

in all dishonesty

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/15515916) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/15515916>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	방탄소년단 Bangtan Boys BTS
Relationship:	Kim Taehyung V/Min Yoongi Suga
Characters:	Kim Taehyung V , Min Yoongi Suga , Kim Namjoon RM , everyones there briefly but i wont tag them
Additional Tags:	Alternate Universe - College/University , Humor , Fluff , gratuitous cheating at monopoly , prelude to that taegi con men au i aspire to write , Mutual Pining , hand-holding
Language:	English
Series:	Part 2 of for u .
Collections:	only20k+ , sweet tea , Suga_Taehyung , myBTSfavs , Heart_Feels , Borahae: Best of BTS , oneshots! ('▽ `) , kill me softly
Stats:	Published: 2018-07-31 Words: 3,279 Chapters: 1/1

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by [fruitily](#)

Summary

while taehyung is trying to figure out whether or not min yoongi wants to stab him with a fountain pen, they find out they make an excellent team when it comes to board games.

Notes

requested by [@muu_shaa](#)! ♥♥♥

the prompt was for taegi and i took a pretty self-indulgent approach because i've been wanting to write them as a pair of shameless scammers,,, i really hope you like it!!!!

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

“your friend yoongi,” taehyung says as he seats himself at namjoon’s table in the library in a rather explosive manner, “what’s his deal?”

namjoon didn’t even react when taehyung hoisted his six-kilogram bag of books onto the table three centimeters from his head which is laid down on piles and piles of notes, and that worries him.

namjoon lifts his head, and taehyung almost flinches. he looks like he hasn’t slept for days. he looks like a scientific experiment gone wrong. the word *opossum* is written backwards on his cheek.

“what the hell are you studying,” taehyung asks.

“world politics,” namjoon croaks.

“do... opossums... play a big part in world politics?” taehyung asks hesitantly, because for all he knows, they might. there might be legions of organized opossum groups with significant political influence running a shadow government that he just doesn’t know about. he feels that it’d be rude to automatically assume opossums *can’t* do that.

“opossums?” namjoon asks blankly.

“i can read your notes on your cheek,” taehyung nods. expressionlessly, namjoon looks down at his notes.

“i don’t know what this is,” he says, “why did i write the word opossum so many times? it’s got nothing to do with anything. why -”

“okay,” taehyung says warily, palms splayed against the table. “i can see you’re not doing so good -”

namjoon makes a strange noise. it’s like a laugh, but coming out of someone who doesn’t really know how to laugh, and is doing his best to mimic the sound and maybe mixing in various animal sounds he’s picked up.

“i’m doing fine,” he says, and sounds like he’s on the brink of a breakdown, “it’s just, you know mondays -”

“oh,” taehyung grimaces, “oh, yikes... i don’t know how to tell you this, but... it’s wednesday.” he leans forward, frowning incredulously. “have you been here since monday? do you *sleep here*?”

“i don’t know sleep,” namjoon whispers with a glassed-over look in his eyes, then lifts his face and looks at taehyung. “i think i’ve always been awake.”

“you sound like a machine that’s recently gained sentience and that is *not good*,” taehyung emphasizes. he stands up, starts gathering namjoon’s things for him. “let’s get you out of

here. get some food and sleep in you. your research paper will be fine, dude. you can stand to take a break.”

namjoon sighs, defeated.

“where are my glasses?”

“i’ll help you look for them,” taehyung says, eyeing the round glasses sitting on top of his peach-colored car wreck of hair, “if you do me a favor or two. let’s get you rehabilitated into society, come on.”

/

the first favor taehyung asks is for namjoon to come to the cafeteria with him and consume a real meal. because he is a good decent person and friend. *you literally tricked me into doing you favors*, namjoon remarked, *your moral alignment is chaotic neutral at best*.

for the second favor, taehyung comes back to his original inquiry and reason for hunting namjoon down in the library.

“what do you mean what’s his deal?” asks namjoon who’s beginning to look a lot more like a person. a person who has the word *opossum* backwards on his face. “are you talking about something specific? his political views? relationship status? one of his weird habits? you saw him do something weird, didn’t you? i don’t know what to tell you, he just is like that.”

“i meant more, like...” taehyung looks up in thought. “why does he both terrify and arouse me?”

namjoon chokes on his water. taehyung waits patiently for him to stop coughing.

“he - hmm,” namjoon says, and gives him a funny look. “i’m not even going to touch that second part, but. why do you find him terrifying?”

“why wouldn’t i?” taehyung quirks an eyebrow. “it’s... his aura. it’s intimidating. he looks like he could stab you... with his eyes. by just looking at you. whenever he looks at me in songwriting workshop i feel like i have internal bleeding.”

namjoon looks at him for a long time.

“i think you should talk to jungkook,” he says finally. “tell him what you told me.”

“jungkook?” taehyung blinks, confused. “why?”

“he’s been feeling down under all this exam season pressure,” namjoon says cryptically, “he could use cheering up.”

/

“i now understand what namjoon meant,” taehyung reflects when it’s been five whole minutes and jungkook is still laughing. “though i don’t understand what’s so funny about it.”

“sorry, sorry,” jungkook gasps for air, wiping his eyes. “it’s just. intimidating? yoongi-hyung?” they had to pause call of duty because jungkook was laughing too much and taehyung couldn’t even take joy in demolishing him while he’s distracted. his whole-hearted reaction strikes taehyung as so bizarre and intriguing. “yoongi-hyung is not scary. he likes to do things his way, and you have to... learn how he operates, sort of. but once you’re familiar with him, you realize how soft he is.” jungkook purses his lips as he considers. “hyung cares about people a lot. he just does it quietly.”

taehyung opens his mouth, but before words can come out of it, his phone starts buzzing on the floor with the power of seventy vibrators. not that he’s ever been in the proximity of that many vibrators at once. it’s just an estimation.

“it’s namjoon-hyung,” he informs, opening the texts. “ah, he made it. he finished his research paper on time after illegally dwelling in the library for days. yay! he’s throwing a party this weekend. oh, that sounds fun.”

“m-hm,” jungkook says, “sounds like yoongi-hyung will be there.”

taehyung snaps his head up.

“no. no no no. i can’t go.”

“how are you still intimidated by him?” jungkook asks incredulously. “i just told you he’s the softest person on the planet.”

“first of all, you did not use the superlative previously,” taehyung points the phone at him, “and second of all, you haven’t seen the way he looks at me in songwriting workshop. like he’s imagining all the painful and creative ways he could murder me with his fountain pen.”

“are you sure?” jungkook says with a deadpan expression. “are you sure that’s how he looks at you?”

“why else would he look at me?”

still maintaining eye contact, jungkook presses a button on his controller to start the game again, and shoots taehyung’s guy clean in the head.

“if i become as annoying as hyungs when i reach your age, i want you to kick my ass,” he says.

/

of course he goes to the party. he's a good decent person and friend and wants to support his friend and celebrate his academic achievements with him. also because namjoon rejected all three of his carefully crafted excuses.

and it's not so bad, actually. yoongi is there with his ethereal beauty and unclear intentions but taehyung is handling it very well, if he does say so himself. that's until namjoon finds him standing in the shower sipping on a strawberry mocktail and playing farmville on his phone, and won't simply walk out like the previous three people who'd been too weirded out to pee after taehyung told them, *just pretend i'm not here*.

"why are you in my bathroom?" namjoon asks.

"why are any of us in your bathroom, really," taehyung says, grabbing for the shower curtain namjoon shoved aside, "makes you think, huh?"

"no," namjoon says.

"well, shit, namjoon, i'm obviously in your bathroom to pee," taehyung yanks at the curtain harder. "some privacy, please?"

"are you saying you're peeing in my shower?" namjoon says, thoroughly unimpressed. they stare at each other for a few moments.

"okay, i realize this looks bad for me," taehyung says.

"get out," namjoon says.

"i have *rights*," taehyung hisses.

"listen, tae, whatever it is about yoongi that makes you hide from him -"

"this isn't about yoongi," taehyung lies.

"- i guarantee you you're making it up. you'd know if you went out there and talked to him." that sounds incredibly fake to taehyung. he *knows* the way yoongi looks at him in songwriting workshop. he's not sure what he's *done* to deserve to be imaginary murdered with a fountain pen; he's pretty sure his general existence just somehow really pisses yoongi off. "either way, you're coming out. because we're about to play monopoly."

taehyung looks at him disbelievingly.

"who plays monopoly at a party?"

"so you don't want to play?"

"*obviously* i'll play. i love monopoly, get out of my way."

the people whose idea of a party is getting increasingly angry at one another for several hours straight are spread out around the board game on the living room floor. there's no sign of yoongi, and taehyung is relieved but also, sort of, wondering where he is. as stated before: his feelings towards min yoongi are complicated.

"we're going to pair up," seokjin informs him as he joins the half-assed circle. *makes sense*, taehyung nods, this is too many people for monopoly. he scans the circle for a potential partner. ideally, his choice would be seokjin, his only real competition here since everyone else kind of sucks; but he seems to be taken already if hoseok sitting behind him hugging him jetpack-style is any indication.

jungkook seems to have paired up with jimin, which leaves him with namjoon, which... it's fine, they can make this work. sure, namjoon holds the record for the fastest bankruptcy achieved in only nine minutes, but taehyung will make up for his inability to tolerate unequal wealth distribution with his ambiguous moral code and willingness to denounce every meaningful friendship he has for the sake of this game.

"wanna discuss strategies?" he asks namjoon, who's distributing the paper money.

"i'm not playing," namjoon glances at him, "i'm just the banker. i think it's important that the bank remain impartial."

"get your ass here, yoongi, we're starting!" seokjin bellows. taehyung's life actually flashes before his eyes.

he sits frozen still as footsteps come up behind him. yoongi asks:

"who am i with?"

"you're with tae," seokjin says. "let's go, i'll start, obviously, i'm the eldest."

"shouldn't you be playing, like, bingo at the retirement home or something," jungkook says, and then they're fighting before the game's even started. taehyung's only paying attention to the fact that yoongi is very slowly sitting down in the space between taehyung and the bank.

there's a very light touch on his knee. taehyung whips his head around. the fingers retreat instantly like they weren't there at all. min yoongi is looking at him and taehyung is appearing incredibly calm about it considering his inner turmoil. he's an excellent actor.

"how important is maintaining your integrity to you?" yoongi asks in a low voice.

"one," taehyung says, "on a scale of two to eight."

"that's a weird scale, but got it," yoongi says, leaning back. taehyung observes his profile and the slightly red tips of his ears and supposes that some people must get red in the ears when they drink, though yoongi doesn't seem to be drinking at the moment.

taehyung only really understands why yoongi asked that question when it's their turn and they land on the community chest square. yoongi lifts a card, holds it in front of his face, and reads out: "collect fifty dollars from each player."

the card in his hand says: go to jail.

yoongi slips the card to the bottom of the pile, completely unbothered, while the other teams give up their money begrudgingly. taehyung stares at yoongi with his mouth slightly open.

it dawns on him: min yoongi is a total scammer.

his mouth stretches into a grin. yoongi looks at him from the corner of his eye, the smallest smile in the corner of his mouth. *now we're talking.*

/

they scam their way through the game. neither of them has any shame and it's amazing. it's an elevating experience. their minds just... align.

yoongi acts shocked and affronted whenever he gets accused of cheating. he raises such a ruckus eventually someone just groans and says, *let's just move on.* taehyung is good at bending the rules and convincing people what he's doing is a loophole and technically legal. yoongi has quick hands and keeps stealing from the bank.

"let's buy the electric company," yoongi suggests.

"that's a bad call," taehyung says.

"okay, okay, let's not fight. just hold my hand," yoongi says, his hand hovering in the air between them.

"that was a fight?" hoseok asks.

"let them hold hands," namjoon says tonelessly, slouching back against the bookcase and drinking beer with a straw.

taehyung places his hand palm-up below yoongi's, and yoongi slaps their hands together. between their palms, taehyung feels a stolen property card.

yoongi holds on for a while longer. for the act, taehyung supposes. he's got good hands. nicely shaped. fit pretty well into taehyung's. just an observation.

when he slides away, he leaves the card into taehyung's palm. taehyung hides it inconspicuously but wonders whether there was any real need to give it to him.

/

“well, it looks like we won,” yoongi says. they sit calmly while the rest of the teams are succumbing into chaos.

“they’ve been cheating since the beginning of the game!” seokjin protests. “why did you place the bank directly next to the team with the most blatant cheaters?”

“i’m impartial,” namjoon peeps from where he has slid almost completely horizontal to the floor. “and drunk. i’m very drunk.”

“what do you have to say for yourselves?” jimin asks.

“we didn’t cheat,” yoongi shrugs. “right?”

“right,” taehyung nods, “we just make a really good team.”

honestly: they do. they work so well together. he’s never felt this kind of a connection with another person before. but that was just - the game, a momentary shared goal, and it’s over now, they’re putting the game and its pieces back into the box.

this was weird. he liked it and he likes yoongi an almost terrifying amount but it doesn’t make any sense because outside of this room yoongi still looks at him like he wants to stab him with a fountain pen.

“i have to leave now,” taehyung announces robotically. the people who haven’t marched off yet all turn to look.

“are you okay?” namjoon asks from the floor as he gets up. his legs are pins and needles.

“yeah, yeah,” taehyung breathes, “i just have to go. i have to feed my lizard.”

“that sounds like an excuse,” hoseok remarks.

“no, he really does have a lizard,” namjoon says.

“this was fun.” taehyung licks his lips. he points useless finger guns as he does some sort of a moonwalk out of the room, what the fuck. “thank you all for coming. come again anytime. i’ll see you around.”

“this is my home,” namjoon points out.

he glances at yoongi only quickly. the way yoongi’s looking at him is making him feel like he’s bleeding internally again. but maybe in a slightly different way.

he skips songwriting workshop the next week. he just really needs to study for his poetry final and if he has to sacrifice a class, he figures it might as well be the workshop. because he may need a little more time to come to terms with the fact that he likes yoongi a lot more than originally thought and that it is painfully clearly unrequited.

“found you,” comes a voice across the room. taehyung lets his pen drop and lifts his head. namjoon gives a smile as he lowers his bag and a familiar-looking jacket onto the library table, and draws the chair across from taehyung. “you left your jacket at my place.”

“oh.” taehyung drapes it across his shoulders. “thanks.”

“shouldn’t you be at the songwriting workshop?” namjoon quirks an eyebrow. “what are you doing? hiding again?”

“i’m not hiding. i’m dwelling.” taehyung heaves a sigh. “you should be familiar with the concept. i’ve yet to reach the stage where i write opossum all over my notes and then legally die on top of them for several minutes.”

namjoon snorts. then he considers taehyung with the kind of look on his face that means he’s about to say something profound and life-changing while taehyung pretends not to notice.

“you like yoongi, don’t you?” he finally asks. “just making sure there are no misunderstandings here.”

“no misunderstandings, no,” taehyung mutters, “he can’t stand me while i want to do fraud with him for the rest of my life.”

“yeah, you two together are definitely going to be unbearable for the rest of us,” namjoon sighs, “but you know what? your happiness comes first. you should look into your pocket.”

“what?” taehyung looks at him blankly. “is that a metaphor?”

“literally look into your pocket, tae,” namjoon says exasperatedly, “yoongi told me to make sure you do that.”

“yoongi?” taehyung blinks. carefully, he sticks his hands into his jacket pockets like he’s expecting to find a land mine or a small porcupine. the fingers of his right hand snag on something hard and thin. he pulls it out.

it’s a community chest card. it says go to jail.

except that *to jail* is crossed out, and scrawled above it is: *out with me?*

taehyung stares at the card. then he stares at namjoon. then at the card again.

“but -”

“sometimes people stare at other people because they find them attractive,” namjoon shrugs nonchalantly.

maybe, *maybe* yoongi wasn't looking at him because he wanted to stab him. taehyung lowers the card.

"there has been a misunderstanding," he says evenly.

"you don't say."

taehyung's heart beats thunderously and with purpose. he springs to his feet.

"i need your monopoly cards," he says frantically.

"what? *why*?" namjoon yelps. "just *go* to him, you know where he is, and tell him you'll go out -"

"no way," taehyung argues, "he asked me out in this sweet, thoughtful way - the cards have personal significance to us and i can't just go to him empty-handed like some unromantic barbarian."

"pretty sure you could," namjoon mumbles, but tosses him his keys anyway. taehyung catches them from flight. "you two owe me a new board game."

/

the happy gummy grin that spreads on yoongi's face when he reads the community chest card outside the songwriting workshop is the most incredible thing taehyung's ever seen. and it's a lot easier to believe jungkook when he called yoongi the softest person on the planet. *collect \$50 from each player* now says *collect me for dinner at 8*.

"i'm terrible at this sort of thing," yoongi murmurs, eyes cast down at the card he's holding like it's a precious possession, "i was trying to talk to you for such a long time, and then namjoon told me... i was coming across as, uh, hostile?"

"it's not like i was intimidated or anything, it's not like, yeah, no need to come back to that," taehyung says. he smiles. "i know you more now. i enjoyed committing fraud with you. i've never won that unfairly before in my life."

yoongi smiles up at him. his cheeks are lovely pale pink.

"neither have i."

"walk to the library with me?" taehyung asks softly. "i kind of left all my stuff there to go get this card. and namjoon. i left namjoon there. oh, we can share tips. like if namjoon asks you where his glasses are while they're on his very person, tell him you'll help him look in exchange for a favor."

yoongi scoffs.

“i’ve been doing that for years.”

taehyung might be a little bit in love. in crime. in love.

“that trick where you held my hand,” he says as they walk, “that was a really cool trick.”

so yoongi does it again.

End Notes

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