalantly and stepped back, walking to his shelf and placing the book in its place.

"You have so many." Seokmin gasped, pointing out the obvious. "And they are ordered by colour." Joshua watched him slide his eyes over the shelves and smiled.

"I like reading." He said. "Do you?"

"I loved reading when I was little, I got a book as a present for every birthday I can remember." And Seokmin smiled, and maybe it was small and didn't quite reach his eyes but it was something.

"I was like that too, sadly my mom always bought me toys instead of books." Joshua still remembered his pouting whenever that happened.

"Oh? That's awesome. I didn't have my own toys. Or parents." Seokmin said distractedly. "Most of your books are brown." He added like the first half of his sentence didn't faze him. It probably didn't. He had accepted the reality and moved on because of what was left to do otherwise. Joshua knew the feeling all too well.

"Yeah I-" Joshua blinked a few times, it's not his place to comment on it or ask. "I like old literature, especially first press books."

"So cool." The look on Seokmin's face reminded him of a child in a candy store, looking at all the colourful wrappers and favours but knowing his parents would never allow it.

"Do you wanna borrow a book?" And Joshua wanted to give him that, something small but it was all he had.

"Could I?" His eyes were hopeful and bright when he looked at Joshua and he felt himself nodding instantly.

"Most of them are in English." Joshua furrowed his eyebrows and started looking over his bookshelf, for the first time in his life feeling like he's lost. His eyes glaze over a few books, part of a trilogy, but he doesn't want to give them to Seokmin. They both had probably lived through worse things than the fake, easy to predict crimes in it. He doesn't want to give him a biography either, not many people liked reading about other people's lives, he doesn't give him horror too, Seokmin couldn't sleep on his own, without the help of silly made-up ghosts. Maybe historical fiction?

"Can I have this one?" Seokmin asked, pointing his finger to a thin book, barely touching it, almost hidden away by the thick covers all around it.

"Poetry? Sure." Joshua took the book and gave it to him, it weirdly fit the idea of what Seokmin would like, maybe he looked for big feelings in small words, maybe it was the unwillingness to be defined and yet being more in order than any novel ever could.

"I like the colour of the cover." Seokmin simply said as he took it carefully in his hands. Joshua smiled and thought that maybe he should buy all the yellow books in the bookstore next time.

No.

What was he thinking?

"Have you read it?" Seokmin asked.

"Yes." Joshua said as he walked across the room, sitting on his bed with his back against the headboard and picking up his book.

"I should go." Seokmin said, 'you should' is what Joshua's brain was telling him to answer.

"You can stay and read with me." Is what left his mouth.

"Are you sure?"

No.

"Yes."

Joshua heard him let out a short breath, a little shaky. Seokmin hesitantly took a step forward, then another and another until he reached the bed and sat carefully, as far away from Joshua as he could. Joshua watched him with his peripheral vision mimicking his position and opening the book carefully, his fingers shaking. Joshua noticed how he followed the words with his fingers and sometimes stopped for a long period of time and stared, first on the page and then looked at the wall in front of him with his eyes closed, then shook his head and

dived back in, sometimes turning the page, sometimes not. Joshua found himself on the same page for more than ten minutes a few times. He signed and closed the book in his lap and put it on his nightstand.

"It's fine if you don't like it, you can borrow another." He said, hoping his voice doesn't sound rude or accusing.

"No, it's just-" Seokmin sighed and opened his eyes to look at him, Joshua noticed the tears he isn't letting fall. "I wasn't really allowed to read back then when-" He didn't finish the sentence. "I really like the book but it's...weird."

Joshua's heart felt like it was frozen in his chest. He stared at Seokmin who didn't look away.

"That's totally normal, there are days I can't even read a sentence." Joshua quickly said. He knew what Seokmin meant isn't that. They both did. But that was all Joshua had to offer so he hoped it was enough. "Can I read with you, I was actually thinking of rereading this book." Seokmin smiled at him and his eyes told him he knew Joshua was lying.

"Of course."

And it started like that, every night when they both couldn't sleep and Joshua was not out they sat in his room and one of them would read while the other one listened. At first, it was awkward, sitting alone in a room filled with only beautiful words. They finish the poetry book very quickly, then they start another and another after it. Sometimes Seokmin moved closer and watched the words as Joshua read them, carefully at first, leaning slowly and keeping in mind Joshua's reaction until sitting next to each other, their legs and shoulders touching felt familiar. After that sitting got uncomfortable so they laid in bed, still close but not close enough to be intimate. Often Seokmin would doze off and Joshua would continue reading until his eyelids became heavy. That's when he would turn around and place the book on the nightstand and turn off the night lamp, then turn around and fall asleep, not touching Seokmin but knowing he's there by his quiet breaths. Joshua would often wake up from the first sun rays peeking through his blinds, covered with a blanket and his bed empty. It was usual, it was familiar so it didn't faze him, he stopped looking around the room for Seokmin after the first few times.

Until one morning when instead of the warm caress of the sunrays he felt equally as warm boy holding his hand, Joshua stayed awake for the next few hours, with his eyes closed and waited for the moment when Seokmin would carefully get up and leave. However the moment never came, Joshua was still covered with his blanket, they both were, which meant Seokmin had woken up and decided to stay. Joshua didn't comment on it, fearing that if he brought it up Seokmin would think he minded, he just carefully pulled his hand towards his chest and fell back asleep.

<https://curiouscat.live/pinkphoeniixx>

Pick the stars in the sky

Chapter Notes

TW: mentions of guns, violence and sexual assault.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

As soon as the car stopped Joshua jumped out of it, with Seungcheol and the two other boys running after him. There were the two guards that usually stood at the front, they were alarmed as soon as they saw them coming.

Useless. Easily passable.

Shortly after Joshua found himself walking across the floor towards the private section of the club, pushing around drunk bodies and smelling the unpleasant scent of alcohol and sweat combined.

"Where the fuck is he?" Joshua yells over the loud music. There are four guns pointed at him immediately but he doesn't even flinch.

Comical.

"Joshua Hong, what a pleasant surprise." The man said. Kim SooChul. He was a short man in his forties. If you looked at him, at first glance you would see a regular rich middle-aged man, but in reality, he was the leader of one of the most annoying gangs in this area. Always a pain for all of them. "Come have a drink with us." He calmly says, gesturing for his men to lower their weapons.

"Answer the question." Joshua says firmly.

"By 'he' you must mean your little... friend." Kim SooChul says, sitting back and crossing his legs. Joshua watches a girl sit next to him to lit his cigarette. She was too beautiful and innocent-looking, the way she smiled at him when he pets her hair was laughable. "Just heard about it an hour ago, poor thing, hope he's still alive." Joshua feels his nails digging in the flesh of his palm from the pressure of trying to collect his anger. "Sadly I don't have anything to do with it"

"You're the only person with enough impudence and power to afford messing with us."

"You flatter me." SooChul says after a long drag. "But I don't have a reason to do it, from what I've heard he's not really valuable." Joshua makes a step but feels his arm being held back.

He doesn't care about the things people whispered behind his back, he had heard it all. He never had.

But with Seokmin.

It's different. Seokmin deserves to be told kind things, to be cherished and loved. And the one thing Joshua is fucking sure about is that Seokmin was worth much more than the whole club combined with all the fake malicious people in it.

Then he feels his phone vibrating. It was Wonwoo.

"You have a message and it's certainly not from Kim SooChul."



The first thing Seokmin had to do after he recovered was to train. If he was to stay with them and actually have a chance of survival he had to have the bare minimum of fighting skills and the ability to use a gun at least averagely. All of them had to, Seungkwan and Jeonghan did it too before him, even though they never went out to do business, Wonwoo did too, in fact, he was more than excellent in both but he only went if they needed him.

And so the task of training him was handed mainly to Junhui and Minghao.

It was slow.

Reasonable, given the fact that Seokmin had never even imagined he would have to hold a gun to protect his life.

Almost every day after breakfast the three of them would disappear in the training room and not come out for hours.

Sometimes one or both of them were out or busy so whoever was available took their place. Joshua never volunteered. He much preferred resting or training on his own so at first, he sat quietly and watched. Until-

Well until one morning when Seokmin had looked at him for a brief second, a little spark of, well maybe not hope but something behind his eyes. All the eyes in the room had turned towards him when he offered to help and he felt them watching his back as he was going to his room and change.

So he trained with Seokmin one time, then a second, until a month or so passed and they were always together in the training room. Seokmin worked hard, he wasn't the best at hand-to-hand combat, he tried avoiding it when possible, but he was trying. Seokmin still wasn't fond of people touching him that much. He had a hell of an aim though.

(Joshua had been left dumbfounded one day when Seokmin asked to try the bow and arrows. They belonged to Junhui but he didn't use them often. Seokmin had hit the center on his third try and hadn't missed ever since.)

Seokmin still sometimes trembled after a bullet was shot but he never missed a target, even the moving ones they had installed.

So they spent most of their mornings together, then it came the nighttime and they spent that together too. After the first night that Seokmin had come to his room to read, he did it for a second time a few days later, then again. Joshua had to constantly reassure him it was fine, that he didn't mind his presence.

It was calming. It was nice. It became familiar.

(Sometimes he went to Seokmin's room, it was a rarity and it happened only at first. After a late-night mission when Joshua couldn't fall asleep he would go and check on Seokmin. He was always awake too)

As the time passed, when Joshua came home late he had to wait just a minute for a quiet knock. It had taken a lot of convincing on Joshua's part to make Seokmin believe that it was fine if he waited for him in his room but he had eventually succeeded.

Sometimes he found Seokmin laying on his bed reading, sometimes he would be asleep on the side of the bed he usually occupied.

Some nights when Joshua would shove the door, tired and feeling his eyelids heavy, his right hand hurting and feeling like he could pass out any second... then he would find Seokmin had fallen asleep peacefully on his bed, a blanket draped over him and gently holding the pillow Joshua slept on, he felt like someone shoot right at his heart.

It was endearing, it was casual, Joshua liked his company and that was fucking scary.

Sometimes Seokmin waited for him and Joshua would fall asleep with the sound of his voice reading to him or telling him about his day or a movie he watched.

With time being around each other became familiarity, a routine.

Time also taught Joshua to read him, to try and figure why he reacted the way he did to certain things, to know him. Joshua became familiar with his blinding smiles whenever he was happy, he became familiar with the way he furrowed his eyebrows and bit his lip when he wasn't satisfied with himself, being with training, or even the most trivial things. He noticed the way Seokmin still trembled whenever someone raised their voice while arguing or the little step back he took unconsciously whenever someone came too close to him while they were mad, saw the little discomfort whenever he was being hugged by one of them disappear little by little and then reappear whenever someone accidentally touched his waist or leg for a moment too long.

Joshua didn't like most of those things but he had no control over them, only time could lower the pain and hopefully heal these wounds. He had talked with Seungcheol about it. He knew the wife of one of his old friends was a therapist. Seokmin had objected at first, saying it's not necessary and he doesn't want to bother them but eventually agreed. Dr. Lee however lived across the country so they talked over video calls every Sunday afternoon.

After that Joshua started noticing good things too, Seokmin looked healthier with each passing month, he had gained a healthy weight, his arms and legs were starting to look strong from all the physical training, his skin was glowing.

Joshua decided he liked Seokmin's voice, he liked how loud he can get whenever he was happy and how sweet he can become at night, sometimes Joshua closed his eyes and didn't sleep for a long time, enjoying his tone. Seokmin always told him about the things that made him happy, an old song he had heard on the radio in the kitchen or a cooking show he found with a sweet old lady, how he had managed to beat Junhui in archery and he and Minghao inviting him to go out to get coffee together.

They slept together more often than not now and Seokmin had stopped leaving in the middle of the night. However, they never did more than accidentally brush hands or intertwine their fingers, barely awake, until-

Until one morning. Joshua had woken up with both his hands around Seokmin's body. He had panicked, trying to move away as carefully as possible but it didn't work. Seokmin had woken up halfway, blinking a few times and then falling asleep again, not commenting on Joshua's hand resting on his waist and the one under his neck, he had even cuddled closer. Joshua looked at him, his lips in a small pout as he breathed and his eyewashes stroking his cheeks gently. Joshua had dozed off too.

It was strange. Seokmin had woken up a few hours later, glanced up at Joshua with sleepy eyes and apologetic smile, whispering a quiet good morning. Joshua confidently refused when asked if he had bothered him, answering he actually slept very well, probably from the warmth, trying to sound as chill as possible.

And it just sort of never stopped being a thing.

Hugging each other and showing casual affection became normal, Joshua was proud to notice Seokmin never seemed uncomfortable whenever he hugged him tighter than the rest of them, whenever he reached to brush a hair behind his ear or away from his face, whenever he was under Joshua after the older had pushed him down while training self-defense moves, casual touching and holding hands started to not faze neither of them, didn't matter if they were alone or just around the house, which brought questions.

Questions Joshua didn't know the answer to because he had to find an answer for himself first, because Seokmin was nothing more than a good friend. Because they did all the things friends did. They enjoyed talking for hours, reading similar books, training together, hugging and being there when one of them needed someone to be. Seokmin needed that, a good friend, support and love without pressure, but Joshua couldn't give him that, could he?

Sometimes when Seokmin was happy Joshua couldn't help but think about how pretty he and his smile looked, about how comfortable it was, laying in his arms, and how soft his lips looked and wondered if he tasted as sweetly as he imagined.

And even then he would lock these thoughts, deep into his mind because he couldn't risk scaring him off, losing him.

And how long has it been now? Six months but felt like much more.

Until one afternoon, after Joshua had taken Seokmin out for coffee, well neither of them got coffee, tea and hot chocolate instead. After the cafe, they had driven around the city and made a quick visit to the bookshop because Joshua had too few poetry books and Seokmin liked them.

That night they were sitting on Joshua's bed, a pile of new books on the ground next to his shelves. The book Joshua was reading was filled with love poems. He could see Seokmin looking at his face instead of down at the words, as usual, could hear his quiet sigh and his eyes looking down at his lap.

"Can I ask you a question?" Seokmin said quietly, making Joshua glance up and hum. He closed the book, putting it aside. "Do you think-" Seokmin swallowed, not looking at him. "Well, um, do you think if met in another way you could've-" Seokmin was nervously playing with his fingers. "You could've liked me?"

And it took Joshua a minute of staring at Seokmin to figure out what the question was implying. And then another few seconds to get his mouth to work enough for him to formulate an answer.

"I like you." Joshua simply said because it was true.

"Not...like that." Seokmin looked at him, his eyes glowing and hiding behind a small smile. "Sometimes I think what if? What if I was like, normal, you know?" Joshua did know, he had spent many nights thinking about what would his life be if he wasn't born into this, what if he ran away, far far away, studied, got a degree, had a chance of a normal life. "Maybe in another life, you could've looked at me differently, I could've had a chance." Seokmin looked blank, like he didn't care what he was putting on the table, he looked like he had been in silent pain. "I just beg you to stop giving me false hope."

Joshua stayed still, blinking and opening his mouth but no words could come out.

What false hope?

"What do you mean?" Was Joshua not so obvious in his growing adoration, everyone else saw it.

"You're so nice to me." Seokmin said quietly, moving his legs up and hugged them to his chest. "Even at the start, I somehow didn't feel that scared when you picked me up and drove off, I wasn't terrified. Then you and Hansol brought me here and gave me everything I've ever wanted, I feel you and the boys like family." Seokmin rested his head back on the headboard and breathed, then looked at him. "I know that should be enough to make me happy, and I truly am, but...I feel greedy. You are..well, sweet to me, cared, I like it when I'm the reason for your smile. You didn't make me feel bad for myself at the start for having difficulty with training, let me borrow your books even though you don't like it when people take them, didn't get mad when I accidentally fell asleep in your bed. You never touch me

without permission and never even dared to force me to do anything, even though I spent every night in your bed. You are patient and nice to me so I-" Seokmin paused.

Joshua saw the last six months flash before his eyes, how had he missed all of this.

"As I said, I feel greedy and disgusted with myself because I- I want more, I want you but I know you deserve better, someone-" Seokmin swallowed thickly, pushing tears back."Someone that is not broken and used."

Joshua's heart broke at the last words. Seokmin was holding his heart in his hand, smiling at it sadly, and holding it out to Joshua who didn't know what to do. Did he take it? He wanted to. But did he deserve it?

Did he offer his in return? Maybe he could make it work. For Seokmin.

"But I want you." Joshua said quietly. Seokmin looked at him. Joshua had so many things he wanted, needed to say but he couldn't. Not right now. "Can I kiss you, Seokmin?"

Joshua wanted him. It was terrifying and wrong but he did.

Seokmin looked at him with confusion, his eyes still full of pain. Was wanting that wrong?

"Just a kiss, nothing more, I promise." Joshua whispered, it was a promise, it was a plea. Kisses were usually worthless to him, kissing was an unnecessary distraction of reaching the result quicker. So why did he feel like kissing Seokmin would be different?

"Are you sure?" Seokmin asked timidly. His hands untangled from around his legs so Joshua slowly reached to take them in his. "You can." Seokmin whispered, like a breath was stuck in his lungs. Seokmin's hands started shaking under his. Joshua slowly moved forward, stopping a centimeter from his lips. A last chance of pulling away, he didn't want the control, he wanted Seokmin to kiss him because he wanted to, not because he felt obligated.

Soft lips brushed against his hesitantly. Joshua felt Seokmin's hand pulling away and cupping his cheek. Seokmin didn't move, Joshua tilted his head slightly, lips moving slow and patient. It didn't really feel like a kiss Joshua has had before, it was warm, it was gentle, it was soft and satisfying. Felt like the blanket Seokmin still covered him with, and himself recently.

It felt right.

Joshua felt both of Seokmin's hands cupping his face slowly, like he was holding something precious, irreplaceable. He placed his hands on Seokmin's waist on instinct, thinking it through only a moment later. But Seokmin didn't tremble, didn't pull away from him, he never did.

It was special.

It was enough, just a touch of his lips was enough for Joshua to forget all the past people that had shoved their tongue into his mouth and pulled his hair. The moans were replaced with soft breaths, the rough gripping was replaced with a soft touch.

Seokmin pulled away to take a breath, his forehead resting against his. "I- This is my first kiss." He said slowly, timidly. Joshua smiled softly, moving his hand up to caress his cheek and pet his hair. Joshua laid back and opened his arms. Seokmin gently moved over him and looked at his eyes for a long time. Reading, thinking, observing.

"What does this mean?" Seokmin said like a secret whispered between them. Joshua didn't know the answer, not right now. Right now all he wanted was to kiss Seokmin again, and again.

"Kiss me." He said. "Please."

And Seokmin did, just as before, warm, timid, tasting sweet and feeling sweeter, making Joshua's heart pound violently against his chest. His hand touched Joshua's neck but he didn't pull him closer. Seokmin moved his lips gently, too scared of doing something wrong, somehow asking if he was okay.

He was so much more.

"You're perfect." Joshua whispered a second later. He didn't give Seokmin time to answer or think, capturing his lips again. Goosebumps ran down Joshua's spine when he felt his hand moving to his shoulder to squeeze it and his tongue brushing gently over his bottom lip.

The air between them felt thick when they parted. Joshua's lips tickled, his heart was warning it would jump out, his cheeks felt damp but he hadn't cried.

Seokmin had buried his head in the crook in his neck and if Joshua focused enough he could hear his silent sobs. Joshua tangled one of his hands in his hair, petting it carefully and rubbed his back with the other.

He waited. Would wait forever if he had to, waited till he thought Seokmin had fallen asleep on top of him.

"Can I sleep with you again?" Seokmin asked, his breath tickling Joshua's neck. He moved up to look at him and Joshua reached to cup his cheek.

"I never want you to leave." Joshua said, answering his question and a few more that stayed unspoken.

One week. That's how long it took Joshua. They weren't apart, Seokmin still showed to their training, Joshua still saw him around the house. But he didn't come at night, Joshua looked for him when he woke up in the morning but he wasn't there.

On the seventh day, he had slowly walked to Seokmin's room, knocked on the door and waited. Joshua wasn't sure if he was being selfish, wasn't sure why he did this. Being together would eventually cause pain, to him, as well as Seokmin. But at the same time, every second Joshua knew he could have him it ached. Seokmin had opened a minute later and hadn't pulled away when Joshua had wrapped him in his arms.

"Are you sure?" Seokmin whispered against his lips a moment later, lead in Joshua's room and embrace by gentle hands

"I've never needed anything more." Joshua simply said. Seokmin leaned forward, their foreheads brushing, and Joshua closed his eyes, losing himself for a moment. Seokmin's eyes traveled over his face, like it was for the last time.

He had all he ever wanted to, why was Joshua so hard to resist?

His hand found Joshua's neck as before, Seokmin's fingers were gentle against his skin. His eyes fluttered closed as he leaned forward.

And it brought back the sweet memory. It was a kiss drowned in uncertainties, in confusion. And yet somehow Seokmin was the only thing Joshua was sure about. It was a kiss filled with care, a soft touch and nothing more, a timid plea.

And Joshua somehow knew what it was. What Seokmin was asking, what he was ready to give.

Joshua felt shy fingers caressing his neck and lips brushing his in weak but desperate motions. Joshua let his hands hold his waist and gently pull him closer, he opened his lips barely, waiting, inviting. He felt Seokmin lick at his bottom lip but it was so slow, too slow, too gentle, too warm, too entrancing. It was right.

Seokmin didn't deepen the kiss any further, maybe because he didn't want to, maybe because he didn't know how, but the soft lips against his and the occasional fervent lick was more than enough to make Joshua feel like he was dreaming.

Seokmin made him feel alive. Joshua didn't know what that meant, what will this lead to, wasn't familiar with the heavy feeling in his chest,

All he knew is that he wanted it, the sick feeling in his stomach and the quickening heartbeat, to taste and feel and touch, to kiss Seokmin all night.

And so he did.

And maybe it wasn't the whole night but it was okay because Seokmin came to him the next one too, and then the one after that.

And he just stayed. Joshua got used to seeing his face first thing in the morning, to feel his breath stroking his neck, to feel his gentle fingers trace the natural lines of his face, to wake up and get a warm sweet kiss, to hear his raspy from sleep voice whisper a good morning. Seokmin was suddenly always there and Joshua...wanted him to be.

Joshua had gotten used to coming home and seeing him asleep in his bed but now he took quicker showers just to see him sooner, got used to walking soundlessly around the room because Seokmin was a very light sleeper, always kissed his forehead before falling asleep. Seokmin always woke up at that and cuddled closer because he slept better like that. And surprisingly Joshua did too.

Sometimes when Joshua was free after training he took Seokmin out for a drive around the city, for not too long and not too far because it was dangerous, just to their favourite coffee shop. It was not perfect, he wanted to take Seokmin out on a real date, in a fancy restaurant because he deserved nothing less but he couldn't. And then he would feel bad and Seokmin would wrap him in his arms and kiss him and it was okay. Seokmin never complained when Joshua was busy, was always relieved when Joshua came home from a job, appreciated the smallest things, had cried the first time Joshua got him a bouquet of sunflowers.

They were... happy? Joshua definitely was, happiest that he could remember being. He didn't know how relationships worked because he had never needed or wanted one, but if that was what they had, he thought they were doing a fucking good job.

The other boys probably found out, sooner or later but no one asked questions, at least not Joshua. He never kissed Seokmin outside of his (their?) bedroom, besides the one or two times when they were alone in the training room. But it wasn't necessary, they still held hands and shared glances over the diner table, their hugs were too tight and lingered too long to be platonic, Seokmin was rarely in his room now. (Hansol was not in a rush to move back too, shocking.)

With time they became more familiar with each other. Their kisses became deeper, more desperate and intense. The timid touches became certain, needier and yet still gentle.

With time they learned how to ask for things, learned how the other one liked to be touched, learned each other's movements and needs. With time Seokmin became more comfortable, bolder. He found that he liked to sit in Joshua's lap, straddling him, he felt safe like that and yet in control. Seokmin liked that he could get soft and sweet with Joshua's lips kissing his cheek and neck gently, he liked that he could get more and deeper just by lifting himself to be over Joshua and claiming his lips however he wanted.

As the months passed Joshua stopped being afraid of hurting Seokmin, of accidentally forcing him to do something he wasn't comfortable with.

They talked. They set rules. They set boundaries.

And time allowed them to move on until there were almost none left, just a simple word. Hands started traveling from face and neck over chest, ribs, slowly wandering lower with bold hands, only waiting a second for rejection but none was given. The content quiet hums of sweet kisses became breaths of pleasure, the curious or unsure eyes closed when they rolled their head back.

And yet the line was never crossed, touches under shirts, that sometimes came off but only that, timid fingers hooking under waistbands but never reaching for more.

And the feeling was not fear, it was the simple yearn for when eventually that happened it would be perfect, as cliché as it sounded.

With time the care and adoration they had for each other grew, it was in the way Joshua would kiss Seokmin's forehead and caress his cheek. It was in the way Seokmin would kiss the palm cupping his face, the knuckles on Joshua's fingers, that were almost always red, the

scars on his chest, asking quietly if they hurt before that. It was in the way Seokmin would stay and read just so he had an excuse to wait for Joshua, in the way he would run to the kitchen and make a sandwich or ramen while Joshua showered because he hadn't had dinner, along with a cup of hot tea.

There were many bad days too. Days in which things went wrong and Joshua would come home with bruises and wounds, covered with blood, days where he didn't wanna talk because people had lost their lives just because they were at the wrong place at the wrong time. In these days Seokmin would stay close, help Seungkwan in patching Joshua (as well as any other of them), and just be there for whenever Joshua wanted to talk, sometimes to be held until he fell asleep. Other days Seokmin would wake up and everything would be the same except for a creeping dream or thought of the past, in these times whenever he needed Joshua he was ready to give him everything, similarly, if he needed to just be alone Joshua would stay aside, not too far away but just enough.

Time also changed other things. Before the simple question "Joshua, you're home?" was now "Shua, I missed you." The "I'm not feeling well today." to "I need you, please hold me."

Before the "Seokmin, are you alright?" was now "Baby?" followed by a worried look, the thoughts of "he's so pretty" became firm words of "You're so beautiful, baby."

Joshua was happy. Now that he had Seokmin he didn't want to lose him, he didn't want to watch him suffer a day, no, a minute more. And this formed an idea in his mind. He could try and do anything in his power to make Seokmin's life the best they could have in their fucked up world, he could give him care and adoration, be there for him.

However, the past he couldn't control. Joshua didn't like feeling powerless, didn't like seeing Seokmin wake up crying from a nightmare. So if Joshua couldn't help him forget, he thought that maybe erasing the people from the nightmares would make Seokmin happy.

It was hard, getting the full record of his past, of the monsters that haunted his baby's nightmares but he had Wonwoo and Mingyu. It was sick, with every thing he found out he grew angrier. The tracks let from one man to another, in his word everything came with a prize, that being money or lives and Joshua has never hesitated to do anything to get what he wanted.

He got a name eventually. Yoo Sunni. It was unusual so they assumed it was a nickname. After that it was easy enough, getting a track of her records, however, they were from almost a year ago. After that, she had somehow disappeared. They found some people that were involved but it was all useless information because they either didn't want to snitch or claimed they didn't know that name. Joshua was angry. He was confused too because from what Wonwoo could find Yoo Sunni was some kind of a pimp for the rich men that wanted the favors from her girls. The two girls that they found and had worked for her many years ago had told them she was respected in her field and treated them well enough. However, they didn't remember any boys that weren't clients in the house.

It was confusing. Joshua had even called Dr. Lee but she had explicitly refused to give him any information that was shared between her and her patient.

So it was either ask Seokmin for information or drop it. And Joshua did not like giving up, not when he had spent so much time.

It was a calm Tuesday night, the house was questionably quiet. Mingyu had brought dinner to Wonwoo in their room and locked the door after himself, Seungkwan and Hansol had gone out (which was "definitely not a date", they had even dragged Chan along, despite the youngest's protests.) Joshua was happy that they had a small glimpse of normalcy however secret and careful they had to be, Junhui and Minghao were in the training room, which they always were whenever they weren't out or arguing in the middle of the living room then aggressively solving it by making out on the couch. Joshua didn't know where the others were, nor he did care.

He was left alone with Seokmin after dinner. It was strangely domestic, them cleaning the table and Joshua putting the leftovers in the fridge while Seokmin was left with the dishes.

Seokmin closed the dishwasher a few moments after Joshua was ready and pressed a few buttons. He was wearing light jeans and a pink oversized sweater and he looked just... huggable? He walked in front of Joshua, who was sitting on a chair quietly. Joshua took both of his hands and pulled him in his lap then, wrapping his hands around him and burying his head into his chest. He felt Seokmin kissing his hair and his fingers gently carding through the strands on his neck. Joshua moved his head after a moment too long to kiss the place on his neck under his chin, then his jaw and under his ear, earning a cute giggle.

"Let's go to your room, anyone can walk in." Seokmin said.

"Everyone knows, baby." Joshua said with a half-smile waiting for a reaction. He isn't quite sure what to expect.

"So you mean to tell me Seungkwan and Hansol telling me about their experiences with sexuality and stuff all of a sudden or Soonyoung explaining to me how it's perfectly okay to want something more even though our lives aren't perfect weren't completely coincidental." Seokmin dragged his fingers over his jaw and stroked it with his thumbs. "Or Jeonghan ranting on me how consent is important, I can develop a "healthy relationship" with sex and how we should be safe first and foremost."

"He did what?" Joshua furrowed his eyebrows. "I'll kill him."

"You won't, he's trying to help, they all are." Seokmin gave him a weak smile, then averted his eyes. "I talk with my therapist about it often these days, I don't know what they assume about me though."

"Fine." Joshua said and pulled him closer again. "But I'll threaten his life." His words are muffled by the fabric of the sweater. "Baby-" Joshua said carefully. "You know that's not important, right? I'm happy with just having you. It's enough."

"Yeah, and it's well, hard to believe still." Seokmin said carefully. "I've talked about it with Dr. Lee, it's got nothing to do with you, you are wonderful." Seokmin reassured him. "I've never had anyone want me the way you do, it's confusing and hard to wrap my head around. But it's exciting too, it makes me wanna have more. I like it when you touch me, I like it

when you kiss me more intensely, I really like the sound you make when I accidentally press into you and would definitely like to have more of it, I'm just not quite ready yet."

"As long as you're doing it for you." Joshua said as he looked at him. "I adore you." He said and kissed him, because like is too weak of a word for what he felt towards the boy that's kissing him softly right now. Plus it was true, he did adore and love him, very much. However, he wasn't quite sure how to say it because he had never felt anything close to it or if saying it was the right thing. Being pressured was the least Seokmin needed.

"Sweetheart." Joshua said after he broke the kiss, as much to Seokmin's dismay as well as his but he had to ask. "I want to ask you something but I need you to listen to me." He wasn't afraid of Seokmin being mad or angry at him, well because he never once was. He was however scared of losing his trust. Seokmin nodded and pressed his lips in a line, confused about what was that about. "Do you maybe remember the name Yoo Sunni?"

Seokmin tensed at that, his palms left Joshua's neck and were placed carefully on his chest. "Why do you ask?"

"I've been researching some stuff about the people that-" There was an agonizing pause. "-hurt you." Joshua decided to say.

Many emotions ran through Seokmin's face after his words, confusion, disappointment, sadness. He opened his mouth to speak once but words don't come out, he just looked at Joshua and shook his head, then stood up and walked away. Joshua didn't try to stop him or pull his hand with force but he walked after him into their room. Seokmin stopped just before the door and changed his mind, walking towards his old room instead.

"Please leave me alone." Seokmin said with his hand on the handle, his back on Joshua.

"But baby listen-" He tried to touch his hand as carefully as he could but Seokmin pulled away.

"No, Joshua, You had no right." His voice is stable and cold and it hurt Joshua more than any shot had.

A door was shut carefully in front of him. He let his forehead rest against it. And it's not like he didn't expect this to go wrong but that didn't mean it didn't hurt. Joshua carefully knocked on the door. "Baby, talk to me." Maybe the silence was better than hearing Seokmin cry without being able to do anything about it.

The door opened a few minutes later, but honestly, it had felt like decades. Seokmin took his hand with a sigh and guided him inside. His whole being was just too kind and gentle, the world doesn't deserve him, Joshua doesn't either.

"Why?" Seokmin simply asked. He sat at the bed and Joshua kneeled in front of him.

Joshua didn't know why. "I thought I was doing the right thing." He said. "For you."

"For me." Seokmin said quietly. "How so? Because after making me believe that my past doesn't matter, after saying all those words of how you like me for me, after making me believe life was actually worth it for once this seems a little hypocritical." Seokmin said and honestly he was right. Joshua had said all those things and was now running around, digging into his past without permission, just because he thought it was the right thing. Just because his selfish self couldn't stand the thought of not knowing.

"I'm sorry." Joshua said and rested his forehead over their intertwined fingers in Seokmin's lap.

"It's okay, I'm not mad at you." Seokmin said.

"I know, but you are disappointed." Joshua said, Seokmin's silence confirmed it. "You're right, I wasn't doing it for you. You are strong baby, I know you are, but seeing you wake up in the middle of the night after a horrible nightmare, seeing the fear you had in your eyes a few seconds before realizing it was me who was holding you and not be able to do anything about it made me feel weak. I don't like being powerless when the person I'm in love with is hurting so I did the only thing I'm familiar with. I did it for me," Joshua said in one breath. He doesn't apologize for it, he doesn't feel empathy for the people he almost killed because they were too cocky and stubborn, he's only sorry that he may hurt Seokmin in the process. He had been selfish, egoistic, out of-

"You are in love with me?"

-place. He however doesn't regret it. If he-

"Shua?" Seokmin said, more clearly than the whisper Joshua vaguely heard seconds ago.

"Yes?" Joshua looked over his face, his expression had changed.

"Are you sure?"

"I do apologize for hurting you, however-" Seokmin put two of his fingers over his lips to shut him up.

"I don't care about your fucking apology when you just said you are in love with me." Seokmin grits through his teeth, he's irritated because he doesn't usually swear much. It's cute.

Joshua made sense of his words then. And weirdly he doesn't want to deny it, say he had misspoken because it was true. He was in love with Seokmin. He wasn't sure how it had happened or why did he deserve even a second of Seokmin's time really but here he was. He was in love and that seemed... exiting?

"I mean it's quite obvious sweetheart." Joshua said jokingly instead.

"No, it isn't." Seokmin said, raising his voice and pushing his shoulder gently.

"So the flowers, dates, compliments, me literally saying that I adore you wasn't enough?" Joshua says smugly, glad they had changed the subject, even for a moment. "I'll write you a

note next time."

"Or you just say it, how about that?." Seokmin poked his chest with his finger, his eyes looked happy and he was trying to contain his smile. "Ugh, I hate you." He said and pulled Joshua in a hurried kiss. Before he knew it Seokmin is licking into his mouth and his fingers are tightly clasping the collar of his shirt. Joshua couldn't help but smile.

"If that was you hating me I can't wait for what's to come." Seokmin laughed but pulled him on the bed as well, switching the position to be on top and kisses him again. The kiss was slow at first, Seokmin is gently claiming his lips and stroking his jaw. One of his legs slips between Joshua's ones and he intently grinds his knee into his crotch. Joshua groaned in complaint quietly but is quickly silenced. Well, he brought this on himself.

"That was me loving you." Seokmin said against his lips after.

It's weird, laying on the bed of Seokmin's old room instead of the one in Joshua's but neither of them was in the mood to relocate. Seokmin was sitting between his legs, his head rested back against his shoulder.

It's comfortable. It's familiar.

Joshua was stroking his hair with one hand and the back of his palm with the other. Seokmin had his eyes closed and was just thinking over some stuff.

"What-" Seokmin said later that night. "What did you find?"

Joshua is quiet for a minute, thinking about how much he should tell him.

"How much do you want to know?" Joshua said carefully, he moved his hands and wrapped them around his waist. A reassurance. A promise he's there no matter what.

"It's fine, I should have probably explained some stuff to you a while ago." Seokmin said. "Tell me all you could find and I'll add if I think it's necessary."

"Okay." And Joshua didn't want to because it would have been so much easier to deal with it alone, that's what he had done all his life. But he owed an explanation so he told Seokmin all of it. He doesn't stop him, not when he's telling about the ways he and Wonwoo found the information, not when he tells him about the guys that they found at various clubs and places. Joshua is only sure he was listening because he squeezed his hands when he noticed him looking at his face or quietly hummed.

Seokmin spoke when he mentioned the woman thought.

"She's long gone." Seokmin said unfazed.

"You sure?"

"I mean yeah, I saw it all happening in front of me."

"Baby?" Joshua said tensing up. He wouldn't blame him for anything but it would be surprising."Did you-?"

Seokmin assimilated what he's implying then " What? I didn't kill her!" He jumped and turned to look at Joshua.

"Okay." Joshua simply said, he believed it.

"Sunni wasn't that bad." Seokmin started. His voice was sure, even if his body seemed a little shaken. " As you already told she provided sexual favours for the rich but was actually not a terrible human being. She owned a big house, which was a fancy brothel, but don't misunderstand she treated the girls well enough and most of them wanted to be there." He paused, Joshua knew those things but didn't interrupt him."I lost my parents when I was very little and spend my life at a very bad orphanage, then the day before I turned eighteen I met Sunni, she asked what my deal was and I told her, I mean what did I have to lose right?" Seokmin laughed bitterly." I don't know why but she offered me a job of sorts, she didn't really pay me but offered me a place to stay, all I had to do was help her manage the girls, cook and clean the rooms. At that time it sounded like a really good deal so I accepted. Sunni had a weird personality but it was bearable, some of the girls were actually really nice to me, even more, when they found that I wasn't really interested in them. Sure there were some nights when a drunk man would try and get into my room thinking it was one of the girls." Joshua hummed in disgust." My life wasn't so bad, I had a roof over my head and two of the girls were actually my friends. That was until one night."Joshua didn't like the few moments pause."Sunni had some type of a business dinner with a man and I had to serve them of course, he was looking at me strangely the whole night. The next day Sunni came into my room and told me I had to sleep with him, I didn't want to do that but if I refused she would have kicked me out " Seokmin sounded dull. " It was terrible, I closed my eyes and imagined I was somewhere else, I refused to let him kiss me which made him angry. Thankfully it was over quickly. I had to get over it though, I had work and responsibilities."Seokmin closed his eyes and shook his head, maybe it was unconscious so that he could erase the thoughts."Life continued as usual until one night when many men came to the house looking for Sunni, I wondered why she had left in such a rush a few hours before. They started trashing the house and taking the girls, I tried to escape but couldn't leave my friend when I heard her calling my name so they took us. I had lost hope,I don't know for how long they moved us from one place to another, I heard things about selling some of the other girls. " Seokmin finally looked at him."That's when you found me."He seemed small. He was taller than Joshua but he wanted to wrap him in his arms and never let go.

"I-" Joshua started and what? He was sorry, he couldn't change the past. He felt sick, like he had the worst hangover in his life."Do you want to talk with Dr. Lee tomorrow morning?"He wanted to say something more. Felt like he needed to say more. But what on earth could he possibly say that wouldn't just sound dumb and out of place? He didn't have an idea what it had been like, all the times he had been stabbed, shot at and in the face of death felt small. All he could do was... be there?

"I think I'll be good till Sunday."Seokmin smiled weakly. "I've already told her most of this, she's really nice and understanding."He leaned forward and made Joshua lay down, then

wrapped himself around him with his head in his neck and Joshua couldn't be happier to hold him. Seokmin nuzzled like a kitten against him and Joshua was in love.

"Shua?" Seokmin said quietly, Joshua just hummed. "You would try to find and kill him right?" His voice was soft.

"First thing in the morning." Joshua answered, of course he would, he just hoped Seokmin didn't try stopping him.

"Okay, be careful." Seokmin said, he really didn't see a point in trying to stop him, maybe then all the nightmares could end. "Is it bad that I wouldn't mind if you do?"

"I don't think so." Of course it wasn't, Joshua hadn't felt bad for less terrible people than him. "People like him don't deserve even a thought from you, even less your compassion."

Joshua couldn't see his smile but somehow he knew just by his movements and breath alone. "You say stuff like these and I just-" Seokmin shifted on the bed, lifting himself to face him. "You're wonderful."

Joshua laughed. "I'm very far from that baby." Joshua ran his hand through his hair. "I kill people, for living."

"Bad people." Seokmin said despite him.

"Not necessarily, in their eyes we're the bad ones." Joshua said, he didn't know why. To scare him off? He isn't sure if Seokmin wanted to leave he would be able to let him go. Then why.

Seokmin didn't seem fazed by his words, but again, he had patched wounds and wiped the blood off him many times. He just cupped his face like he always did, like he was holding his most precious thing, and pressed his forehead against his.

"Don't try to scare me off, you're stuck with me now, like it or not." Joshua opened his mouth then closed it. He was dangerously selfish but he didn't care. Stuck was not the right word, extremely lucky felt more like it. "Plus give yourself some credit, I don't know how did you manage to make me fall in love with you after all of... that, but here we are."

"I adore you." Was all Joshua could say because what else he had. Oh and. "Would you kiss me?" Because asking was like a habit, because Seokmin's nod and smile just after that and before kissing him brought warmth to his heart. Seokmin tilted his head and touched his lips, slowly letting himself fall deeper and deeper. The best part was that Joshua was there to catch him, to meet him. He's pressed against him, his hands in his hair, not tugging, he never did. Joshua wrapped his hands around his waist protectively because he was the only one allowed to do that, to have him.

Make him happy and protect him, that's what Joshua knew what he only needed to do then

Was that too rushed?

Be my eternity

Chapter Notes

TW: the usual ones

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

The message was ridiculous. And short. It had been only an alarm, a sign so they were noticed.

Joshua wasn't in the mood for playing games.

He nearly ran towards Wonwoo's room and scared Mingyu when he opened the door so harshly. Wonwoo of course didn't tremble.

"Can you-"

"Already did, nothing. "Wonwoo says, not parting his eyes from the middle monitor and typing something. "You'll have to wait for a phone call."

And Joshua doesn't like that. He doesn't feel like he could just stand here when Seokmin is alone somewhere, probably cold and scared, with some stupid people with a death wish. No one was dumb enough to mess with them. But if Wonwoo couldn't do anything no one of them could.

The call came exactly eight hours after the message, just like they had said, just enough time so they could collect the money. Joshua couldn't even go to his room during the night, what was left for sleeping. His bed felt empty. The only thing that kept him up was coffee and spite.

When the time came everyone came into the living room, circling him. He picked up on the first ring.

"Who the fuck do you think you are?" Joshua spat at the speaker, Seungcheol shook his head and made him turn on the speaker.

"Watch your tone or your little thing over here may get hurt." A man says, his voice is raspy. He was probably their leader

"If you even dare to touch him-"

"Relax, will you." The man's voice is mocking, Joshua wonders how long would it stay that way once they meet. "Plus it would not be the first time." Joshua thought his words over. He felt Wonwoo and Mingyu watching him, it was like they pierced through him with their eyes. No, he couldn't be? They had spent weeks trying to find the man from the dinner Seokmin told him about but couldn't find anything.

"What do you mean?" Joshua says firmly.

"Oh, I'm sure your little boyfriend over here has told you about the night we spent together." Joshua feels all the eyes in the room on him now. "I heard you were looking for me, it's good to finally meet you."

He's ready to answer but the next thing he hears is an opening of a door, then something ripping harshly and Seokmin's voice in the distance, "*ouch, you son of a bi-*"

"Shua?" His voice changes immediately when he's given the phone to speak. He doesn't sound terrified, Joshua's heart beats harder just because he hears his voice. He hopes Seokmin knew he would come for him. He sounds relieved when he hears Joshua's voice.

"Baby, are you okay, did he hurt you?" Joshua asks in a rush.

"No, I'm fine, don't worry." Seokmin reassures him, Joshua is so proud of how strong he is now. "How are you?"

Joshua smiles at his question, which is completely uncalled for taking into consideration the situation. Joshua also knows he's probably lying. Just seeing the man again alone is probably a pain Joshua doesn't want to imagine. "I'm very angry sweetheart, I'll be on my way to get you as soon as we end the call okay?"

"Yeah okay." Seokmin says quietly, like it's only for him to hear. "Should be easy enough, because I'm surrounded by a bunch of pea-sized brain dic-" He raises his voice and the line is cut off. Joshua takes a breath, he's just hoping to get to him before Seokmin breaks down, he knows his behavior is a coping mechanism. He also swears they would suffer a very painful death for just touching him. Joshua deals the number and it's picked up on the third ring.

"Little piece of shit shouldn't have done that. He wasn't that stubborn before, "And it takes all of Joshua's self-control to hold back. For now. "Bring the money to the place I'll text you in an hour. Don't try playing games or we'll kill him, God knows it would be a pleasure."

The man hangs up then. Joshua doesn't think it was so much for the money, he probably wanted to try and scare them off. Joshua feels his blood boiling in his body, his nails are digging into the flesh of his palm. He feels like someone is definitely going to die and it wasn't Seokmin.

It takes them a few minutes to gear up and get in the cars. The whole thing goes smoothly overall. They drop the money and attack while the men are distracted by greed. Joshua trusts his brothers to watch his back while he breaks every door and shoots every person that gets in the way. He's not worried about them, they are more than capable. He finds Seokmin in the basement, which he should have looked at first really.

"Go get him, we'll watch your back." Mingyu says and Hansol nods, there are two lifeless bodies next to them.

Joshua opens the door carefully and closes it behind himself.

Seokmin's shoulders relax when he hears Joshua's voice. He's tied on the ground, including his mouth and eyes.

And Joshua has killed men before but this was different. Joshua wasn't sure who the man thought he was playing with, but it was apparent he was not expecting this to go so far. He was holding his gun to his baby's head and looked so sure of himself. It took a split second for Joshua to shoot his hand so he would drop the weapon and another to slice his throat with his knife. Slow and painful death, that's what he deserves. And even then he doesn't think it's enough to compensate for the pain Seokmin went through. Nothing will ever be.

Joshua turns to Seokmin right after and kneels, he wipes the blood out off his dagger before slicing the material as carefully as he can. Seokmin smiles at him as soon as his eyes and lips are free and patiently waits until Joshua cuts the rope around his limbs. There are red marks on his wrists from the rope, a few other cuts over his arms, blood next to his lips and a cut on his eyebrow. Joshua had never felt more satisfied with killing someone. He had hurt Seokmin and paid for it.

"We have to stop meeting like this." Seokmin says jokingly but he isn't smiling. He looks over Joshua's face. "You're bleeding!" Seokmin gasps and cups his face in his hands. Just like he always does.

"Probably, but most of the blood's not mine, don't worry." Joshua pulls him in a hug then, closing his eyes and breathing him in.

It's okay. He's okay.

"As much as I hate ruining your moment-" Mingyu's voice says in the distance. Joshua doesn't know when he had even opened the door" -we better go."

He's right, Joshua knows it. He helps Seokmin stand up and his legs are a little numb so Joshua picks him up to carry him out. Joshua is so happy he's weighing more in comparison to the first time.

"Come on sweetheart, let's take you home." Joshua says and Seokmin snuggles into him, not caring that he's covered in blood. They pass dead bodies, thankfully not familiar ones.

The car ride is silent, Joshua briefly heard Mingyu asking Wonwoo if he was alright and them holding hands in the front but he didn't really pay them mind.

Seokmin is sitting in his lap and is holding on to him tightly, he didn't sound scared on the phone or until all of them got in the cars and drove off but Joshua had expected it to hit him soon. He had started quietly sobbing in Joshua's neck, the other holding him tight, sometimes kissing his hair or rubbing his back. Joshua feels like he could finally breathe. They had saved him, Seokmin was safe in his arms, almost untouched.

Joshua feels a tear roll down his cheek, then another. What the hell?

Seokmin somehow senses it and lifts himself up, looking over Joshua's face in confusion.

"Babe, it's alright." Seokmin says quietly, like a secret whispered between them, and wipes the tear on his cheek. Joshua feels ridiculous when he does it with still wet cheeks and puffy eyes.

"Are you okay sweetheart? Did he touch you?" Joshua looks over his face.

"Not really, no. His men tied me up and dealt with me, he's a coward." Seokmin says. "I'm fine now that you're here."

"I don't wanna lose you." Joshua says.

"You saved my life for a second time, you won't lose me." Seokmin looks at him with confusion. And that's the thing, he did. Joshua would do it a thousand times if he had to. He would risk his life over and over again. But what if one of these times he didn't succeed?

"We did and you're safe now." Joshua frowns. "Maybe the only way I could keep you safe is by letting you go." He has thought about it before but this only raised his fears. What if someone else finds Seokmin and tries to take him, he was the only weak spot for Joshua, he has to keep him safe and alive.

"No!" Seokmin half yells and Joshua could feel Mingyu's eyes on them from the back mirror. Seokmin stares, his eyes flickering over Joshua's face frantically.

"It's actually really rational when-"

"No!" Seokmin demands. "Listen to me, Joshua Hong." He curls his fingers into the fabric of Joshua's shirt with both hands. "You are doing it again, making decisions instead of me. I'm completely capable of thinking and knowing what I want and it's this, I want you, don't you dare push me away."

"You're so young, what we have could ruin your life, even worse." Joshua says calmly, he's throwing oil in a fire he isn't sure why he had started in the first place.

Seokmin laughs and cups his face. Joshua swears it's like a habit at this point. "You're my life for fucks sake, you're my everything." He says calmly and leans forward, capturing his lips in a feather-like kiss.

Joshua hates himself for being so selfish.

"Good, that's good." Joshua nods slightly. "To be honest I don't think I would've been able to let you go."

"Good." Seokmin says too and smiles.

"I can't really promise you the future but I'll try and make you happy and keep you safe as long as I can." Joshua pulls him closer. Close ain't close enough.

"Shouldn't be that hard, you already do."

They all gather in the living room later that night. It's awkward at first, no one wants to start a conversation.

"I'm sorry for causing trouble." Seokmin starts. He is sitting on the right side of the couch with Joshua next to him and still holding his hand. "I should have been more careful."

"It's not your fault." Joshua says quickly.

"Joshua's right." Everyone looks at Seungcheol. "They should have known better than to mess with family."

Seokmin smiles at that. He lifts his hand that is interlocked with Joshua and looks at their matching rings. They had given it to him a few months back. Seokmin had never had a family, no real siblings, now he had them. At first, he wasn't even sure that some of them liked him, was even scared to cross their path at the beginning but now he had eleven brothers. And well he had Joshua too, which was still mind-blowing.

Seokmin's...tired.

He tries to listen to the boys talking about the men that took him, asking Wonwoo if he could dig something about why would they target them, Joshua explaining the whole thing with as little personal information as possible and just filling in the ones that didn't come on the whole thing. He really does but his eyes close on their own.

He feels Joshua moving his hand so he could rest against him and is thankful. He feels like hours pass but it's probably a few minutes when he hears Joshua calling him.

"Baby, let's go." Seokmin nods but doesn't open his eyes. Joshua strokes his cheek so he smiles and lifts his head, placing a kiss on his lips. It's like a habit really, he doesn't think anything of it.

Until he realizes they're not in their room. He pulls away and looks left and right. And it's like not a secret, like at all, that they are together but they have never kissed in front of everyone before. No one seems fazed when they wish them a good night, which is nice.

And Seokmin is thankful he took a shower as soon as they stepped home because he had just enough energy to crawl under the covers and snuggle next to Joshua.

He dozed off again and he should be deeply asleep as soon as his head hits the pillow. He's warm and comfortable, Joshua is next to him, he's so so tired. However, he stays at the border between being awake and falling asleep for a long time. He feels Joshua stroking his back and could feel his breathing under his arm on his stomach but he's not asleep too.

Joshua stands up later that night and Seokmin doesn't protest, he just patiently waits for his return. Joshua hasn't told him he would be going out and his phone had not made a sound so it was safe to say he would be back.

And he was, a few minutes later, with a cup of tea in his hand. Tea calmed his nerves and helped him sleep. He took a book out of his drawer and sat on the bed, resting his back against the headboard.

"Did I wake you up?" Joshua asks after Seokmin moves closer, placing his head in his lap carefully as to not disturb his reading.

"No." Seokmin hums.

And Joshua doesn't say anything more. Seokmin lays his head on his lower belly and his hand hugs his waist. Joshua's hand is tangled in his hair and only pulls away to switch the page and he's just always so fucking gentle.

Joshua is mesmerizing. He had always been ever since Seokmin noticed him. It was simply innocent admiration at first.

Joshua was contradicting. He was powerful and deadly, it was in the way he carried himself. But at the same time, he was kind? And understanding, calm and collected when he didn't need to make people fear him.

And Seokmin was interested in him, not in a sexual or romantic way, well not at first. He was interested in him in the way that he wanted to be like him. He respected Joshua and wanted to prove that saving him was worth it, that he can be a valuable member of their gang even if it cost him endless bruises and scars from training, even if his ears echoed the sound of guns well until he fell asleep, even if it meant waking up in the middle of the night because he wasn't satisfied with himself and walking to the training room.

Seokmin liked the surprise in Joshua's eyes when he tried the bow and arrows and succeeded. He wasn't perfect but luck was on his side that day. So he would wake up in the middle of the night and come train until his arms hurt. Until his aim was close to perfect. And he liked the approval in Joshua's eyes.

Eyes that had started to look at him softer? It was weird to explain but he liked it. He liked Joshua's attention on him, he liked that he let him stay in his room and read with him. Seokmin had never had a best friend. He did want one though. He liked Joshua. He was smart and funny, he was careful and respectful towards him. He liked training with Joshua and felt safe even when he was on the ground under him from training the defense moves. He liked

that Joshua started buying and reading more books that weren't in English because that meant he could borrow and read them too. He liked when sometimes Joshua held his hand to maybe comfort him in a way, Seokmin had fewer nightmares when he slept with Joshua next to him and had hoped when the other reassured him it was fine he was being honest.

Seokmin had been so sure what his feelings were platonic back then it was funny when he thought about it now.

But back then he didn't think anything was wrong. Didn't think that the desire to hug Joshua a little tighter and for a little longer was not supposed to be there. Didn't think that thinking of how gorgeous he looked after shower with just a bare face and his skin painted warm shades from the night lamp wasn't platonic. Until-

Until one morning when he had woken up in his arms and felt the desire to never leave.

At that moment he had realized that oh.

Oh no.

And he had tried, he had tried so fucking hard to go back. He didn't want the tangling feeling in his stomach when Joshua held his hand, didn't want the raising heartbeat with every hug, didn't want any of it.

But he couldn't stop it. He didn't know what was happening to him because he hated being touched. But he melted when Joshua did it. It had reached the point that he couldn't sleep if the other was not next to him. Seokmin felt scared every time Joshua took his weapons and went out. He couldn't sleep when he knew Joshua was out there. He was so deep that he didn't care what anyone thought when he ran to him after he came back and refused to let go for minutes.

But Joshua didn't let go of him either, always reached first for his hand, loved when Seokmin read him to sleep. And it planted a small seed of hope in his poor, broken pitiful heart. The seed grew and grew with every time Joshua looked at him softly or asked if he wanted to go for a drive with him, where they would be alone and talk. Seokmin didn't know what he wanted, he would have been more than happy with what they had for the rest of his life, he just wanted Joshua.

He wanted Joshua.

He couldn't have Joshua.

He wondered if.

Seokmin had asked Joshua if. He was always honest because his therapist wanted him to express his feelings as well as he could. He was terrified and ashamed to ask such things.

But then-

Joshua had asked to kiss him.

He had said yes.

Seokmin had been so afraid because after being used all his life, trusting someone to have him like that was scary.

But the kiss wasn't what he had expected. It was better. It was filled with gentleness and warmth. If that was what kisses felt like he wanted more.

He had felt his whole body overwhelmed with emotions, because after all those years someone cared enough to ask, cared enough to make every touch a gentle caress instead of a painful burn. Then Joshua had said he was perfect, which he didn't believe but it had been enough for the tears in his eyes to spill.

He had been terrified.

The next morning when he had woken up and Joshua hadn't been there he was mortified. He didn't know if he had stepped over a border, didn't understand Joshua's answer the previous night. So he waited for Joshua to figure it out.

And then a week later when Joshua had come into his room declaring that he wanted nothing more than to kiss him, he had been surprised. Confused. Exited?

Seokmin never imagined having the life he did now.

He was happy, he felt safe, loved, at home.

Never dared to dream he would be in love, even better with a person that loved him back just as strongly. Never thought someone would bring him flowers, hug him after a nightmare, be eager to just have his touch and kisses. Never thought someone would be ready to die to save him.

His life felt easy. Not in the way that he didn't have any worries because he had, fears and terrifying thoughts, mainly revolving around losing his Joshua. Not at all. Easy in a way what he could sometimes think about the next day, week, and not be afraid. Breathing was easier, waking up was a pleasure. (Well almost always, there were the moments when Joshua was missing.) Living was worth it.

Joshua made him happy, Seokmin made him happy in return. Simple as that.

Joshua made him want more. In a sense of wanting a future together, of growing old together, of having a small farm next to a lake where they would grow their food, where they had two baby girls and a dog running around the garden while they made dinner. Of a simple life where loving each other was enough. Of course, he couldn't have it, Joshua had said it from the start. But dreams were free.

He wanted more in other ways too. Sometimes when Joshua was kissing him he couldn't help but be frustrated, he wanted Joshua to love him in the most intimate way. Seokmin wanted to be touched and to finally see what the people in the books were talking about. The only true pleasure he had felt was in the shower, his mind couldn't help but take him to the previous

nights when Joshua had kissed his neck, had pulled him closer, the way he could feel that Joshua wanted him when he was sitting in his lap, the way he ground his hips down, greedy to hear him and kiss his quiet moan away.

He wasn't scared of Joshua touching him, of him doing something to hurt him. He was okay now, after many long talks with Dr. Lee, after many thoughts about it. No, he was actually afraid of being bad at it. What if after waiting for it for so many months he disappointed Joshua in some way?

He liked what they had now, it was mostly pure, the comfort of getting to touch each other without the obligation of anything more.

Joshua never denied him and that was addicting. He took what Seokmin had to offer and returned it double.

And he was just so fucking hot. It shouldn't be possible for someone that beautiful, charming and caring to have that kind of body and that way of smirking that made his knees weak.

Seokmin remembered one night when Joshua had just gotten out of the shower in a rush because of a phone call, with just a towel wrapped around his waist. Seokmin thought if he had let his mouth open he would have started drooling like a sappy romance novel protagonist. He had looked at his back muscles when Joshua walked around the room, he looked at the droplets of water falling from his hair and running down his chest and lower.

And he had felt bold out of a sudden. Bold enough to drag Joshua to the bed immediately after he hung the phone and straddle his lap. It had been exciting, the hot skin under his fingers was familiar but the fewer layers between them weren't. His kiss had been desperate, needy, determined. Joshua's hands hadn't stopped just at the hem of his shirt but had actually taken it off after an eager nod from him. Joshua's lips had felt hotter and more real when they were placed directly at the skin under his collarbones and chest. It had felt good, Seokmin had felt like he wanted it, was not afraid or having second thoughts.

But then his phone had rung again and Joshua was gone in just a few minutes, later that night Seokmin had him shirtless again but this time with blood over him and a wound to patch up.

Whenever that happened Seokmin had to face reality because even though Joshua was his world, he was still a human being. In the next days until Joshua recovered he made sure to tell him that he loved him more often, to appreciate every kiss and hold him closer at night.

Until Joshua was on his feet shortly after and nothing had changed.

Seokmin never thought of bad things when he kissed him goodbye and tried to stay as calm as possible while Seungkwan and Hansol were arguing behind his back. (Which come on, Joshua had told him they were like that for years now but it was clear they were in love, they were sharing a bed for God's sake.) The blood stopped fazing him, the weapons covered in it that Joshua placed on the table as he was undressing, too.

Joshua was terrifying outside, all leather and skill but whenever he looked at him there was only adoration. Seokmin had seen the change of his eyes, from cruel and merciless to full of

love when they looked at him. Joshua would never hurt him, not in an emotional, not in physical, or even sexual way. Joshua was his safe space, where he felt protected and treasured. Joshua was always so careful with him, Joshua who could have anything and anyone but chosen to stay with him just because Seokmin loved him. Joshua who gave him everything, his wildest dreams, which okay weren't anything more than his own bow and arrow and every book of his favorite poet but it was enough to make him cry from happiness. A simple hug, a compliment, a kiss, gentle fingers carding through his hair. It was enough for Seokmin to feel like the happiest man alive.

And all Seokmin could offer was a promise that he loved him more than anything. But Joshua thought it was enough. (Well it's not like Seokmin didn't do anything for him too, he was proud to know he made Joshua happy just with his presence, could calm him down with just a kiss and by holding his face to breathe together. He loved when Joshua fell asleep under his arms massaging his back and Seokmin telling him pointless stories. Knew what foods Joshua didn't like and what tea was his favourite so he made them when Joshua was on bedrest.)

Seokmin loved him.

And he was ready to bet his life that Joshua loved him just as strongly. And it wasn't just because he told him so. Joshua had never made him doubt it really. Seokmin had never had the reason to doubt if what Joshua felt towards him was anything less. Joshua had risked his life for him and had promised to do it thousand times more, no one could argue with that. And Seokmin believed him because he felt the same. He was not into the idea of living without Joshua, he simply refused to.

Seokmin feels Joshua's fingers stroking his cheek so he moves his head and kisses his palm. He loves Joshua's touch so much. And now Joshua wasn't afraid like at the start, now he could pull Seokmin in his lap and ask for a kiss because he knew the other was eager to do it, Joshua wasn't afraid to lift his shirt up and map his body when they were making out. They talked, they had trust in their relationship.

Seokmin gently lifts up his shirt, just enough to be able to leave small wet kisses above his waistband. It's a reminder that Joshua is here, he is real, he is his. Seokmin kisses over a scar on the left side, just under his ribs and moves up. He doesn't have any intentions besides being close to Joshua.

Okay maybe it's a small lie, he wants a little attention, maybe a few kisses too.

"Oh don't mind me." Seokmin says and kisses above his belly button. "If the book is that interesting I should read it next."

Joshua laughs, closing the book and tossing it aside, then holds his chin up. "It's in English, I'll buy it for you in Korean when they translate it." Seokmin loves Joshua's laugh, it's something so cute and raw. He moves up and kisses him, short and brief.

"How thoughtful of you." Seokmin says innocently.

And then he's pulled down flush against Joshua, in a needy kiss. Seokmin never felt afraid of being in his arms, held and guided.

Without thinking he pulls Joshua's shirt up and over his head and claims his neck. It's not something unusual. And Joshua doesn't need more, he places his hands on his hips and just holds him. Seokmin never thought he would be comfortable enough to take his shirt off too. He had never thought he would desire to be touched so intimately.

But it was Joshua. His touch was loving, gentle, healing. And Seokmin found it so easy to just give in and enjoy it, because he trusted Joshua with everything.

Joshua was his everything.

Joshua proved every day that Seokmin was his everything.

It was addicting.

Seokmin runs his fingers over his chest and lowers himself to leave kisses, Joshua's hands travel down his spine slowly. Seokmin's breath hitches when he felt him squeezing his ass and takes his hands to place them there again, kissing him eagerly after. He moves his hips slowly in the rhythm of their kiss. It was intoxicating, knowing that someone loved him, that Joshua would never hurt him, was doing this for the pleasure of both of them.

Seokmin twists his tongue and thrust his hips forward roughly, and he could feel it, he could feel everything. Joshua wants him.

He wants Joshua.

And Joshua is still oh so gentle with him, moving to leave sweet kisses on his neck and barely squeezing with his palms. And Seokmin had never thought he would say it but-"I want-" He whispers but isn't sure what he meant. And fuck watching Joshua slowly opening his eyes and watching him like that made every doubt melt, he had the most beautiful man only for himself. Oh God.

"What do you want, baby?" Joshua says and he thinks he wants everything. He wants to show Joshua he was his everything. He cups Joshua's face with both hands because he was the most important thing in his world. Seokmin kisses him and he was sure. Joshua hums into the kiss, simply caressing his lips with his tongue and moving his hands up and down over his thighs. He moves his hips, grinding down and feeling him against himself, it was familiar but exciting every time, they never did more than that.

Seokmin had always had a little voice at the back of his mind that told him to do it sooner, let Joshua have his body because no man would wait for him that long. Men only wanted one thing.

But the voice telling him that Joshua was not like them, that he would wait for him and loved him no matter what was louder.

And it was right. He couldn't lie to Joshua, he would see right through him if he felt uncomfortable.

Seokmin moves his hands down over Joshua's bare chest, feeling soft skin and hard muscles under his fingers, until he touches him over the fabric of the sweatpants he usually slept with. Joshua doesn't break the kiss at that, just squeezes his thighs as a remeasurement. Seokmin moves his hand against him and the sound Joshua makes against his lips sends shivers down his spine, he was so turned on it was actually painful. Seokmin tangles his hands in Joshua's hair again and sinks heavily in his lap. Joshua's lips travel to kiss his bare chest as well as he could and this with the combination of the satisfying friction between their bodies was enough to get him panting.

It's so good. Joshua holds him close and all Seokmin wants is to feel his hands on his skin all over without the annoying feeling of fabric between them. He takes one last kiss and moves down, kissing over the warm skin, trying to clear his mind of all things that weren't Joshua.

"Can I?" He says with his fingers over the waistband and looks at Joshua, who looks back at him with warm eyes.

"Are you sure?" Joshua strokes his cheek with his thumb, so softly it makes him melt. He nods. "Okay then, just if something happens and you want to stop tell me immediately." Joshua says. "I love you." He adds before lifting his hips to help him take them off along with his underwear.

And Seokmin doesn't feel scared, doesn't feel uncomfortable. All he feels is excitement in his heart and other feelings tickling between his legs. He leans forward to kiss the skin on Joshua's lower stomach and runs his hands over Joshua's legs. Seokmin takes him into his hand and strokes a few times, spreading the wetness from the tip down and looks up to look at Joshua, whose eyes are still carefully looking at him. He moves his hand slow and teasing, and feels pride in himself when a moan leaves Joshua's pretty lips and he dips his head back. He lowers himself and closes his lips around the tip, eager to hear more. He teases his tongue around like he assumes it feels good and was surprised when he doesn't gag at it. He actually enjoys the weight in his mouth and wants more so he sinks his head down slowly and hollows his cheeks. He feels Joshua's fingers in his hair and moans unconsciously. Joshua's fingers are gentle and don't pull, they are only there for reassurance and it's enough to make Seokmin moan and wanna do more with each caress. Every time Seokmin moans against him, the vibrations that are sent over his body make his breathing heavy and all Joshua wants to do is just close his eyes and sink at the feeling. He wants to say something but he's afraid it would be wrong.

"Am I doing okay?" Seokmin asks then.

"Yes, yes, it's wonderful, baby." Joshua says and looks down at him, who gives him a shy smile. "It's so good, It's perfect. " Joshua says because he feels like it. "You're perfect."

"Thank you." Seokmin mumbles shyly and takes him again without warning. Joshua closes his eyes for a second in the hot feeling around him. He was trying so hard to not move, afraid of hurting the other, but it was so hard when Seokmin somehow took him deeper and began working his hand where his mouth couldn't reach.

Seokmin really likes the praise. Like really. The fact that he could make Joshua feel like that only using his mouth and fingers excites him. All it took was his gentle voice for Seokmin to forget all the cruel words that once made him believe he was nothing. All it took was just a simple touch from his soft fingers to forget all the vile hands that once thought they had a right over him.

He had everything now, he was everything to someone and that clouds his mind and makes something like ecstasy run in his veins. There are tears in the corners of his eyes from the intense pleasure he feels. He moves his hips against the sheet and the little friction against him makes him moan.

"I'm close, baby." Joshua says after that and it's probably a warning for him to pull out but he doesn't want to. "Fuck okay then." Joshua says when he realizes what's happening. "You're so good and pretty sweetheart, you make me feel so good."

Seokmin enjoys his breathless voice and everything as a whole so much, his free hand that's on Joshua's stomach he moves down to touch himself because he wants more. Seokmin proceeds to move his tongue and head but faster, feeling his own arousal under his belly, working him until he feels his body tensing up. Seokmin releases most of him and keeps just the tip into his mouth, circling and teasing his tongue over it leaving the rest to his hand and moves the one between his legs in the same rhythm. It's so good, he feels like he couldn't breathe too. Joshua comes into his mouth quickly after and he honestly hates the taste but he would bear it for Joshua. Seokmin looks up at him and he's just so ridiculously hot with his closed eyes and he's biting his lip because of the pleasure. It's simply too much, it takes a few more flicks of his hand and he's coming too, silencing himself by kissing Joshua's skin above his belly button and breathing heavily against it. He hopes Joshua wouldn't notice, he had wanted to do that for him but in the end, he had been greedy. However, the hands in his hair again and the quiet praises leaving Joshua's mouth were probably an indicator he had failed. Seokmin felt good, he had forgotten everything that didn't include Joshua's touch or voice for minutes.

Seokmin climbs slowly up and buries his face in the crook of Joshua's neck, who wraps his hands around him protectively.

"Look at me, sweetheart." Joshua says.

"No." His words are muffled. "I'm embarrassed."

"Okay, if you don't wanna talk about it it's alright." Joshua kisses his hair and Seokmin is glad he understands. "But just so you know that it was knowing that you are getting off just by making me feel good that made me cum so fast."

"Really?" Seokmin slowly lifts his head after thinking over his words.

"Yeah, it was so fucking hot." Joshua says and pecks his lips. "Just next time I wanna help."

"Oh God."

"Let me clear us up."

And Seokmin lays there, watching Joshua take down his pajama pants and underwear slowly and clean the mess he's made. He's embarrassed but not uncomfortable, Joshua smiles at him and kisses him.

"I love you too." Seokmin says because he didn't say it earlier after Joshua cleaned himself too and pulled him against him under the covers. They were too lazy to put on clothes but the fact that Seokmin can feel every inch of skin pressed against him makes him feel satisfied and comfy. He moves his hand, drawing circles on Joshua's chest with his fingers. He feels insanely lucky. Joshua was here. Solid, Real. Warm.

Joshua was all his to have.

Joshua kisses the top of his head, the hand dropping from his hair to rub along his back. Seokmin feels his eyes heavy and closes them, focusing just on the heartbeat, the hand on his back, the warmth pressing all against his body.

Seokmin doesn't really know what he did in a previous life to deserve this. Or maybe it was because of all of the suffering and pain that he was given in this one.

Whatever it was, he didn't care, all he knew was that life with Joshua was the most important thing and now that he had it he wouldn't lose it. They would have to pry it out of his cold dead hands.

"You make me so happy." He lifts his face to kiss Joshua's jaw and the other just squeezes him tighter. Joshua loves him and it was real, it was not a dream, a crooked reality he would wake up from.

"You're my everything baby."

Joshua loves him. Seokmin loves him right back.

And maybe Joshua couldn't promise him a future. But he gave him everything here in the present and it was enough. Anything else was irrelevant.

Because he would prefer a life like this, filled with blood and pain and fear, instead of one where Joshua wasn't in it. He knew Joshua wanted to give him a simple life away from him, where he would be safe, but honestly, he didn't need it.

He needed Joshua. Joshua was all he had ever wanted, even back when he was praying to be finally free and happy.

Joshua gave him happiness. Joshua gave him freedom. Joshua gave him love.

Joshua was his eternity.

Well, that was it? It's not something groundbreaking but I warned y'all lol. Anyways, the next final chapter is a Bonus one ;)

Also, there is a [thread](#) with songs that inspired me if u wanna check them out.

<https://curiouscat.live/pinkphoeniixx>

Like blue flame

Chapter Notes

Was this chapter necessary? Absolutely not.
I apologize for any typos.

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

"Are you sure you're okay with this?" Joshua asks as he parks the car behind the building. It was unexpected.

Last week Jun had asked him to deliver something to his friend at the port and Joshua had agreed, it wasn't the closest one but Joshua had agreed without asking too many questions, he didn't even ask what was in the box he was taking to be secretly shipped to China, he just hoped that it wasn't that illegal.

This morning when Seokmin had sulked because Joshua was leaving him for the seventh day in a row he had suggested he came along. What could go wrong right?

The whole delivery went well and quick, if they left immediately they would be home before midnight. However, Joshua hadn't predicted the big chain crash in the back road he used. It was too late to go back now so the only option was to sleep over somewhere.

"I mean yeah? It's better than driving back, plus you should rest, you've been driving all day." It wasn't perfect, they both had no change of clothes and the only places they could stay over were a cheap motel down the road(they had checked the reviews on this one before stopping and the complaints of insects and other animals in the rooms weren't delightful) or a love hotel next to a gas station. Honestly, it didn't look bad, the outside looked nice, it was a black building, not too tall and with minimalistic design on the outside, the first thing that caught your eye was the big "Love Shot Hotel" red neon sign above the entrance. "I'm sure it's better than the motel with a complimentary zoo inside." Joshua laughs at his joke and takes his hand after taking everything that he needed from the car and locks it.

The inside wasn't that different from the outside, the walls were painted in red and the furniture was black, there were paintings of naked women on the walls and two vending machines but it actually looked clean and well managed. There was a girl behind the front desk, talking on her phone without paying them much attention.

"Hello?" Joshua says to her and she looks him up and down, rolls her eyes and tells whoever she was talking to to wait. Her hair was purple and she was wearing very red lipstick.

"Welcome to Love Shot Hotel, what can I do for you, sir?" The girl says. Joshua looks at her name tag for exactly a second because she was wearing a very revealing tank top. Her name was Minji.

"We would like a room, on the second floor, at the end of a hallway, preferably with a window instead of a balcony." Joshua demands, if they're staying at a random place with no seeming security he better takes some precautions.

"You're very picky." Minji complains but starts typing something on her computer. "You probably want a bathtub and working lock too."

"I don't necessarily need a bathtub." Joshua says.

"How many hours?"

"One night."

"Fancy." Minji looks between them and Joshua sees her smile at Seokmin, probably because he did first. "We only offer a discount on Valentine's day so you'll have to pay full price." Minji gives him an expectant look and raises her eyebrows.

"Shouldn't be a problem."

"Wonderful then, we advise you to use cash in case of a jealous partner back home and not because I'm too lazy to learn how the card thingy works." Minji says with a big smile and Seokmin couldn't help but laugh at that.

"Babe, why didn't you mention you had a jealous partner, am I only a side piece?" Seokmin says dramatically, looking very offended.

Joshua hums at him. "Yeah, but you're prettier baby." Joshua says and lifts their interlocked hands to kiss his.

"I like you guys." Minji says happily. "Here I'll even give you our second-best room since you don't want a balcony." She opens a drawer and pulls out a silver key. "We don't offer room service or any of that shit but our walls are very sound resistant," Minji says and opens a cabinet behind her, pulling two towels. "Here, in case you need anything you would have to deal with it because my girlfriend is visiting later and I would be busy." Minji says and clicks a few buttons, then gives Joshua a printed receipt.

"That's too much?" She says.

"Thank you for the room." Joshua says and smiles at her, she looks confused when he refuses the change.

"Wait, I usually don't give every guest this-" Minji turns around and opens a cabinet, pulling out a box. "-cause most of them are creepy but since you both are very cute I'll indulge you." She gives it to Seokmin, who looks at her confused. "It's some fancy shower products and other complementary stuff we should give out to people renting the more expensive rooms, they are actually really nice so I keep them for myself."

They both thank her and use the stairs to their room. It's quiet, there are no people in the hallway and actually not much noise too.

The room itself was nice, it was painted in red as well, the whole hotel had a theme going on. Even the lights coming from behind the headboard were red. There was a king-size bed in the middle, the window doesn't directly look at it which was good. Joshua locks the door behind himself and walks to close the blinds. There were a loveseat and a small table but no TV or a closet, reasonable, assuming most people didn't come here particularly to sleep or watch TV.

"I wanna take a shower." Seokmin says with a sigh, he looks tired. Joshua follows him to the bathroom.

"Take a bath, it's quieter." He puts the towels next to the sink. "I'll go to the gas station to buy us some food and stuff." He reaches through the small bag he carries, pulls out a gun and places it over the towels. "I'll lock you, be careful."

"You're being paranoid." Seokmin rolls his eyes but comes closer and wraps his hands around Joshua's waist.

"I need you to be safe." Joshua says quietly and pecks his lips.

"Fine, be careful too." Seokmin smiles and releases him, pulling his shirt over his head and folds it. "Come back quickly before Minji throws us out for disturbing her time with her girlfriend."

"I'll keep my eyes closed."

Joshua comes back not even ten minutes later, unlocks the door and places the bag on the table. He had bought them some sandwiches, snacks and water, he even managed to get toothbrushes. He walks to the door and knocks.

"It's me baby." He says and opens the door carefully.

"Yeah no shit, since when people knock before shooting babe." Seokmin says, he has his eyes closed and is laying as well as he could fit in the bathtub. "I'm not hearing you taking your clothes off and I don't like that." He says and Joshua smiles.

"You seem pretty comfortable down there, don't wanna disturb you."

"You've been away for seven days in a row doing God knows what and the only time you were home, you were locked up in a room with Seungcheol and Wonwoo till the middle of the night, then gone before I wake up, I've only seen you for five minutes a day, at most, and today when you were finally free, we had to drive for hours in the middle of the summer. " He says and looks Joshua dead in the eyes. "I miss you so much and if you're not between my legs in a minute I swear."

The sound of the water moving and rippling was the only sound in the bathroom for a while after Joshua gladly complied. And he was so grateful because he was tired. He had let Seokmin wash his hair and back and was now laying in his arms, enjoying the gentle touches

on his chest. His eyes were closed and his head was tipped back over his shoulders. It felt warm and smelled nice, he had to try hard to not fall asleep right here.

"I missed you too baby." Joshua doesn't apologize for disappearing because he knows it's not necessary. Seokmin knew he had to and even though he could sulk he wasn't really mad. This was Joshua's job.

Seokmin kisses his shoulder and squeezes his waist. "Maybe next time I could come along and help?" Seokmin says. Joshua hums and turns his head to kiss his cheek as well as he could reach.

"Absolutely not." He says sweetly.

"But why?" Seokmin whines. "I've improved so much in hand-to-hand combat, my aim is perfect, I could actually be helpful."

"You are helpful, baby." Joshua turns in the bath as well as he could to see him.

"The only thing I do is help if someone gets hurt, do chores or help if somebody needs a training partner."

"Which is enough." Joshua touches his cheek softly. "You need to understand that I would not forgive myself if I let something happen to you, please don't ask this from me."

And Seokmin gets it. Sort of. The tight feeling in his heart whenever Joshua went out or came back covered with blood never washed away.

"I feel sick every time you leave out of the door and know I might never have you in my arms again." Seokmin whispers quietly.

"You're a braver person than me Seokminnie." Joshua hopes that was the end of this conversation. He knows how hypocritical it sounds but he would rather be selfish than have Seokmin exposed to danger willingly.

Seokmin didn't look at him, he was staring at the wall and Joshua believes that maybe he needs some alone time, he usually did when he got this quiet. Joshua kisses his cheek once again and stands up, wraps one of the towels around his waist, gets the gun and goes out of the bathroom.

But apparently, he had read the room wrong because not many minutes passed before Seokmin came out of the bathroom, the same towel wrapped too low on his hips and scrubbing his hair with a smaller one. He looks soft as he was walking to Joshua, who was sitting on the bed and putting the gun in the drawer of the small cabinet next to it.

"Do you think my thighs are too fat?" Seokmin asks suddenly, like the whole conversation from before didn't faze him anymore. He starts tapping dry Joshua's hair too, with the same towel, so he laughed.

"They are absolutely not, perfect size for me to hold and squeeze." Joshua says amusedly.

"I've gained some weight recently." Seokmin says and runs his hand through Joshua's hair to comb it. "You probably wouldn't be able to pick me up like before." Seokmin goes to the bathroom to throw away the wet towel.

"You train a lot, it's normal, not all weight is bad for you." Joshua stood up and took his hand as he came out of the bathroom, pressing him to the wall. He wraps his hands on the back of his thighs and lifts him up. Sure, he did feel some pressure in his hands but he was happy he did because his baby looked happy and healthy. "See?"

"Show off." Seokmin says but kisses him nevertheless. Joshua smiles against his lips so he had to use his tongue to shut him up. Joshua stops playing games after that and kisses him deeply, pressing him against the wall. Seokmin hums pleasantly at that and moves his hands over his arms to wrap them securely around his neck.

Joshua parts to breathe a moment later, but Seokmin doesn't let him, his lips tingle with desperation because he had really missed this, he was kissing him like he was afraid Joshua would disappear.

And Joshua kisses him back just as desperately.

"Let's get you comfortable, sweetheart." Joshua whispers, he doubts that being pressed against a hard wall was the most comfortable feeling. Seokmin just nods and reaches towards the light switch. The only thing that prevents Joshua from slipping and falling while he carries him to the bed is the surprisingly bright red light coming from behind the headboard of the bed.

Joshua was quickly pulled in another kiss after he put him down. Seokmin kisses him in heated, desperate movements full of tongue and clasp teeth. Soon they were both panting against each other's lips. Seokmin's hands wandered freely across Joshua's body- up his arms, in his hair, down to his hips to pull the stubborn towel down and throw it away, at whatever piece of skin he could get his hands on really. He moans when Joshua moves his head to the side to kiss his neck. He starts moving his hips up, grinding himself against Joshua's thigh and his breath becomes heavy, Joshua could very well feel his eagerness now that he was naked.

"Shua-" He pants, Joshua lifts to look at him and he honest to God looks sinfully pretty with his face pained in red lights, his closed eyes and mouth slightly open to let out quiet moans.

"Baby?"

"Can we-" He says in a quiet voice. "Can we do it now?"

And Joshua feels his words burn his skin. It wasn't like a few months back when they had started touching more and pleasing each other with their hands or mouth, sure that had been exciting and felt even more wonderful but this?

This was big, Seokmin trusted him enough to let him have him in this way even after-

Joshua kisses him softly, softer than all the ones they shared tonight. "We can do everything you want sweetheart, I just need you to know that just because we are alone here doesn't mean we have to." Joshua says because he isn't gonna do anything until they were both completely sure it's right.

"I know that." He smiles and cups his face. "I'm doing it because I want it, I want you so bad." And Seokmin did because...he had never promised anything, he was never sure if he would be ready to do that with someone and yet Joshua had staid. He had never imagined getting love, being so in love that the thought of being with someone didn't scare him. The only thing he feels is excitement and the need to be as close as possible. "Do you want me too?" He asks because he had to be sure Joshua does too, consent is a two-way street.

"I do baby, of course I do." Joshua smiles and kisses his nose. Seokmin is so in love. "So, how do you want to do it?"

And Seokmin is confused at first but his lips form an 'oh' a second later. He had a choice, of course he did. He had never even considered the possibility of it. He had thought about it, about pain and tears and had never remembered how loving, caring and considerate his boyfriend was.

"How do you prefer?"

"That's not important." Joshua says.

"It is to me."

"Okay I guess-" Joshua says carefully. "Uh, I let someone fuck me once, a few years ago and it wasn't my favourite thing." He smiles awkwardly.

"Did he hurt you?"

"No, I mean yeah it was painful but it was probably because I wasn't into him."

"Then why-"

"Work."

"That's terrible, baby." And Joshua is surprised because Seokmin pulled the baby card only when he was injured very badly.

"No, it's not like that, I did it willingly." Joshua reassures him. "Plus I'm sure if I do it with you I'll enjoy it."

"Still, you were hurt." Seokmin pulls him in a gentle kiss and strokes his cheek with his thumb. Joshua couldn't remember what his life was before him honestly. Being loved by such a kind, gentle and strong person was priceless.

Joshua had never imagined getting love before, now love kisses him with soft lips and looks at him with bright eyes.

And Joshua didn't want to stop kissing him, didn't want to stop saying how much he loves him, didn't want to make him doubt it for even a second. Because his life had only started having meaning since meeting him. It sounds desperate, it sounds pathetic, it's the truth.

As much to his dismay Seokmin stops kissing him but holds him close, his hands on his neck gently stroking his skin.

"Thank you-" He says. "-for telling me and giving me the comfort of having a choice, however I've always wondered-" His eyes travel over Joshua's face. "I think I want you to fu...love. I want you to make love to me."

And Joshua has never considered that.

He has fucked so many people, faces that he could vaguely remember, from pretty girls in tight dresses to hot guys in the back of the club. But it had always been just that, meaningless and easy to forget.

Seokmin wanted him to make love to him.

It sounds fake, it sounds like something made up in the old poetry books when people were too shy to call it something realistic.

And yet it didn't sound that laughable when it came from his lips.

Seokmin was pretty, he was soft and gentle, he was loving and selfless, he was beautiful. Joshua felt like it all made sense now, making love was right.

(And of course he was hot, and sexy, and tempting, and seductive. He was all of those things and more so that Joshua would want him sprawled at any possible surface, moaning so hard it was getting hard to breathe. But that would be later.)

Joshua had never made love. He wanted to. He wanted to give all of himself, to hold him slow and teasing, he wanted to worship him all night, his name to be the only thing his lips could say, he wanted the pleasure of knowing they were doing it because they wanted to be close, not a quick release.

"I've never done that baby." Joshua says quietly, it had become a habit at this point.

"Do you want to do it with me for the first time then?" Seokmin smiles at him reassuringly. Beautiful.

First time? It was funny at first but now that he thought about it? Joshua had never really been with someone he truly liked, the only thing he did was use them and they had used him right back. But now...he wants this because it was Seokmin, because he loves him. Seokmin was his first love. He was his first.

"I do, I want us to make love." And it sounds right. "Together."

And they kiss because it's familiar. Honestly, Joshua had never expected it to happen, he was fine with it not happening, but if it did he thought it would be more planned, where they would sit and have a long talk, they often did that.

But it feels right.

The hot skin pressed against his feels right, Seokmin's hands traveling all around his body and the always so gentle and eager lips feel right.

Seokmin grinds his hips up once again and moans against his lips and he's just so beautiful.

"Come on-" He whines and Joshua thinks it's cute how eager he is.

Joshua thinks clearly only then.

"Baby, I don't think we can-"

"Why?" He whines and looks at Joshua.

"We don't have-"

"In the box." And Joshua looks at the box on the nightstand and reaches for it.

Oh.

Seokmin clears his throat and tugs at the strands of hair on his neck so Joshua came back to reality. He trails his eyes over his body, taking the towel and letting it fall to the ground, then getting comfortable between his legs and kisses him.

And Joshua kisses him deeply, needy, desperately, needing to show him that this was right, if love could be expressed with a kiss he needed it to be it.

Joshua coated his fingers, never stopping kissing him. Seokmin breaths out hard, fingers curling into the flesh on his shoulders, body tensing.

"You'll have to be relaxed, baby, otherwise it would hurt." Joshua whispers.

And Seokmin is mad at himself because It's happening. He had been thinking about it, imagined it for so long and now that he could have it he was being unreasonable.

He nods, ignoring every thought and insecurity, he trusts Joshua immensely.

Joshua lowers himself and kisses him softly, lifting Seokmin's leg to wrap around his waist with his other hand. He doesn't release his lips when he finally slips one finger inside him, drinking up every sound Seokmin makes. It is uncomfortable, it's not exactly painful but he doesn't particularly like it.

"I've got you baby." Joshua promises. "Just tell me when you're ready for more."

And Seokmin knows he was saying this to reassure him but if he didn't like one, he wouldn't like more.

"Keep going." His jaw tightened but he says nevertheless.

"You're not ready, you know I can feel it." Joshua takes out his finger and wipes it from the sheet, then lays next to him on the bed. Seokmin feels a tear roll down his eye and he turns his back on him. He had ruined it.

"I love you so much baby." Joshua hugs his waist and kisses his neck.

"I'm sorry." Seokmin whispers.

"There is nothing to apologize for, there is always a next time."

Seokmin turns to face him and Joshua wipes his tear, leaning to kiss his lips, so soft.

"What if next time doesn't work too?"

"That's fine."

"I wanted us to have that." Seokmin says quietly. "I promised you."

And Joshua could repeat a thousand times that this was not important, that he wasn't disappointed but sometimes words were not enough.

"You can make it up to me?" Joshua says and pushes a strand of hair off his forehead, kissing it.

"Yes, I-" Seokmin looks down between them and nods. "I will." He climbs on top of him and kisses him quickly, then starts kissing down his throat and chest and as much as Joshua enjoyed it-

"Not like that." He says and Seokmin looks up at him, confused. Joshua pulls him up and kisses him again, his hands travel over the curve of his spine and down, touching and claiming, firm enough for both of them. "I want to eat you out."

"Huh?" Seokmin moves back and looks at him, looks over his face and down to his red lips then in his eyes again, he thinks he's hearing things but Joshua doesn't speak. "How is that for you?"

"Oh it is." Joshua looks at him smugly. "You riding my face while I just lay here and please you sounds very nice."

Seokmin had read in a psychology book a while ago that your first love is not the biggest, that it usually was there to teach you how to recover and accept the pain of it disappearing, you don't find true love well until you're almost thirty it said, but he thinks it's all bullshit. And sure he isn't like most people but he's sure of one thing- Joshua is his first love, even after barely an year of knowing each other he was sure he was it.. He doesn't care about

psychology, he doesn't care about what was right, all he needs was Joshua to continue loving him the way he does now.

And how can he not when Joshua always gives him everything, he's like a fever dream. Because Joshua doesn't hurt him and doesn't use him. Because Joshua makes him cry only when the love he gives him is too much and he can't take it anymore, because Joshua treats him like something precious, his treasure as he would say.

"Yeah." Seokmin says.

"Yeah?" Joshua repeats.

Of course he would accept, he was crazy about him, Joshua made him even crazier when he used his mouth on him.

"Just because I love you, don't think I would enjoy it, I'm doing it for you." Seokmin jokes and Joshua understands, he moves up with fake confidence. Joshua takes the pillows and throws them at the end of the bed.

"Obviously." Joshua says and runs his hands over his thighs that are resting on the sides of his waist. Seokmin puts his hand under his chin and makes him look up at him as he moves his way up. Joshua looks down before he makes one last step and smiles. "For me?"

"For you." And Joshua pulls him over his face and spreads his legs. Seokmin had barely time to reach and hold the headboard for support before he felt a wet lick. He feels it tickling and it's nice, tingles are spreading through his body with every lick and he can't hold his smile. Joshua places his palms on his thighs again, kissing the delicate skin. He feels soft and tastes sweet, like he always did, but that was probably just the feeling of being in love.

"I would need you to relax and sit on my face baby." Seokmin hears his muffled words and it would have been funny if it didn't sound so alluring.

"Are you sure? I don't want to hurt you."

Joshua nods, his nose touches something and Seokmin twitches. "Definitely." Joshua promises. His breath tickles him. "Closer is better."

Joshua doesn't wait to spread Seokmin's thighs even more and tugs him down to sit fully on his face. He licks a wet big strip and feels him jump slightly but he holds him down by holding his thighs securely. Seokmin tangles his hand in Joshua's hair, it's something grounding. That's all he sees underneath actually. Joshua doesn't wait for him to calm down before doing it again, licking with no mercy because he wants him wet and dripping, this was the only way he could please him like he deserves. Seokmin feels like he was going insane. The feeling is unexplainable, it's good, so unbelievably good. He could get off just by it any day. Joshua's licks feel incredible, it's like he is making some kind of a magic down there.

"Oh fuck." He moans in a broken voice and it's like that makes his boyfriend under him even more eager. He enjoys a few more licks with quiet broken moans, then Joshua moves his palms, spreading him even more and pushing his tongue into him. Seokmin breaths out and

tries to move away but Joshua doesn't let him go, he tightens his grip onto the headboard and starts panting for a sweet release. Joshua doesn't stop fucking him with his tongue Seokmin feels his limbs becoming soft and his vision blurring.

"Shua-" He begs but it's not heard. Joshua is lost under him and is holding his thighs tight, his fingers digging into the flesh possessive enough to leave bruises.

Joshua starts kissing him then and it's over for him. He feels himself leaking, his thighs are shaking, the thought of Joshua kissing him like that between his legs makes him insane.

His kisses feel softer in contrast to his tongue so Seokmin lets himself breathe. He lets go of the headboard to push his hair back, which is still wet. He wants to kiss Joshua and show him he was doing amazing but for now all he could do was stroke his hair.

It's calming, the burning feeling from before has calmed down and Seokmin feels only the tingles from the start. Then he hears the wet sounds of Joshua licking his lips and he starts to lick and thrust into him again, deep and wet. And he's doing it with determination and no signs of stopping any time soon.

Seokmin moves his hips on instinct, fucking himself on his boyfriend's tongue. He doesn't know if this is how it's supposed to go but Joshua doesn't seem to mind, he even puts his hands on his ass and encourages it. Joshua hums pleasantly every time he moves. Seokmin rocks his hips gently over the flat of his tongue, moaning every time he felt his tongue dig into him.

It's filthy, his sloppy movements and the wetness between his legs are too much, his body is shaking and he feels mushy. Seokmin moves his hips once, twice and he feels like he couldn't anymore. He lifts himself and takes the headboard with both hands. Joshua goes up under him. Seokmin looks down, he's so pretty with his red lips, his chin and mouth are covered with saliva and his hair is a mess.

"It feels-" Seokmin says after he can find some words. "-so good."

Joshua smiles and lifts his head to kiss the inside of his thigh. "Why are we stopping then?"

Seokmin moves down and buries his head into the crook of his neck. His legs are still on both sides of his waist so Joshua moves his palms over his back, ass and stops them to hold his thighs again.

"I just need a minute." Seokmin mumbles.

"Okay, after that we can continue if you want?" His voice is raspy. Seokmin moves up to face him.

"I can't feel my legs." He says earnestly. He lowers himself and kisses Joshua, his face is wet but his lips taste just as sweet as every time. Joshua moves up to sit and takes him with himself and now Seokmin is sitting in his lap. The kiss is slow and patient, Seokmin feels how hard his boyfriend is and the thought of him being turned on by just pleasing him makes him crazy.

"Turn around." Joshua says against his lips and Seokmin is too overwhelmed to refuse, he complies obediently. Joshua palms his neck and kisses the back of it, his other hand reaches down to stroke him. "Now I just want you to lay over my chest and I'm gonna do the rest, okay baby?" Joshua asks, his breath is hot on his neck so Seokmin nods. He does as told, ignoring the heat in his cheeks from the position and being so exposed but it's not really necessary. Joshua pulls him closer by the thighs and spreads him then starts licking, sucking and pushing his tongue like he hadn't stopped for a second and it's somehow even deeper in this position, if that was even possible.

All Seokmin could do is lay down and pant, he can't think straight, he feels like his soul had left his body and he's hovering somewhere. He grinds down and moans, he's been neglected for so long it's borderline painful.

Joshua releases one of his thighs and pushes his thumb inside, using his spit as lube. And this doesn't feel uncomfortable like before, it wasn't painful, he even wants it deeper. Seokmin moans against Joshua's lower stomach. He moves his thumb and licks around it. Seokmin is definitely going to cry now

"M-more please?" He could barely talk right now. Thankfully Joshua complies and coats his fingers again and replaces his thumb with his index finger. It feels so good. He moves his hips because he needs more, fucking himself on his fingers and tongue and actually getting a little friction between his legs too.

Seokmin lifts his head to see how hard his boyfriend was just by pleasing him and he wants to help. He lifts himself and moves down, taking him in his hand and stroking, spreading the wetness down. Joshua moans but doesn't stop moving his fingers.

"Baby, move back, I can't reach with my mouth." He says but Seokmin doesn't want to. He takes him in his mouth quickly and the moan that escapes Joshua's mouth is enough for him to want to go deeper and faster.

But it was slow, Joshua was still moving his finger inside him and he didn't want him to stop, he circles his tongue and moves his head up and down slowly. They have all the time in the world.

Joshua adds a second finger and it's uncomfortable for just a second but he's distracted enough to not pay it too much mind.

And the whole thing is too much.

Seokmin arched his back as he prepps him, now with three fingers and it's so gentle and slow, long fingers reaching deep and just right, brushing and pressing and dragging. And every time Joshua found his spot he moanes, but doesn't let him go which made Joshua moan too, it was like a chain reaction, they both gave something and received it double.

"Baby, I-" And Seokmin knows what this means. He doesn't want to stop, he doesn't. But he wants something more. If his mind wasn't this clouded he would dwell on how hot it was that Joshua was turned so much from just eating him out that it took just a few seconds of sucking him off for him to be coming.

Seokmin collects all the strength he has left in his body and crawls away, collapsing on the bed next to Joshua, spreading his legs and arching his back. He still feels the aftertaste of pleasure because of his fingers.

"Babe-" He whines and looks at Joshua next to him. "I want you now."

And Joshua moves over him and captures his lips in a deep, breathless kiss. Seokmin wraps his legs around his waist and tugs him down, pressing their bodies together and it's just too good.

"Are you sure?" Joshua says with closed eyes, their foreheads and noses were touching. He wants it so bad too.

"Yes, please- I want you- I love you so much- I need you Shua." All he could do is beg for it. Joshua shushes him with another kiss. He takes the pillow and places it under his hips, then reaches for the box.

"Can we do it without-" Seokmin asks, Joshua paused and looks at him. "I don't think I have anything, he used one when he-"

"Oh, baby-" Joshua kisses his lips, cheek, nose and forehead lightly, just gentle soft touches. "Don't think about that, please, of course we can." And Seokmin smiles when he opens his eyes. Joshua moves back and takes the bottle, spreading it over himself and him, it's cold so he trembles but soon Joshua is kissing his neck and his hand is trailing down to lift his leg even more.

Joshua finally aligns himself and presses into him, slow and careful, trying not to hurt him. It feels uncomfortable, it hurts like a bitch too. Seokmin bit his lip so he didn't cry out, he had expected that after prepping him so good with his fingers it wouldn't. But it did. Joshua kisses him when he sees the expression on his face and he returns it, trying to ignore the pain as much as possible. He wants this.

"We can stop-"

"No-" Seokmin says, there are tears rolling down his cheeks and Joshua kisses them away. So gentle, so loving. He moves his hand between them as well as could reach to stroke him and it actually helps.

The pain starts disappearing eventually and Joshua moves slowly, watching his reactions. And it wasn't something he couldn't bare, he moves his hips up to meet Joshua and it actually felt...good?

And it was slow.

Joshua pays attention to him as he moves inside, deep but gentle.

"You're being so good for me baby." And that sparks a fire inside his skin. He wants to be good for Joshua, he wants to be the reason for his happiness, for his pleasure. He wants Joshua's hands to erase everything before him, he wants him to take, own, claim.

And he's doing so good, he was bigger than the evil man that had taken this from him and so he reached deeper, Seokmin wants him to, wants him deep and wet so that everything that wasn't him disappears.

So he begs for it, his voice is needy, his nails are clawing Joshua's back hard enough to leave marks because he belongs to him. And Joshua hears him and gives it to him deeper and harder.

And yet it still feels like making love.

Joshua pauses when he's deep enough and kisses him long and needy, then resumes his thrusts. He pushes him further up the bed, then pulls him down, Seokmin feels his legs tremble, his whole body really. And he cries, he cries out of pleasure, Joshua had again made him cry because all the love he was giving him was overwhelming.

And Joshua knows, he kisses his tears away.

He's so good, thrusting in a steady rhythm and all Seokmin could do is take it, feeling like his whole body was paralyzed with pleasure. They couldn't even kiss anymore, they were gasping for air and moaning against the others lips. And Seokmin is definitely gone, Joshua is moving against him, resulting in a gratifying sensation with every new thrust and that was too much.

"Please, Shua-" He begs, he doesn't know for what, maybe for him to finally touch him because the overstimulation is too much, he doesn't know. Joshua slides his arms underneath his boyfriend's back and arches him up from the bed to sit on his lap and to tug him down hard to meet his thrusts halfway. And somehow this was the thing Seokmin needed because like that he could feel him deeper, and kiss him at the same time. Seokmin wraps his hands around his neck happily, kissing him with little moans escaping from the corners of his lips.

"I love you." Joshua says, wraps his hands around his waist and pulls him closer.

"I love you." Seokmin says, cups his face and kisses him and it's too much.

Bodies intertwined, limbs tangled, lines between them blurring, begs mingled with moans and gasps and whines-

And Joshua spins him again and fucks him into the mattress and he loves it so much. Deep thrust. Loud moans. Shaking limbs. Arched back.

And he comes, he comes untouched, he comes without even warning Joshua. But he doesn't mind it.

"You're so beautiful baby-" Joshua talks him through it."- so good for me. Perfect." Seokmin cries out at his words, hips jerking up, whispering his name like a mantra, his nails digging painfully in his back and his legs pulling him closer.

" Don't stop." Seokmin says when he feels Joshua slowing pulling out, trying to keep him in place with his legs. He is still riding his high and wants more, the pain would probably come

soon but he doesn't care. He wants Joshua in him, to make him feel just as good.

And Joshua hesitates only for a second before continuing his thrusts as before.

Seokmin becomes sensitive, he is tired and spent, his whole body feels sticky and wet. He strokes Joshua's cheek and makes him look at him, he looks at him as he meets his every thrust. His other hand moves over his on his thigh, the pain is slowly growing but he doesn't let it show on his face, he smiles when he looks at Joshua. Pretty. Beautiful.

"You're so good love-"Seokmin says in his sweet voice, the one Joshua heard before going to bed or whenever he was injured."-come for me, please." He begs and it's enough.

And Joshua kisses him as he comes, deep, deep inside and Seokmin returns it eagerly. His movements slowed down little by little and the kiss became messy and unfocused.

He stops moving and breathes hard, laying his head under Seokmin's chin to just feel him closer for a moment more. Seokmin runs his fingers through his hair and back, a comforting touch. He loves him so much.

"You were perfect, babe-" He says and Joshua nods. He moves up and pulls away, Seokmin whines from sensitivity.

They lay like that, exchanging lazy kisses, facing each other, Joshua's hand on his waist keeping him close, Seokmin's hand on his cheek, stroking it. It was late, probably way past midnight, Joshua feels his eyelids heavy.

"I love you." Seokmin whispers as he cleans him up with a wet towel, it's not the best but it should work for now because they were both too exhausted to shower. Joshua lays next to him once again after that and Seokmin goes to him, tangling his body around him and kissing his chest and neck.

"I love you." Joshua says." That was fun, we should do it again."

"Eating me out or fucking me?" Seokmin smiles against his neck, he was having fun down there and Joshua didn't want him to stop.

"Eating you out." He answers honestly."I really enjoyed that."

"Yes please." Seokmin pecks his lips."The other thing too, I really liked it."He really did, being so close, not only emotionally but physically too."We could try to switch too, I would love to have you like that if you wish."

And Joshua smiles as he lifts himself to pull the cover over their bodies. Their limbs were tangled together, like a web." We could."

Yeah, they could. They could do it again any time they want, in any way they want. Touching and being touched. Pleasing and being pleased in return.

And Joshua could not believe how in such a little time he felt so hard, an year ago he had been bored and miserable, then Seokmin came and brought the sun in his life again, loved

him and let Joshua love and protect him. And Joshua never thought about the future because he didn't know if he was promised one, but if he did he knew he wanted it to be with Seokmin.

And Seokmin could not believe how happy he was, because only a year ago he had lost everything, every day had been painful, then Joshua came along and his love made breathing easier, gave him everything, was his everything.

Seokmin feels himself dozing off, he was warm and comfortable, Joshua breathes slowly underneath him and lures him into sleep too.

"I love you." He whispers, he was pretty sure Joshua is already asleep, he had been so tired and yet he gave him everything again. He had heard his desires and had made sure to give him what he needed, he made love to him slowly and gently, then deep and hard. And Seokmin could feel it all along.

And he knew it didn't work like that but it felt like Joshua had officially made every part of him his, he took slowly but steadily, first his heart and now his body. And Seokmin had made him his a long time ago. He knew it, he could feel it.

This was special, it belonged to both of them.

Seokmin moves his head up, breathing the scent of Joshua's skin and feeling it's warmth all around his body.

He was happy. He was in love.

Chapter End Notes

Yes, Minji from Dreamcatcher, is it even my fic if I don't include my dc agenda?
Also, I know it's kinda bad but I've never been good at writing these parts.

<https://curiouscat.live/pinkphoeniixx>

End Notes

[curious cat](#)

I would love to answer any of ur questions!

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!