

Where We Should Be

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Where We Should Be

by [Plantaloupe](#)

Summary

There was no warning label that came with adulthood, Can had found. When faced with the difficult task of finding his first real job, he finds himself working as an assistant for the Medthanan family. It's a simple job for the most part, just fetch when he's told to fetch - except he's always been the type that's a bit all over the place, not to mention easily distracted. And there's a certain someone who is just about the most distracting thing he's ever been faced with.

It's just another day

No one had prepared him for what it was like to actually search for a job. School had been a picnic compared, it felt as though he'd put about a million applications out there, only hearing from a few before a company actually seemed to take an interest. Most of the places Can had applied to hadn't even responded, the few that had apologized that he wasn't quite what they were looking for, they wanted *experience*. Something he couldn't get if no one was willing to take him on and so that he could get it. His first two years at the university had been rough, his attention span had been tested, but once he'd matured some his grades were actually not bad after he finally started to take things seriously. Though he'd graduated he still didn't actually know what he wanted to do for a living. He'd literally applied anywhere he saw that was hiring. The place that finally hired him had interviewed him a grand total of *four* times, something Ley had mentioned seemed weird, but he needed the work. It wasn't as though he could live at home with his mom for the rest of his life, nor did he in truth really want to.

They'd hired him though! His mom had even helped him get some nice shirts, pants and even a few ties so that he could look professional when he went into work. The job itself didn't sound so bad, he was an assistant, he just did whatever the guy he was hired to help asked of him. The company he hadn't actually heard of before, and it was true he should have researched it before he actually took an interview, because now not only was he nervous, he was *intimidated*. Medthanan Enterprises owned half of Bangkok, had stakes in other parts of Thailand and sometimes worked in both the UK and the US.

Can fidgeted with his tie as he walked into the large house, the man he was to follow around and assist requested he come straight to his home instead of heading to the office because he intended to work from home that day. Apparently that was a fairly common occurrence. Resting just on top of his tie was a badge that hung by a lanyard around his neck that had a small picture of him, a large M.E for the company and his name, much to his distress it said Cantaloupe instead of Can like he'd requested. Just under his name it read, "Tul Medthanan's Assistant". Tul had done the first two interviews before the man he later found out was actually his father took over. He seemed nice enough, had a pleasant disposition though something felt off. It wasn't off enough that he could put his finger on it, but he saw something just below the surface in the man he didn't quite like.

A job was a job though, and he wandered in after kicking off his shoes to find him sitting at a table surrounded by paperwork. "Cantaloupe! You're early, I'm pleased. I don't have a lot for you to do yet, but here, take this file and run it to my dad's office for me? It's just down the hall, up the first set of stairs, it'll be the only door." Can almost winced at the use of his full nickname. He held it back, offering a deep wei to his boss before he took the file in his hand.

“Thank you, Mr. Medthanan sir, I’ll get that right to him,” He didn’t wait before he set off in that direction, biting his tongue to keep from begging him to just call him *Can* . It also took a lot once he was out of view to not peek inside the file, which from the small tab read *Medthanan, Tin*. That seemed weird, in the research he’d done that name hadn’t come up, just Tul and his father... but mostly Tul if he was quite honest. He kept the file shut, forcing himself to remember that he wasn’t being paid to be nosy, instead just do as he was asked. A thing he already struggled with, so focus was important. He’d barely put one foot on the stairs when another man appeared from around the corner, pausing at the top of the stairs to look down at him. It wasn’t Tul’s father, nor anyone from the company he’d met thus far. He was handsome though, ridiculously so. By now Can was far more aware of himself than he had been when he’d started college. While he assumed most people sorted out their sexuality by the time they were teenagers, Can had taken until he turned twenty to get a full grasp on it.

He’d gone from thinking he liked girls, to thinking perhaps he liked both... to knowing damn well he wasn’t just gay, he was hopelessly gay. He wanted a relationship with another man, yet couldn’t quite achieve it. It wasn’t because he hadn’t tried, it was because he lost interest the moment someone showed interest in him. But this man, in all his tall handsome glory, was pushing just about every button in him. He slowly walked, one foot in front of the other as he started up the stairs, the man’s indifferent, cold eyes now on the badge that rested on his chest. “My brother’s new assistant? Don’t mess up, he fires at the drop of a hat, or should I say... file,” Can had fumbled with the file in hand the moment he spoke, his eyes wide as he paused near the man, allowing his glance to dart from him to the door. *Keep your temper in check Can, keep it in check.*

“Seems nice enough to me,” he offered, pushing a wide smile across his face even as he felt his face heating up. “I’m Can, nice to meet you, he just asked me to bring his dad... your dad... this,” he nodded down to the file before he fixed the man with a curious stare.

“*Cantaloupe*,” the man corrected with a glance again at his name badge, “Tin Medthanan, as I said, don’t mess up.” With those words, Tin walked down the stairs, leaving Can with his cheeks puffed out, his teeth pressed into his tongue as he tried again, not to correct him and to not loudly announce that he wouldn’t mess up. He knew himself well enough to know he probably *would* mess up, focus wasn’t ever on his side but he was going to try his damndest, he *needed* this job. Tin’s pretty face didn’t help, nor did the flutter in his stomach at just watching him walk away, particularly how his ass moved as he hopped down each stair. Quickly, he shook his head, returning his focus on the door. *Don’t you dare look at your boss’s brother’s ass, Can, stop this.*

The rest of his first day had gone well, he'd managed to deliver the file and get back to Tul without major incident. Mostly it had been tiny family incidents throughout the day that left him feeling cold. Tin hadn't shown up again until the end of his shift, while Can was helping Tul sort through paperwork, moving things into order by date and doing his best not to let Tul see him counting the months on his hands under the table. The moment Tin showed back up in the kitchen where they sat, the air around them had turned *icy*. And Can noticed that it didn't actually seem to be Tin's fault. No, Tul seemed to get some kind of weird pleasure out of egging Tin on, despite Tin being very careful not to engage with him. On the outside the interaction looked as though it was just Tul attempting to make small talk with his little brother, something he'd called him several times, but Can had caught something in his eyes that left him feeling uneasy.

The moment he'd caught it, he'd let his eyes drift over to Tin, who met with his eyes and what he saw there only confirmed it. There was sadness, pain, and Can himself didn't like the sinking feeling in his chest as they stared at one another. Tul seemed to pick up on something there as well, though he didn't say anything or press the matter, he mentioned Tin several times throughout the rest of the day, as though he was studying Can for something. He only hoped whatever he was looking for, it wasn't bad and he hadn't found anything in it. For an awkward moment, Tul had even tried to introduce them, a small smile on his face that left Can feeling uneasy. Tin, confirming quietly that they'd already met, left Tul with his gaze moving between them. Can himself let his eyes focus entirely on the paperwork in front of him. If he focused entirely on the dates that he was meant to be sorting, his eyes wouldn't drift over to Tin like they so badly wanted to do.

Tul was still looking for something, though Can was unsure what. The entire interaction left him confused. It didn't feel how siblings were meant to act with one another, it certainly wasn't how he and Lemon were. They bickered, but none of it felt cold, or calculating. In the very same moment, Can mentally shook his head at himself. Clearly he was reading way too far into it, he didn't know them well enough to judge. There was a chance that this was just *rich people*. They were so weird.

Are you complete or is something missing?

Chapter Summary

Can's entire first week had gone much the same, small run-ins with Tin, but for the most part he followed Tul around.

Chapter Notes

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

Can's entire first week had gone much the same, small run-ins with Tin, but for the most part he followed Tul around. He'd already told Ley multiple times that he felt more like he was turning into Tul's bitch than he was his assistant. Once they'd gotten his paperwork sorted, the sort of jobs he was given were menial. He was proud to say he knew that word now! He picked up laundry from the cleaners, left to get him his favorite coffee - which he'd dropped and had to run back and get again - picked up his lunch, picked up his son from school at the end of the day and then he went home. Phu, his son, seemed like a nice little boy, spoiled absolutely rotten but Can could see he could be nice given the right guidance. Something told him Tul wasn't the right guidance.

Week two he actually got to help him around the office instead, though he was still doomed to the same type of work. Can was now convinced he had an assistant because he was lazier than he wanted to seem, he wanted to seem like he could do it all, yet there was Can in the background doing all of the things he didn't want to do. He had time, half the time he was socializing instead of actually working, but as he'd overheard him say, the types of things he had Can do were *below him*. If he was honest it was grating on his nerves, but he needed the job more than he needed the dignity. It was a sad reality that college also didn't prepare him for - adulthood sucked. On the last day of his work week, Tul had sent him to pick up his laundry again, and this time asked him to just drop it off at the house. After that he was free to go home, and frankly, Can couldn't wait. The weekend meant he got to go to the bar with Ae, Pond, Techno and Type, it also meant he could kick a ball around with Ae when he wasn't busy with his new boyfriend.

Can draped the laundry bag over his shoulder, his other hand already loosening his tie as he made his way through the Medthan mansion. His brown eyes stared up at the door to Tul's bedroom, where he had a hook hanging already for Can to leave the bag. He hung it, quickly turning with a wide smile because that meant his day was done. Except, as he turned, he found himself face to face with Tul's brother, and he immediately backed himself against the door. "Oh holy hell," he breathed, his hand clutching his chest as he stared up at his face. He hadn't expected to see him, not until he came back the next week. Half of him had hoped that he wouldn't even be home. It wasn't that he had a problem with Tin, it was that he knew

better than to stare at someone related to his boss. And it was really damn hard not to stare at him.

“Is my brother done bossing you around for the day, or are you stuck with him still?” It took a lot of willpower to keep the smile off his face as he pressed his back against the door. At least someone else noticed that he was being treated like a retriever a bit more than he was being treated like an assistant. Since Tul was his boss, he was definitely ready to tell Tin that it was fine, he wasn’t being paid to just stand around so getting things for him wasn’t a big deal. All words, all sense left his head as Tin pressed one of his hands just beside his head against the door, his body far closer than Can had anticipated. The biggest problem was, despite knowing his sexuality, he didn’t exactly have a lot of experience. He’d kissed a few guys, had come *close* to sleeping with one but it just never worked out. He got nervous, something didn’t feel right, and he ran away like a coward. More often than not, like he’d said, he lost interest when another person showed interest in him. Even he couldn’t explain why that was, so he’d started giving up on relationships before most of them even started. On top of it, anytime someone attractive got close, it felt as though his brain had completely short circuited. Tin was hot, *so* damn hot that he was lucky he hadn’t drooled down his front.

Can swallowed thickly, *nervously* as he glanced to the side, glad he still had one escape route. Tin had effectively closed off the other one with his arm.

“Oh... I... he... yeah,” he stuttered out, his head shaking quickly. *Get a grip.* “I’m actually done for the day, I was just... going home.” The words came out slowly as he tried to keep himself from stumbling over them, the nervous flutter in his chest making things beyond difficult. From over Tin’s shoulder, a woman approached, and Can met with her curious gaze as she crossed her arms over her chest. She was small, her hair dark, slicked back and more than half way down her back. Clearly wealthy, beautiful in almost an otherworldly sort of way. Her eyes were narrowed, flickering between Can and the back of Tin’s head. It looked as though Tin had been about to say something when he followed Can’s gaze over his shoulder. Just like that, his body was moving back, his hand dropping to his side.

“Orn,” Tin spoke softly, his gaze meeting with Can’s once more before he moved to her side. “Orn, this is Cantaloupe, my brother's new assistant, Cantaloupe, this is Orn, my... fiancée.” *Fiancee*. The word stupidly hit harder than the fact that his full nickname had been used twice in one sentence. Of course he had a fiancée, of course she was beautiful, he’d known all along that there wasn’t a chance. He was his boss's brother after all, but he was also handsome, *rich*. He probably didn’t even like guys. Can pushed his usual wide smile over his face, offering her a deep *wei* before he nodded at Tin.

“Nice to meet you, miss. I should be going, Mister Tul just wanted his laundry dropped off. Tin I... Mister Tin... see you soon,” He offered, unsure where he had even planned to go with his sentence after Tin’s name had fallen from his lips. He received the smallest *hello* in response from Tin’s fiancée, her attention seemed to be fully on Tin. He couldn’t blame her, his attention would be on him too if he were his fiancée. A thing he had to stop himself from thinking about. “Also, feel free to call me Can,” he finally allowed himself to say, though his

eyes lingered on Tin as the words fell between the three of them. He was sure the ghost of a grin had passed over Tin's lips.

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It was apparent after a month of working for Tul that he typically fired people just weeks after hiring them - if not before then. According to one of the small conversations he'd had with Tin, he was the one he'd kept on the longest. Talks with Tin had become a bit more frequent, almost always interrupted by the arrival of Orn. It was clear she had a jealous streak, and for some reason Can brought it out of her. She seemed to regard him as though he was some sort of insect that was below her notice, and yet at the same time, she seemed to see him as some sort of threat. Though he was taller than her, she made the effort of tilting her head back just enough so that she could look down her nose at him, all the while she'd step deliberately between himself and Tin though they weren't ever all that close to one another. If Tin noticed, he never said anything, but Can was just glad he seemed to be on good terms with and befriending Tin. Whether or not he *should*, he'd found he liked his company, liked talking to him and just generally enjoyed being near him.

After a month, he could say with one-hundred percent certainty that he liked Tin far more than he liked Tul. He also knew that Tin and Tul didn't get along, though Tul put on airs in front of everyone, and according to Tin he did that even when it was just the two of them. "*Some people get so stuck playing a part, they continue to play it on their own little stage in their mind. They forget everyone else can see through it, and they refuse to step off. My brother has been on that stage since I was born.*" Tin had explained once. Can had meant to question what he meant, but as per usual, Orn appeared at his side. The way she hung off his arm was irritating, and Can hated to admit it, but he had a crush on his employer's brother. A huge fucking crush.

It didn't matter anyway, even if Tin didn't have a fiance there was no saying he'd be interested even if Can could act on it. There was no telling if he even liked guys, let alone poor ones that still lived with their mom. But he'd be damned if he could tell his heart that. The way it reacted to Tin's presence wasn't like anything he'd ever experienced, it was out of his control and he hated himself for it.

Chapter End Notes

since my crazy self is doing two fics at once (attention span??? whomst?) I've decided to try and put them on a schedule. This one will post on Mondays (unless RL kicks me), and the other will be on Thursdays! <3 Adore you guys <3

Would you please have mercy on me?

Chapter Summary

A teenaged Can would have run off at the mouth, adult Can had to swallow down several comments about how Tul wasn't the brother that was difficult to wait for. He wasn't even waiting for Tin, it just felt like he was. Waiting, hoping, dreaming, and above all helplessly whining over this ridiculous path his heart had chosen.

Chapter Notes

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

Two months, about a month and two weeks longer than anyone else had ever made it on the job. It most certainly wasn't because he was particularly good at it, either. The reason Tul kept him on was a mystery, and one he only complained about because it was suspicious. It always took him a bit longer than Tul wanted for him to get him his coffee - it cost more too, as more often than not Can dropped it and had to run back to get a second one. He always apologized profusely, more often than not joking that it was because he was a football player, he was better at running and kicking than he was at holding things. Though Tul always smiled and seemed good natured about it, Can could see the irritation that hid just below the surface. It was that stage Tin had mentioned, he was putting on a show, whether or not it was for Can or for himself he wasn't sure.

Tin, while more often than not seemed a bit more than indifferent, actually was far more kind than he let on. Not only was he kind - or could be when he wanted, but he was funny, far more fun to talk to than anyone else in the house. It was a dangerous game Can found himself playing, somewhere caught between Tul, Tin and Orn. It was always his favorite sort of day when Orn was away and could be counted on not to return until much later. He'd soon realized Orn didn't actually live in the Medthanan mansion, despite the fact that she was engaged to Tin. She rarely went into his room, the more Can paid attention, he noted they rarely even touched. More specifically, Tin rarely touched her, though she was always hanging off of him in one way or another.

That evening Tul had a late meeting, one he wasn't sure how late he'd be out but he'd asked Can to stay late at the mansion just in case he needed to come home to help him organize notes. Orn was apparently out of town with her mother, a spa vacation by what Tul had said, though Can was still trying to piece together why he'd taken it upon himself to inform him of his brother's fiancée's doings. It made him nervous, if he was honest, that perhaps Tul saw the crush that he was trying so desperately hard to hide. He was failing at it, he was sure, his heart jumped in his chest whenever Tin walked into a room, his eyes would immediately find him. Two months in and he found himself dreaming about him, longing for him, wishing he

could just... step in and push Orn aside. He'd never actually do such a thing, forever doing his best to treat women with respect, but man was she annoying. And *man* was Tin hot.

Can stared around him as he tapped his fingers on the counter in front of him, unsure how long he was going to have to wait for Tul to return. He checked his phone, he'd only been there for thirty minutes, but it felt like hours. He forced his eyes to look away, away from the entrance to the kitchen as he heard the familiar sound of someone walking in. He hated that he knew exactly who it was by the footfall, the way they stepped, walking slightly on their toes, slow even steps. His heart reacted before he could stop it, so he looked the other way in hopes that it wouldn't be as obvious as it felt. If they'd been in a cartoon, his heart would have jumped out of his chest and his eyes would have formed actual hearts.

Pathetic Can, just pathetic.

"My wonderful brother does love to leave you waiting around, doesn't he?" A teenaged Can would have run off at the mouth, adult Can had to swallow down several comments about how Tul wasn't the brother that was *difficult* to wait for. He wasn't even waiting for Tin, it just felt like he was. Waiting, hoping, dreaming, and above all helplessly *whining* over this ridiculous path his heart had chosen. He still kept his eyes diverted, his phone back in his hand as he scrolled through it like he was expecting a message. Anything to keep them from wandering over to what he couldn't have. *Engaged, related to your boss, so far out of your league you might as well take up mountain climbing if you want to reach him, Can.*

"Late meeting, he wasn't sure if he needed help or not after. The usual," he offered, the corners of his lips tugging up into a smile even as he refused to take his eyes off the phone. It was unfortunate that he could still see Tin out of the corner of his eyes. He was leaning on the counter, one hip pushed against it as his arms crossed over his chest. Worse than being able to just barely see him, he could *feel* his eyes on him. He wasn't entirely sure why he was staring at him, but it made the hair on the back of his neck stand on end. Tin was ever so slowly trying to kill him, sometimes he wondered if he had any idea the effect he had.

"Interesting timing he always seems to have. You haven't noticed a pattern, *Cantaloupe*?" He could hear the smile in his words, and Can was turning towards him, his eyes narrowed and his cheeks puffed out before he could stop himself.

"Oyyy Tin!" It had been an argument several times now, and Tin seemed to take some kind of pleasure out of getting this rise out of him. And Can fell for it everytime without fail. Ever since he'd decided to make it known he preferred to be called Can, Tin had made it a point to use his full nickname. Not only that, but he drew it out, that *stupid* grin on his face every single time he said it. Even their dad had switched to calling him Can, not Tin though, Tin just wouldn't let the stupid name drop. "It's *Can*. Can, Can, Can! Why is that so hard for you? All you have to do is leave off the *Taloupe*, just... it's just Can." For emphasis he even

stuck out his tongue, feeling his teenage self come out in full force, something only Tin could bring out of him.

“Mmmm, sure, but that little outburst didn’t answer my question, as cute as it was.” And just like that Can’s eyes returned to his phone, feeling his face heat up. It wasn’t the first time Tin had called him cute, and he reacted the same way every time. Face red, eyes down, unsure how to respond when the man in front of him was engaged and yet he wanted him so very badly. It wasn’t fair, Tin though he didn’t know it, was so cruel to his poor heart.

“I couldn’t hear the question over the name, weird how that happens,” it was his turn to smile, chancing a small glance in Tin’s direction. It had been a mistake, the wide smile there was enough to make his heart stop, the smile he’d put there.

“Everytime Tul has had a mysterious meeting late, I’ve been home for you to wait here with. Orn hasn’t been around most of the time either. You don’t think he’s up to something *weird*?” It was just a coincidence, he was sure it was, Tin was reading into something because he didn’t trust his brother. The reasons why he still didn’t know, and he never asked since it wasn’t really any of his business.

“Oh yeah, I guess that’s true. Weird coincidence right?” Especially the Orn part, since from what he could see, Tul and Orn got along just fine. It was as though he’d heard his name though, because not seconds later Tul himself came bounding into the room, Tin’s eyes rolling as he turned to leave the room. Not before he gave Can a look, their eyes meeting in a way that left him without breath. Tul went straight to work, chattering about the meeting and how they had a new restaurant chain that was interested in doing business with them, and wanted them to help them find the best real estate possible. Can started taking notes the moment Tul started talking, something that had been requested when he’d first started. It was a quirk that apparently helped him sort out his thoughts later, if he could read back what he’d already said.

“I think that’s all I had, Can, thank you,” Can offered a smile as he slid the notes over, wincing only slightly because he really did wish his handwriting was a bit neater. It was legible, which was the important part he supposed. He started to stand, but Tul’s hand on his shoulder kept him seated. Tul touching him was new. “I actually wanted to talk to you about something... not work related. Equally important however, at least in my opinion.” Up until that point, Tul had never really discussed anything outside work with him. Sure there were random comments about Tin, about how they seemed to get along and at least once he’d commented that he thought Orn was good for Tin. He’d agreed though internally, his mind had screamed that he knew someone who was far better for him.

“Oh...” was all he managed to get out before Tul offered him a sickeningly sweet smile. Can, for his part, already very much disliked where this was going.

“It’s about Tin, I’ve just noticed that the two of you seem to be on friendly terms. At least, you talk quite often. It’s not a problem of course, I’m glad, he could use friends,” he said it wasn’t a problem, but something in his tone, in the way the smile grew said it actually was a problem. “Really I’m just looking out for you, Can, you’ve been such a great asset, I’d hate you to get mixed up with the wrong sorts.” Tul lifted his phone, and Can watched as he seemed to text someone. Within seconds, his own phone was going off and he lifted it in confusion. “It’s better to show than to explain, I’ve always found. Just be careful, he’s not always as he seems.”

Can sat still for a moment, his eyes flickering between Tul and his own phone, confusion clear in his expression. Tul stood, making it quite clear the conversation was at an end, and Can followed suit, standing with a small wei before he made for the door. More than the curiosity of wondering what it was about Tin he wanted to warn him about was the *why*. They talked when he worked, but that most certainly didn’t mean they were friends. They were *friendly* ... was it because he could see what Can was trying so desperately to hide? *Did Tin know?* And the question that screamed above everything else in his head, could he trust Tul to be honest with him about whatever it was he wanted him to know about Tin?

Chapter End Notes

No beta :3 plz take this time to throw your hate right in Tul's direction, thank you.

But I read the truth you hid behind those eyes

Chapter Summary

He wasn't the smartest person in the world, far from it, but even he could pair the information he was reading with the words he'd heard from Tin's own mouth.

Chapter Notes

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

The talk with Tul had left his mind reeling. Tul had insisted that he read the article on his own time, but he'd caught sight of a picture that had been sent along with it.

The moment he'd gotten home, he'd spent most of the night pouring over the article that had been sent, followed by his own research. He'd also spent time staring at the picture Tul had sent. Zoomed in, eyes pouring over every detail, not only what Tin was holding, but the expression on his face and the people around him. All of which, he noted, seemed to be watching him, which seemed weird for a party, and just added to the details that didn't make sense. Can would easily admit that he wasn't the smartest person. School had been a struggle at the best of times, he was still easily fooled into believing people simply because he wanted to see the good in everyone. It had gotten him in trouble in the past, and he knew it caused his family to worry about him. Even with that, something about the picture didn't look right, the more he zoomed in, the more it looked a bit more like Tin wasn't actually doing anything at all. All of the articles he'd read said the same thing, Tin Medthanan, heir to the Medthanan estate had been arrested for drug possession. Possession, but the way Tul had spoken it left the impression that Tin had been an active participant. That he was maybe still an active participant. The deeper he dug, the more he saw that even the press said there had been nothing found in his system. For all the time he'd spent around Tin, he'd never gotten the impression he'd done drugs.

He wasn't the smartest person in the world, far from it, but even he could pair the information he was reading with the words he'd heard from Tin's own mouth. *My brother has been on that stage since I was born.*

Tul said he wanted to warn him, the words he'd used made it seem like it was out of the kindness of his heart, because he cared. Can wanted to hear from Tin himself. How was he supposed to bring that up when they weren't really even friends? They talked for sure, but it was always interrupted. Can had hardly slept that night, fretting over something that didn't even really have anything to do with him. It wasn't like he was dating Tin, a crush was hardly cause to concern himself when Tin was getting married. Yet he found he cared, the

same as he'd care if Good, Ae, or Pond were having someone talk poorly about them. He'd fight for them, the same way he desperately wanted to fight for Tin.

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Following Tul around the next day was nothing short of agonizing. He didn't want Tul to question him about it, though he could see very clearly Tul was waiting to see if he'd bring it up. Instead of doing what Tul wanted, he tried to act as though he hadn't even read it, he acted like his usual cheery self. Tul didn't need to know that he'd dropped his coffee twice, his lunch once, and had to run home to switch his shirt because he'd managed to run face first into someone on the street who had proceeded to dump whatever they'd been drinking down his front. To say he was distracted was an understatement. It was a relief when Tul sent him to pick up Phu, it meant there was a chance he could meet up with Tin, that he'd have a chance to talk to him. How he was planning to bring up that particular subject he wasn't sure, but he figured he'd let his mouth run the way he'd so avoided and see where it took him. It was better news that Orn was still out with her mom, so he didn't have that particular worry to deal with.

"Oyy Phu," his voice called through the mansion as the young boy took off, "your dad said homework first! Don't forg- Oy don't you give me that look!" *Hell*, he sounded like his mom when he'd been young. His heart jolted in his chest as he heard a small chuckle, his eyes catching sight of a hand ruffling the young boy's hair before Tin stepped around the corner. It was almost as though he'd been waiting. Can stayed quite still as he watched Tin interact with his nephew, quietly telling him to do as he was told before Phu was off again. Their eyes met, and Can felt all the questions he had building up inside of him. The small smile that had been present on Tin's face melted away, replaced with the indifferent stare he'd come to see him use with nearly everyone.

Can hadn't realized until that moment that he was usually an exception. It only confused him further.

"Ai'Tin, can I ask you something?" He started slowly, stepping forward as he watched his expression turn cold, suspicion filling it by the second.

"You're probably going to, no matter what I say, might as well out with it," the words were cautious, *angry*, he let his eyes glance down to the way the other man's hands were balled into fists at his side.

Can took in a breath, trying to steady himself before he launched into everything that had been playing through his mind. "Tul sent me some things, I don't know why he decided I

should know them, but they were sketchy, you know? Some articles, a picture... he said he was trying to make sure I had all the facts before we became good friends - or something like that. I know we... aren't friends, not really... but I like talking to you so I looked into what he sent. I just want an explanation mostly, because I don't believe what the articles said, you don't do drugs. Probably anyway, I don't feel like you do, it doesn't seem right. What happened Tin, if you don't mind telling me? I just want the truth, you know?" He rambled out, thus far he'd done his best not to let his mouth run the way it loved to do. Half the time his brain couldn't catch up with what his mouth was saying and he didn't realize what topic he was even on until he was done talking. This was no different. He watched the play of emotions on Tin's face as he spoke, focusing more on that than the words he spoke.

Tin's expression had gone from pissed, to alarmed, to something he wasn't sure he'd ever seen before. Surprise maybe? Mixed with confusion, if he was reading him right. Tin wasn't the easiest person to read as it was, he tended to stick to two or three emotions, and more often than not the default was cold indifference. When he finally spoke, the words were slow, cautious, but even Can could hear the hope hidden underneath. "You... didn't believe him? Or what you read?" Why was he so surprised? Can had no reason to believe Tul other than the fact that he was his boss. That wasn't much cause to believe anyone. Even he knew that, and he believed most people.

"No... I stayed up all night looking at other things, you know, things Tul didn't send me... possession doesn't mean you did anything you know, it just doesn't ma-" his words were cut off, the air leaving his lungs as a pair of arms wrapped tightly around him. A hug from Tin was the last thing he'd ever dreamed he'd be on the receiving end of. He hesitated for a long moment before he gave in, his hands resting on the others back as he felt himself melt into the feeling. He'd never expected to actually touch Tin, the feeling was both overwhelming and yet more than he'd ever imagined. Each place their bodies touched felt as though it was on fire, against his will he found himself breathing in his scent, his eyes slipping shut against each sensation as it assaulted him.

Tin was quiet, though Can was sure he didn't have a clue the struggle that was not only happening in Can's mind but within his body as well. It would be so easy to just press his lips against his neck in this position, to give into every desire that had been growing in him since the day he'd met him. Tin's words broke him free of the prison his mind had trapped him in, and instead of desire, he felt his heart break. "No one's ever believed in me before." More than break his heart, it made him angry. *Orn was his fiance*, did that mean she didn't believe him either? "It was a set up, I'd just gotten there and someone passed me something, I was passing it away from me when the police came. Tul set it up, he hates me." There it was, every weird feeling he'd gotten from Tul, every little uncomfortable thing he'd picked up just below the surface. This was the stage Tin had talked about that Tul stood so high on, not even a pedestal, he'd carved himself a stage and refused to leave it. In carving it, he'd chosen to be his own brother's downfall, it made Can sick to his stomach. "Still believe me?" The question was soft, and Can found himself nodding before he had a chance to process the question.

Not only did he just generally believe most people, his heart told him this was true, that Tin wasn't lying and was instead speaking his truth, a truth it seemed no one believed. "Mm, I believe you," In that moment, he realized he'd already given his heart over to Tin without Tin knowing. Tin had no idea, and yet as he stood there, Tin slowly pulling back from him, he felt his heart follow. The moment they'd touched, it had lept out his chest so that it could stay with Tin, and there wasn't a damn thing Can could do about it.

"Thank you, Can." Though there were tears in his eyes, he truly did look thankful, as though a weight had been lifted off him. It instead rested on Can's shoulders, he could only hope he was strong enough to hold it up. He liked to think he was strong in a lot of ways, an athlete at his very core, but he'd never had to hold an emotional weight before. Not his own, nor anyone else's. And now, somehow he found himself holding both at once, both in secret.

That in itself was its own weight, a secret he had to keep close to his chest. Where he typically found that he was an open book, he was now shut off to the world. This one secret kept him shut off from the man in front of him, from his sister, his mother, his best friends... the fact that for the first time in his life he had feelings that were so strong, so demanding of his thoughts... and no one knew. No one could know. It devastated his heart, despite the reassuring smile he offered Tin, the nod of his head that said he was there, for whatever he needed. Where else would he be when his heart had already decided?

Chapter End Notes

You guys are much to kind to me! Thank you for reading <3 hope you enjoy where this is slowly building towards.... and hope no one minds angst because we're about to hit a wild angsty ride :3

Tripping over myself, aching, begging you to come help

Chapter Summary

It was his own undoing really, the more he fell in love, the harder it was to even look Orn in the face, to stare back defiantly when she looked down on him. It didn't help that he'd walked into the hall once to the pair of them just moments from kissing.

Chapter Notes

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

Conversations with Tin were far more frequent since the truth had come out. It was almost as though Tin gravitated towards him the moment he walked in the house, it played tricks on his heart. Though he'd thought that he couldn't possibly like the other man more, he'd been wrong. Outside of work, he saw signs that were more than a little alarming. One of his very best friends, Ae, had a boyfriend now, though apparently they'd been dating for quite a while and kept it quiet. Ae had always been the private sort, so it wasn't that surprising that he'd kept it between the two of them. The only reason it came out now was because they were in love, and it wasn't something he wanted hidden. The alarming signs he saw were from them. After the shock had worn off, the shock that he wasn't the only one (besides Type) in their friend group that liked guys, that was when the alarm had set in. He saw the way they looked at each other, the way they moved together, heard the words that left Pete, his boyfriend's lips about Ae. They all reflected everything he felt about Tin. He was in love, one sided, unrequited, painful love.

Tul seemed to notice a difference in the way they were around each other, that maybe whatever he'd hoped to achieve by telling his lies hadn't gone according to plan. He saw when they'd find time to stand around and talk, the quiet laughter as jokes flowed between them, as a friendship blossomed. So instead of continuing to push it, he kept him busy. Christmas was drawing ever nearer, and instead of Tul shopping for his son - as he should, Can thought, he gave Can a card with more Baht on it than he'd ever seen before, to go shop for Phu. The longer he spent around the family, the worse he felt not only for Tin but for Phu. He could see that Tul actually loved his son, they practically ran into each other's arms the moment Tul got home. But Tul was busy a lot, it left Phu in other peoples company far more than it left him in Tul's. On top of that, the gifts he received for Christmas should have been from Tul himself, picked out with love... not from Can.

Not only was Tul doing his best to keep him busy, Orn seemed determined to keep Tin at her side.

He had to admit, it was driving him slightly crazy. Now that she was home, when he and Tin did have the opportunity to talk, it was as if she had some sort of radar. The moment their eyes met, she was at his side, pulling him in the opposite direction. The looks she gave Can were angry, as though for some reason she saw him as more of a threat than ever. Tin wasn't interested in him in the same way Can was though, they were friends, that was the extent of it. She was the one that had a cutesy little necklace that hung from her neck that said love on half a heart, that sickeningly matched a bracelet Tin wore that had the other half of the heart with the word you on it. She had the ring. Perhaps it was his inability to keep his eyes off her fiancé that caused her to act the way she did. It was his own undoing really, the more he fell in love, the harder it was to even look Orn in the face, to stare back defiantly when she looked down on him. It didn't help that he'd walked into the hall once to the pair of them just moments from kissing.

He wasn't sad that he'd ruined it, but there was no denying the pain in his chest over what he'd almost witnessed, the only satisfaction lay with how angry she'd been over it. It was as though he'd ruined a first kiss, as though they hadn't gotten even close to it before. It wasn't a question he was willing to ask, so he'd just turned as quickly as he could to dash away. They were engaged, far past the point of just dating, of course they'd kissed before. It wasn't a surprise that he had found them close to a kiss, but it didn't do any good to tell his heart that it never listened anymore.

It wasn't long after he'd accidentally ruined a kiss that he found himself sitting in Tul's home office, typing up some of the notes on a laptop the company had given him. It helped Tul organize his notes better if he could read them in a proper format - Can's handwriting left a lot to be desired, so he had a list of rules Can had to follow, putting them all in a certain order. He glanced up as he heard the door open, fully prepared to tell Tul that he was nearly done and just needed a few more minutes. His eyes fell back to the computer the moment Orn walked in, her face the very picture of disgust as he focused on his work. It took every bit of him to calm his temper, to keep himself from telling her to quit looking at him like that. Whatever her problem was, he hadn't done anything, and he didn't much care what she thought either.

"Cantaloupe, is it?" She questioned, her voice quiet, smooth, seemingly devoid of emotion though he could see from a quick glance at her face that she was anything but. He offered a tight smile as he continued typing, she already knew his name, and he didn't much like her pretending she didn't. He liked that less than he liked her using his full name.

"Mmm, as you already know, though it's Can actually," he grabbed the notes he was typing up, shifting his way through them as he tried to find the next thing he needed to type. Her presence wasn't helping speed up the process any.

"Yes well, can't say I care what you prefer to be called. I just wanted to make it very clear who is engaged to Tin. If you don't think I haven't noticed the way you look at him... he

isn't interested." For a moment, Can couldn't help but let his eyes shut. It was the most she'd ever said to him, and yet it was so out of line he had to beg his own mind to calm down. Beg his mouth not to run away with the feelings rising in his chest. As if he didn't already know that Tin wasn't interested like that, it was painfully clear by the ring that rested on her finger. The diamond itself was blinding.

"We're just friends," was all he offered, his head shaking for a moment as he resumed his work, typing quickly without glancing at her. Friends was better than nothing, no matter how much it made his heart ache to be near him knowing damn well he couldn't have him.

"Stop looking at him, he's above you, stop going where you aren't wanted. This little crush you seem to have... it's disgusting," He didn't have a chance to respond before she was out the door. Was he really that obvious? He'd tried so hard not to be, to act as though he didn't even notice him when he walked into a room. It was his eyes that betrayed him, and he couldn't help but feel a sting in his chest at her words.

He already knew he wasn't good enough, it wasn't as though he needed her help figuring it out.

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Following the conversation with Orn, he'd done his best to avoid Tin for the rest of his shift. He didn't make it easy, he seemed to show up whenever Can was somewhere that made it remarkably hard to get away. Tul's office, for example, had just the one door and Tin had blocked it when he'd found him in there. By the time Orn had shown up, her face red from anger as she pulled Tin away, Can had been very close to trying to climb out the window.

It was unfortunate that as he escaped the office, doing his best to slip past them unnoticed, he heard a very small portion of the argument they were having. It didn't help him feel any better, he was the cause. The words, however, stuck in his mind and left him confused.

"Are you kidding me? I see you Tin, I see you. This needs to stop."

"I don't know what you're talking about, you need to calm down."

"I see you! You think I don't... I see you looking at him, you seriously believe I haven't noticed? He's an assistant, Tin, he's poor, so many class levels below you that it's ridiculous. He's a GUY. Don't walk away from me!"

He didn't stay long enough to see if Tin really was walking away, but Can was running.

He still wasn't entirely sure why she seemed to act like it mattered whether or not they were friends, unless for some reason she really did think his presence around her fiancé was disgusting. There was no denying it, even if it was just to himself, that it hurt. Her words more than confused him, did she really see him as such a threat that she was that concerned? He wasn't a threat, and he didn't like the tension that hung in the air whenever she was near. He'd always been the type of person that tried to make everyone feel welcome in his presence, and found himself far happier when the people around him were happy.

It was weighing on him, he needed the job but the longer he found himself between the three of them, the more it tore at his heart. There was no one he could even explain it to, his sister would squeal and start plotting if she knew he had feelings for one of the Medthanans, Ae was the type that would just pat his back and tell him to fight on. He usually had great advice, but something told him this wasn't a situation he could help with. Then there was Pond, his was the advice he wanted the least. He could already hear it echoing around in his head and the thought of it caused his face to immediately flush. *You have access to his room, right? Bang him.*

Yeah, he'd definitely be talking about it to no one, least of all Pond.

"Something have you blushing?" Can nearly jumped out of skin from his spot on the ground, where he'd been in the middle of tying his shoes so he could leave for the day. A loud *fuck* fell from his lips before he could stop it, his hand grabbing his chest as he lifted his eyes to stare up at the face that was tormenting him day and night.

"*Fuck*, damn it Tin... Can you not sneak up like that? And no, it's just hot." *You're just hot.*

"If you say you aren't, then you aren't... but why are you avoiding me?" Tin's hands were in his pockets, a worried expression pulled his eyebrows together, and Can hated that he couldn't explain. Even if he wanted to, he wasn't good enough with words, he knew he'd mess it up.

"Just busy, Tul had a lot he needed help with. It isn't avoiding, it's you know... my job, and staying out of your way. You have your own things to worry about, like... whatever it is you do, and your fiancé." He knew Tin was trying to get in the company, that they were letting him help out almost like an internship - a test, he'd heard Tul call it. To see if he could actually handle it. While he had a lot of faith that he could, Tul seemed doubtful, it was one more notch on the board against the elder of the two Medthanans. The notches at this point were many and he was struggling to find things he did like.

It seemed something that he had said had bothered Tin, he stepped forward as Can stood up, his hand resting on his shoulder. He could feel him studying his gaze, though he didn't lift his own, he instead kept his focus on Tin's shoulder. "Can, we're friends... you aren't in my way, I come to you, don't I? There was something I actually wanted to talk to you about... about us, and about Orn..." the word us made Can's mouth go dry, his breath catch in his throat in such a way that it felt like he couldn't breathe for a second. When he finally did look up, the expression on Tin's face was unlike he'd ever seen it before. Soft, gentle... there wasn't any sign of the indifference he was so used to seeing. It had been a while since he'd seen it directed at him, but there still wasn't much in the way of emotion usually. Not unless Can had done something that amused him.

He opened his mouth to speak, but another voice spoke before he could. "What about the two of you, and Orn, sweetie?" Her voice sounded sweet, as though there was sugar dripping from each syllable, the look on her face said the very opposite. Tin shut his eyes for a moment, his hand falling from Can's shoulder as he took a step back, when his eyes opened, he offered Can the very same soft expression, before it hardened as it turned back to her.

"Was just hoping we'd all be able to spend time together soon, since you're with me and he's my good friend now, that's all." With a glance in his direction, Can could tell that wasn't what he'd wanted to say at all, but with a quick goodbye, he ran out the door without looking back. The words *since you're with me* ringing painfully in his ears, reminding him of his place, and it wasn't beside Tin.

Chapter End Notes

:3 no beta <3 throwing my own posting schedule to the wind apparently.

Got a feeling that I'm going under

Chapter Summary

Of course Type noticed, he was dangerous like that. The things no one wanted to talk about, the things people kept secret, he was just perspective enough to pick up on. Perhaps it was because he saw his own experiences in the things his friends went through, or maybe he just was ridiculous in the way he picked up on other people's feelings.

Chapter Notes

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

The night after the confrontation with Orn, and the weird conversation with Tin he'd practically begged his friends to go out for drinks with him. He needed it, his heart was hardly capable of taking anymore. Each time he was sure it couldn't possibly get any worse, it somehow managed to do just that. Tin drew him in like no one else could, made his heart pump faster, his breath stop... and his chest and mind hurt. It was a relief to be out around people he was so comfortable with. Laughing, talking, letting the Can he only saw with them out. The Can that so badly wanted Tin to see him. The loud, goofy, *albino monkey* they all knew and seemed to love.

He'd been seated between Pond and Type, though Pond had run off after ChaAim as she walked in, forever chasing her and it was actually sort of cute to watch. So unlike him, but at the same time, it was nice to see him do something that wasn't damn perverted. Ae was in the middle of a quiet conversation with his boyfriend, and No had left early. It left him pretty much alone with Type, the silence other than the music actually suited him just fine in that moment. Quiet that was quickly interrupted by Type's voice beside him.

"Are you finally going to tell one of us what has made you so distracted lately?" Can let his eyebrows pull down in thought, his face immediately falling. Of course Type noticed, he was dangerous like that. The things no one wanted to talk about, the things people kept secret, he was just perspective enough to pick up on. Perhaps it was because he saw his own experiences in the things his friends went through, or maybe he just was ridiculous in the way he picked up on other people's feelings. Throughout the night it was true, he'd gotten distracted several times. Tin's face would swim in and out of his thoughts, and whatever discussion was going on, he'd have to pretend he hadn't heard what was being said so that it could be repeated. Type saw through it, something Can should have anticipated.

His shoulders hunched as he shook his head, a quiet, “nothing, P’,” leaving his mouth before he lifted the drink in front of him to his lips. Maybe if he got drunk enough he’d forget it. The only thing stopping him was a hand nudging the drink away as he set it down.

“Mm, I believe that as much as I believe No left early because he was tired. What’s his name?” Can had pulled his drink back after shooting Type a frown that he’d even dared move it, had just brought it to his lips and then was left choking on it.

“W-who?” He questioned, sputtering as he coughed into the crook of his arm.

“The guy that has you so distracted? Please don’t lie to me Can, none of us have seen you like this before, it’s obvious. You didn’t even talk over a single one of us tonight.” Instead of telling him, Can stood to leave, a disgruntled sound leaving him as he was tugged right back down onto the bench. Though he was athletic, Type was more athletic, not to mention quite a bit bigger than his small frame.

“It doesn’t matter, P’, he... it won’t happen.”

“Do you know that for sure? Has he actually said no?” He couldn’t say no when he didn’t know, or at least, Can hoped he didn’t know. He couldn’t say no when there was no reason to, he was already taken, and out of his league even if he wasn’t.

“Not... exactly. I just know.” He glanced in his elders direction, only looking away to check his phone as a message came through.

“If that’s him... Tin is it? Can’t say I’ve often texted just a friend at,” he paused, his eyes on a nearby clock, “one in the morning, just to see if they’re awake... have you?”

It was so unfair of Type to inspire hope, unfair of Tin to push that hope along as he stood up, the rest of his drink downed in one go, his tongue out in Type’s direction as he left the bar. With his phone in hand, he let out a sigh. They’d exchanged numbers right after the truth had come out, in case Tin needed something. Maybe that had been a mistake, how much could his heart take?

Are you awake? The message was so simple and yet it did things to him that made him pull at his hair in frustration. As he walked towards the nearest bus stop, a loud yawn ripping from him, he typed a quick *unfortunately* back. He half hoped that would be the end of it, but of course it wasn’t. Tin couldn’t ever just leave it at one message, nor could he, it seemed, just answer a text with another text. Tin’s name flashed across his screen, his phone going

off loudly in his hand as his head fell back.

“Why are you calling me? Why can’t you just text like a normal person, huh?” He scolded as he pressed the phone to his ear, the words had no heat behind them, they were instead exasperated as he heard a chuckle on the other end. A chuckle that faded as quickly as it had begun.

“Just had another fight with Tul... he’s trying to keep me out of the family business, just... wanted to talk to you is all.” His voice was quiet, there was a hint of anger in it but more than anything he heard sadness. Can leaned on a pole near the bus stop, his eyes shut as he took in a breath. *Why wasn’t Orn helping him with this?* “Where are you? I hear cars.”

“Do you want me to punch him? I will, but it’ll get me fired and then I’ll have to work for you, I’m warning you I’m expensive, the price will go up,” he joked, an attempt to lighten the mood, and by the light chuckle on the other end, he’d said exactly what Tin had needed to hear - perhaps just not in the way he’d needed to hear it. The sad truth was, if he’d been just a few years younger, he’d have rushed the Medthanan mansion to do exactly that. Punch Tul right in the face. “Bus stop, went out to a bar with some friends, just waiting to go home.”

“Someone should, but not you... I’d rather he didn’t take it out on you. Send me the cross streets, I’ll give you a lift home. Hate the idea of you on a bus this late.” The protests that had already started to leave his mouth were given to no one, the sound of silence on the other end told him Tin had already hung up without waiting for him to tell him no.

Bastard. Heart crushing, hot, damn bastard.

Not only did Can send the cross roads, but he also sent several middle finger emojis and thought very seriously about sending an actual picture of him flicking Tin off. Instead, he leaned his head back after pressing send, ignoring the bus as it pulled up and left without him on it.

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If he’d gotten on the bus like he’d planned, he would have been close to home by then. Instead, he was finally climbing into Tin’s car at nearly one thirty in the morning. Another yawn left him as he shut the door, his hands rubbing his face for a moment before he looked at the man beside him. A mistake if there ever was one, instead of looking as sexy as he usually did, he looked god damn cute as hell. His usual button up with a tie and dress pants had been replaced with a pair of navy blue joggers and a plain gray tee-shirt, his hair slightly messy instead of looking so perfect that not a single strand was out of place. Like he’d just climbed out of bed for the sole purpose of driving Can home. He’d never seen him like that

before, cute was the opposite of helpful, cute messed with his heart just as much as sexy did.

“Here, put your address in my phone so I can GPS it,” he spoke quietly, his phone held out as he slowly took it into his hand. He did as requested, his eyes glancing from the phone to Tin every few seconds.

“I thought you just had a fight with Tul? You look like you were in bed?”

“I was, fight happened a little bit ago but I couldn’t sleep,” Can handed his phone back, watching as he pressed a few buttons until a map showed up on the fancy screen in his car, a map straight to his house. “You smell like whiskey.” A quiet laugh left Can as he pressed the side of his head to the window, his hand buckling his seatbelt as Tin started driving.

“So you texted me?” *And not your fiance*, the question hung in the air, just enough alcohol in his system that he couldn’t keep the bitterness out of his tone. “I was at a bar, asshole, people usually drink there, my bad.” He was thankful now that the last drink hadn’t been mixed as the previous two had been, instead, the more he’d watched Ae and Pete make love eyes at each other, the more he decided straight whiskey was the way to go. It tasted like hot garbage on ice, and burned like the hot garbage didn’t have ice, but it numbed some of the pain.

“I didn’t say it was bad, just didn’t figure you for much of a drinker. We should get drinks sometime,” Can’s eyes were already growing heavy, the lull of the car ride mixed with the alcohol allowing sleep to pull at his mind. The dreams were going to be horrible.

“Mm, unlikely,” he breathed just as his eyes shut. He could have sworn he’d heard Tin say something about hope, but before he knew it he was nudged awake, a hand on his shoulder gently shaking him. Quickly Can wiped the drool from the corner of his mouth that had been gathering there. *Real attractive Can, drool not only in front of him, but all over his car.*

“Cantaloupe, we’re here, go on, go to bed. I’ll see you on Monday.” Can nodded, his eyes raking over Tin’s face as he slowly got out of the car, offering a small wave.

“Thank you... for coming to get me Tin. Try not to listen to Tul, okay? If he bothers you, call me, I’ll come punch him and work for you instead.”

No beta :3 for those of you that /don't/ like angst, there is cute stuff incoming (but also the worst of the angst is also on it's way so sorry!!)

Also taking prompts if anyone has any??? Feel free to drop them here or over at <https://plantaloupewrites.tumblr.com/> !

Heart made of glass, my mind of stone

Chapter Summary

His eyes checked the watch on his wrist as he arrived at the gate to the Medthanan mansion, a whole hour and thirty minutes late. He could have just walked in, he knew the code, but his body was buzzing with anticipation, nerves that he knew were there for no reason. It was just a party, he'd make it through and then go home.

Chapter Notes

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

Can's phone went off just as he finished paying for a load of toys he'd hoped Phu would like. It was the second time he'd been sent out for presents, he was quite sure he'd ever seen one person receive so many gifts in his life. Between him and Ley they'd never received even close to half as much. But he did his job without question, glad he was at least able to get out without having to follow Tul around. Glad he wasn't stuck staring at Tin at the very same time. His heart almost beat out of his chest when he saw *that* name flash across the screen. With all the toys loaded into the Medthanan car he'd borrowed, he read the message, his heart now in his throat.

Tin was throwing a small Christmas party, just a few people they knew and a few plus ones... and he wanted Can there. It took him far longer than it should have as he sat in the borrowed car to compose a message back. The truth was half of him wanted badly to go, but the other half, the half that was fighting for dominance knew Orn would be there, that she was half the they Tin had mentioned, that he was bound to find himself in a world of heart-break come the end of the night. When he did finally send a message back, the only thing he could think to say was a simple *I'll see if I can, I'll have to check my schedule*. Outside of following Tul around, fighting off Ley when she got on wanting to know which brother he thought was hotter, the answer was clear but she didn't need to know, and playing football with a few of his mates... he had nothing on his schedule. Tin probably knew that, he seemed to pick up on those types of things... and with how Can tended to ramble on about anything and everything - Tin knew his habits and quite a few of his likes and dislikes.

He cursed himself for having such a big mouth, and such a dumb heart. Cursed himself as he repeatedly hit his forehead on the steering wheel, a rapid flow of curse words falling from his lips.

The day of the Christmas party was wrought with panic. He had refused to give Tin a direct answer, and each day leading up to it Tin had found him somewhere in the mansion when Tul wasn't around to ask if he was coming, that or he would actually text him to ask. Apparently the party wasn't actually his party - which made sense, the more he got to know Tin the more he realized it didn't really seem his style to throw a party. Something as cheery as a Christmas party was even more far-fetched - in truth it was more of a Can thing than it was a Tin thing, and yet he still found himself avoiding it. The plan had been to say no just days before it, but Tin had uttered one word that had forced him to consider it. In all his time around him he'd never once heard Tin say the word *please*, but he had, for Tin the word used only once was practically begging. Can didn't have it in him to say no. He was in love, how was he supposed to say no to the man he'd fallen so damn hard for?

Tin was so cruel to his poor heart.

The party itself had already been going a full hour before Can finally made a decision, a loud "oyyyyyyy Tin whyyyy," leaving him even as he sat in his room alone, his hands running roughly through his hair. He was going, of course he was. He'd already showered and had shaken Lemon's arm until she'd helped him pick what she called the cutest outfit he owned. He hated the entire phrase, feeling as though he didn't own cute things or outfits. Her comments about *looking hot* for the brothers *also* didn't help, if only she knew that he actually was in love with one of them, and that he just couldn't do anything about it. Even if he could, both he and Lemon knew he wouldn't have the guts to do anything about it.

His eyes checked the watch on his wrist as he arrived at the gate to the Medthan mansion, a whole hour and thirty minutes late. He could have just walked in, he knew the code, but his body was buzzing with anticipation, nerves that he knew were there for no reason. It was just a party, he'd make it through and then go home. Instead of typing in the code, he lifted his phone, sending Tin a quick text that said nothing more than *I'm here, Ai'Asshole, walk me in?*

Tin seemed to think it was amusing when he got riled up enough to call him an asshole, actually, Tin seemed to find it amusing whenever he got riled up in the slightest. He tried hard not to let it happen so that Tin had no reason to tell him he thought it was cute. Compliments made him hope, hope made his heart race, and he could only keep the longing at bay for so long if hope built its way towards his already argumentative brain.

Can offered a tight smile as Tin appeared at the gate, an uncharacteristically large smile on his face as he opened it. "Didn't think you were coming, Cantaloupe," *so cruel to his poor heart.*

"Me neither, but here I am! I didn't bring anything though, sorry... I wasn't sure what I should, you already have everything you want anyway, spoiled rich-" he cut himself off as he felt a hand on his wrist tugging him forward and inside. They'd decorated since he'd left for

the weekend. A large tree rested in the middle of everything, people he didn't recognize were sitting near it, drinking and eating. Can's stomach gave a sharp growl the moment he looked at the food, but the food was quickly forgotten as he heard the disgruntled voice of Tin's fiancée. Orn was talking to one of her friends and he caught the words *I thought he was going to kiss me and then that thing over there showed up*, Can wasn't sure which feeling was more prominent, the sinking feeling that Tin had almost kissed her again - though he was still sure it wasn't the first time - or the smug thoughts that he'd been the one to interrupt it again.

"I'm glad you came, here, have a drink." Can immediately took a drink from the offered glass, feeling like he was going to need it to survive this party with Tin by his side, looking handsome as ever, if not impossibly more so. Even with the drink he knew he wasn't going to survive this, he just knew he wasn't.

The party itself turned out to be fun, aside from Orn glaring daggers at him a majority of the night. Her friends weren't so bad, though it turned out that he was the only person Tin had invited, the one other person he invited had plans with someone already. When Can found out who that was, they'd both had a good laugh over the fact that they had a friend in common. *Pete*. He should have known that Tin knew him, Pete was rich as well, and with as smitten as Ae was over him, he saw him quite a lot on the weekends. Tin seemed a bit unsure of Ae, but once he knew he was one of Can's best friends, he seemed to decide maybe he wasn't so bad.

Can had just left to the kitchen to get a moment of quiet, all of Orn's friends had launched into a loud discussion about something that went a bit over his head. Economics, he thought, but most of the words seemed foreign and he wasn't about to try and follow. He was leaning on the counter, his hip pressed against it, his drink abandoned near him as he took in a breath. He'd had perhaps a bit too much, each time Tin's eyes met with his, he'd taken a drink, like his own personal drinking game. Only he was just trying to calm his heart by giving his mouth something to focus on. If he'd thought it out, he would have eaten instead, because with alcohol came lowered inhibitions.

The cause of the majority of his problems walked in, their eyes immediately catching. Instead of reaching for his drink he turned, his back now pressed against the counter, his eyes shut tight. The party was a mistake, he'd never wanted Tin as much as he did that night. Seeing him in a happy atmosphere, he could almost picture spending every day with him, that it was him offering him gentle touches, coaxing him to socialize. "Can't believe you left me alone in there," the words caused the smallest laugh to escape him, his eyes still shut tight against the onslaught of emotions coursing through him.

"Orn's going to miss you, you know. You probably shouldn't be following me around, you should enjoy your party Ai'Tin," drinking meant he couldn't keep the bitterness out of his tone, and he opened his eyes with the intent to turn and correct himself, offer to go back in

with him... but there was no need. Tin was in front of him. He pushed himself further back into the counter, his eyes staring up into Tin's as he saw something there he hadn't ever seen before. Whatever it was, it made the hunger in him grow, and this time Tin placed his hands on either side of him on the counter, if his brain was working enough to escape, Tin had cut off both routes. He tried to breathe, tried to get his body... his mouth to say no.

"Maybe she's not the one I want to miss me," he could feel Tin's breath on his face, and for perhaps the first time ever, Can felt all the words he could have said leave his mind, rendering him speechless. Tin's hand moved from the counter, instead finding home on the side of his neck, his thumb running over his jaw as he tilted his head back, Can's lips involuntarily parted, his eyes fluttering though he forced them to remain open. He had no words, less than that he had no will power left in him to stop what was happening. He wanted him so bad he couldn't do anything other than stare up at him, his eyes hungry, his breathing slowed as his heart raced against his ribcage. The party in the other room was forgotten, the fact that Orn was just on the other side of the wall didn't matter in that moment.

What did matter was Tin's mouth moving towards his. There was no hesitation as he let his arms wrap around his neck, as he waited impatiently for Tin to finally close the distance. When he did, when he finally felt his lips press against his he melted into him. His heart took on a new rhythm he'd never felt before, his hands snaking up into his hair as he held him there. He pressed himself against Tin, eagerly returning the kiss, their lips took a moment to find a pace that worked, but once they did, it was like fireworks had erupted throughout his entire body, a thick fog settling over his mind. With Tin's arms now circling tightly around him, he let his tongue run across his lips, begging for entrance, begging even more for Tin to deepen the kiss. What he got was both, their tongues meeting together, wrestling for dominance as he pushed his weight against him. He felt hot, like the temperature in the room had risen, and there was far too much fabric between them.

Tin pressed him hard against the counter, his own body pressing hard against Tin's as he felt every nerve in him set itself ablaze. This wasn't like any other kiss he'd ever experienced, this was usually the time he started to push away, because what he wanted to feel, what he thought he should feel, wasn't ever there. This was what he'd always hoped he'd feel, every part of him aching for more, begging for Tin to kiss him until he couldn't find breath anymore, until he couldn't even remember his own name. He was almost there, almost to that exact point as his hand tugged at Tin's shirt, untucking one side of it so he could move his hand inside, his finger tips running over the soft skin there, the chiseled muscles that hid under the fabric. The need for skin contact was unbearable, a force he couldn't stop, and he didn't even try to keep himself from doing what his body craved.

The sound of someone clearing their throat behind him barely stopped him, in truth, if Tin hadn't pulled back he wouldn't have even noticed it. While Tin's eyes had found someone else, his eyes remained on him. He loved him, he loved him so damn much it ached in every part of him, more now than ever and all he wanted to do was scream it, for the entire world to

hear. “Orn...” the one word was enough to break through all of those feelings, to let his heart fully break in his chest as he let his hands slowly fall from Tin’s body. Tin wasn’t his, he wasn’t his to kiss, to hold, what they’d just done was unwelcome, inappropriate, wrong. As Tin let go, he pushed him back, his hand firm on his chest as he forced him to back away. He didn’t want to know how he looked, he could see Tin’s lips were red, swollen from the kiss and he knew his matched. He also knew the devastation was clear on his face, the heartbreak was plain as day. His heart had cracked into a million pieces, and he slid out from in front of Tin, refusing to look back, refusing even more to meet Orn’s gaze though he could feel her glaring daggers at him. “I’m... so sorry,” he whispered as he left, tears already burning his eyes.

Tin was crueler to his heart than he ever expected, there was no recovering from this.

Chapter End Notes

Don't be to mad at poor Tin, all will be explained!

Also credit for the WHOLE idea for this fanfic came from this one scene, and came from this music video with our favorite boys in it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0LXe-08HzMI>

I obviously changed Orn's character quite a bit but you know, drama. :3 No beta as always!

I've got chains and you've got wings, you know that life ain't fair sometimes

Chapter Summary

He hadn't meant to act on anything, but with every wide, happy smile Can offered him, he felt his control slip.

Chapter Notes

This should be the only chapter in this that will NOT be from Can's perspective, but I felt like Tin's was needed desperately at this point. So here's things told from his side

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

What had he done?

The alcohol was easy to blame, but in his heart he knew he hadn't had all that much. His attention instead had been on trying to spend as much time with Can as he could. Can, the only person who had ever believed him, Can... the very person he was sure he'd just badly hurt. He'd spent a full month since meeting him telling himself he wasn't attracted to men, the month after that coming to terms with the fact that he was overwhelmingly attracted to one specific man. Once the realization crashed down on him... he did without thinking. He chased him, falling a bit deeper for him every single time he saw his adorable face.

He hadn't meant to act on anything, but with every wide, happy smile Can offered him, he felt his control slip. Throughout the night, he'd sworn he'd seen something in Can's eyes, a sort of longing as they'd look at each other, it had torn at his ability to use reason. Orn was a pretty girl, but Can... Can was gorgeous, his smile brightened every room he walked into, he was damn sexy and it was the sort of sexy that was completely unintentional. You could just tell that he didn't even realize it, but it wasn't just his face, his body that made him that way, it was his personality. Loud, adorable, unable to control his own mouth, quite possibly the funniest person he'd ever met. He found he enjoyed it when he saw what he realized was the real Can shine through, the distinct lack of a filter, the way his mouth would just run on shamelessly, as though he didn't have a care in the world. The feeling had snuck up on him, and by the time he'd noticed exactly what the feeling really was, it was too late to stop, he just craved everything about him.

Orn on the other hand, the relationship, the marriage to be, was written in a contract. There was no real attraction there, it was all arranged as a business deal between two families. She was from another rich family, and their families together would make both families richer. He'd been dumb enough to go along with it, because what did it matter? It wasn't like he'd ever fall in love, ever trust anyone, it wasn't as though anyone ever cared enough to listen to his story. He had no doubt that she at least found him attractive, but there weren't any feelings there. When the deal had first been brought to him, he had thought he could survive a loveless marriage, that being someone's arm-candy was at least some sort of attention. With his brother and father's push, he'd given her a necklace without telling her that it was Tul that had pushed both it and the bracelet on him, the ring had been given along with the contract. He'd never even seen it, it was on her finger when they met. It was painfully clear now that was the last thing he wanted. Orn wasn't what he wanted.

Now everything was falling apart around him, Can had left the mansion and the tears in his eyes had nearly killed him. Orn was pissed, beyond pissed. That was the kiss she'd been hoping for, the one that he was glad had been interrupted every time it had come close to happening. The kiss she thought should have been hers had gone to a guy. Not just a guy, a guy she'd already felt as though was a threat... she'd been right, no one turned his head the way Can did.

It was her turn to interrupt the way Can always had... if she hadn't Tin wouldn't have been able to stop himself, he'd have taken Can right there against the counter. One kiss from Can and he'd forgotten where he was, the feeling of him lifting his shirt, his hand on his bare side... the only thing that had been left in the entire world in that moment had been Can. His Cantaloupe. He'd been very close to lifting him onto the counter he'd pushed him against, the sound of her clearing her throat had been the one thing that had stopped him. This wasn't who he was, he wasn't the type to cheat - but it also didn't feel like cheating, it wasn't even a marriage he wanted. He'd turned to chase Can despite her standing there, but the loud '*you have got to be fucking kidding me, Tin*' that left her lips kept him rooted to the spot.

On top of everything, as he waited for his father to finish his meeting with Orn's father, Tul stood by with a smile on his face that made him uneasy.

"I knew you'd mess it all up, you know that? Finally had something going for you..." anger coursed through him as he lifted his gaze, though he didn't say anything. Tul wanted to get a rise out of him, wanted him to take this bait and he wouldn't. "I win again, you understand that right? I noticed the way you looked at him right away, there was always something different there. I've never seen that look from you, like he was precious. Did you enjoy those late nights all alone with him? Now you don't have him and you broke dad's little contract. Should be fun the next time he works, can't wait to keep him busy and parade him around in front of you. You make it so easy, little brother." There was a beat between this and his next words, they twisted painfully in his gut. "Cute isn't he? Talks a bit too much for my taste, but he is really very cute. Your almost lover, destroyed that before it even began."

Tin felt sick to his stomach, of course this was just further manipulation. Just when he was sure he'd gotten out from under Tul's thumb, he found a way to put him right back under it, to tear his life apart without so much as blinking an eye. That wasn't even the part that made him the angriest, not only had Tul hurt him, he'd hurt Can... his Can. He slowly stood, his hand slamming on the table in between them, the anger boiling over as he let his gaze finally land on his brother. "And you can tell dad that it doesn't matter what agreement he comes up with, I'm done. I don't want her." He wanted one person, and that person was somewhere out in the world hurting. He had to fight the overwhelming urge to strangle Tul for using someone as good, as pure as Can the way he had.

He had to get a hold of him, Tul had taken so many things away from him, he couldn't let him take Can too. The kiss with Can had already felt like so much more than anything he'd felt before, like their souls had connected, had been searching for each other and had finally found one another. He couldn't just stand by and let Tul rip them apart, not before he figured out if there was something truly there. By the way Can left, the tears that had been in his eyes, there was.

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Days had gone by, and each day that past left him feeling lost. Can wasn't answering his texts, in fact, he was very sure he wasn't even reading them. Underneath the most recent it merely said delivered, by now he'd texted Can enough to know he hadn't switched off the setting that would let him know when something had been read. When he couldn't get a hold of him, he tried Pete. It had been amusing that they both knew him, now he saw it as a saving grace. Pete could help.

It was taking everything in him not to go to Can's home, to let him have that little bit of privacy.

It didn't take long for him to spill everything, just a few messages in. He was desperate. The very last thing he ever wanted to do was put his feelings out there, to tell anyone anything that made him vulnerable. He trusted Pete, but that didn't mean he wanted him to know personal things - that was how you gave someone something they could use against you. But he needed Can, he needed him to know that it wasn't anything like it seemed.

I know you know Can Kirakorn, is he alright? Has he spoken to you?

He'd start it off like that, slowly before he dropped the bomb. For as long as Pete had known him, Tin hadn't shown interest in anyone. Briefly, so very briefly he'd tried to get Pete to actually date him, not because he saw Pete in that way, but because it was convenient. At the time he hadn't even thought that he liked guys. Not only that, he'd heard about his new boyfriend and had quickly decided he wasn't good enough. Short, poor, two things at the time he'd deemed unworthy. It was his turn to fall for someone of the exact same description, and now he found he didn't care about Can's finances, and he rather liked that he was shorter than him. While he was painfully aware they come from two different worlds, that trying to be with Can was almost like tying an angel to someone who had been painted a devil, he needed him. Maybe Can could be the one person who could prove to the entire world that he wasn't what he seemed.

Interesting, you never message me. I also don't think I've heard you worry about anyone in all the time I've known you.

Sorry though. No one can get a hold of him. Ae spoke to his sister, all he got was that he had his heart broken and wants to be left alone. Do you know something?

He knew something alright, and as much as he didn't want to admit he was the one that had hurt him, as unintentional as it was, he knew he needed to get his side out there. He needed Can to know, but with him wanting to be left alone he wasn't sure Pete would be able to help either. It took him a moment to respond, his chest tightening at the thought of Can hurting so bad he was ignoring everyone. Everyone it seemed, except his sister.

Congratulations, you're about to hear more from me than you want.

Do you or Ae have his sister's number? Or do you think you can try to get a message to her or Can for me? It's my fault. Keep your mouth shut about it unless you need to tell someone to help Can, but I kissed him. Orn saw, the marriage is off, thankfully. I need Can to know that I wasn't trying to hurt him, I just want to be with him. I care about him. A lot. Please... if you find a way, tell him it's a misunderstanding and I don't know... I want him? Not her. It's been him for months.

Saying please felt like begging, and therefore it wasn't something he ever said. In this one instance, he wasn't above begging, he wasn't above getting on his hands and knees to try and prove to Can that he cared, that his heart belonged with him. It was the second time the word had been uttered recently - and both times, it had been for Can.

He wasn't sure what he'd expected to get back when Pete messaged him, but what he got, while true, had him rolling his eyes to the ceiling while an exaggerated sigh escaped him. Pete, sweet, caring Pete, with his pureview of the world, who wanted to see love in everything around him

I'll do my best! I'm glad you love Can, he's a really good guy, he'll understand, I know he will. Don't give up, you'd be great together.

The word love was like a beacon. He didn't want to say he was right, but he felt something stronger for Can than anything he'd ever felt before. So, while he waited, he'd continue to text Can, continue begging. Tul couldn't win this, he thought he had, but Tin wasn't about to give up on the best thing to have ever happened to him.

Chapter End Notes

Next will be the aftermath and back to Can. The big pain is almost over I promise!
Thank you to those sticking on through it.

And he took me to the river where he slowly let me drown

Chapter Summary

Long gone were the days where he'd grab a hold of her and shake, begging for her to help her older brother while also decidedly being as vague about his problem as possible. Her hands on his shoulders forced it all to come crashing down on him, a sharp sob leaving him before he could find an excuse.

Chapter Notes

Hello my loves! I am so sorry for the delay, I've been sick, my allergies are pretty much non-stop and between my ears popping and feeling very lightheaded I've wanted nothing more than to sleep constantly. Still sick, so hopefully I can get better soon so I can get these updated more frequently once again. I know the other fic needs to be updated but this one is a bit more edited right now so I went with the easiest to continue. Please bare with me!

Everything in him felt as though it was crumbling to tiny pieces that weren't big or strong enough to keep him together as a whole person. Every part of him hurt, and Ley had noticed the moment he'd walked through the door and made for the stairs. He was usually pretty good at running past her and his mom so that he could hide away in his room until he felt as though he could face the world again. He'd done it after every lost game in college, but nothing had ever hurt quite like this. Long gone were the days where he'd grab a hold of her and shake, begging for her to help her older brother while also decidedly being as vague about his problem as possible. Her hands on his shoulders forced it all to come crashing down on him, a sharp sob leaving him before he could find an excuse. A hand clasped over his mouth as he tried to fight it, his head slowly shaking to tell her he wasn't okay as tears fell, trailing down his face and over the hand on his mouth. Nothing was okay. His whole body was shaking, without her hands on his shoulders he was sure he would have crumpled at her feet. Somehow she'd managed to drag him up the stairs, though he couldn't see where he was going, nor her, or anything else that was in front of him through the tears that fell down his face and clouded his vision. He found himself sitting on a bed, cradled in her arms as she tried to console him, her hand running softly over his hair. His breath was now coming out in shallow gasps, his lungs unable to take in the air they needed through the sobs, through the cries for Tin to fix him, the cries that went unanswered. "Breathe P'Can, please breathe," her voice was soft, coaxing.

Without warning, everything spilled out of him, everything he'd felt, the fact that he was in love and that love wasn't what it was made out to be. Love hurt, it tore you apart and left you without anything left to hold onto. "Tin, you always asked which I... the answer is Tin, always Tin," he started with another sob, his head finding her shoulder. "I love him Ley, it's so dumb I know I shouldn't, he's engaged, he's rich, he's perfect and I'm so..." dumb? Erratic? Loud? There were so many words he could use that just did not fit the life that Tin had. "I'm so dumb, why can't I ever just do things the right way? Why do I always make everything so messy? Tin he... kissed me and his... she saw it, what do I do Ley? How am I going to go back? How can I even face him? It hurts too much, everything hurts." Ley, to her credit, for all her shipping and all her questions about the Medthanan boys kept quiet, her hand still running over his hair as she let him get it all out.

Can let his face push into her shoulder, a never ending supply of tears falling from his eyes as sounds he'd never heard his body make escaped his throat. Pain wasn't always quiet, it also didn't scream for the world to hear as it did in the movies. The anguish led to strangled gasps for air, feral, desperate cries for help that couldn't be answered because the only person that could mend what was broken was the very same person who had been the cause of the break. It left him there, clung to his little sister as she gently rocked, her own heart going out to him as she tried her hardest to hold together what was impossible to hold. Like trying to hold water, every time she held tighter, a piece of him slipped through a crack that she couldn't have shut in time no matter how hard she tried. A piece of him crashed to the floor with every crack she couldn't mend, crashed to the floor and broke into more pieces, forgotten... because Tin wasn't there to pick them back up and put them where they belonged. Love wasn't a blessing, it was a curse.

He wasn't sure when he'd fallen asleep, but Ley was still beside him, curled up with her head on his shoulder. A glass of water was beside the nightstand, a blanket over him and it took him a moment to realize he was in her room, not his own. A wash rag rested in her hand, just barely touching his arm enough to let him know it was damp. He knew what that meant, she'd done something their mom had always done when they'd been children. Waited until he'd fallen asleep, then gently wiped down his tear soaked face. Through the pain, he felt an overwhelming surge of love for his sister, his silly, boy love loving, ship obsessed little sister. She'd taken care of him, heard things she'd begged to hear from him, watched him fall to pieces in front of her and still had put herself aside to take care of him.

The days that followed the disaster at the Medthanan house were a blur. His mom and sister seemed to take turns caring for him, while he laid in bed and wavered between feeling uncomfortably numb and in so much pain that he would take a football to the head any day over what he now felt. He'd taken enough of those straight to the head to know how bad it hurt, and yet, he'd take a million of them if it stopped what he was going through. He felt dumb, letting an engaged man kiss him, an engaged man that he'd stupidly fallen in love with. He clearly loved Orn or they wouldn't have been together. He'd probably ruined that too. Most of all he hated how at night he dreamed of him kissing him again, of how it felt... and he woke longing for it.

Tul had messaged him the day after he'd left, letting him know he'd heard what had happened and he was sorry, that he could take as much time off as he needed. He still wanted to punch Tul... but at least he was kind about this, and he was taking it. Giving himself at least a week, so he could work towards stomping down the longing, the pain, before he had to face both brothers again.

The longing that came from his dreams was what forced the tears to make their return, it brought with it nothing but heart break. He was terrified of the day he had to return and see Tin again. He rarely moved now from his bed, going to the bathroom was the exception. That was where he now stood, his eyes staring into his own in the mirror as he washed his hands. His eyes were red, puffy, tear tracks down his cheeks which were just as blotchy and red. He hardly recognized the man staring back at him, it wasn't him, it was the shell Tin had left behind.

Just thinking his name was enough to force him to double over, his body finding a new home on the floor as a sob shook him. This wasn't even Tin's fault, he could have stayed there, could have fought for him. He should have at least tried to see if Tin was at all interested, if he had a chance. He hadn't, because hurting another person wasn't in him. That was what this was, he'd hurt Orn, for all the things he didn't like about her, he didn't want to hurt anyone. Now he had a taste of Tin and it was all he wanted, and he couldn't do anything about it, it broke his heart knowing he'd made the decision so quickly to run away. Tin deserved better than him, better than someone who was only strong when it came to fighting for others instead of himself. He was weak, so weak. He could have fought if Tin wanted him too, but he knew, deep in his heart this wasn't what Tin wanted. He wasn't wanted.

His thoughts were confused, a mixture of guilt for wishing he'd stayed and fought despite knowing it would hurt Orn, and regret for not doing just that. He didn't know which feeling to lean on, through the pain he found the two battling in him, one thought entering and the other fighting it's way back in only seconds after.

On the floor was where his mom found him, her hands immediately pulling him into her lap as she joined him, cradling him as she moved his head to his shoulder. He could see Ley's feet in the doorway. The tears that fell now were silent, but they still came as he stared silently at his sister's feet. "No one has told me what happened to make him like this, and I didn't want to push. But it's been days." He didn't have the words, he just let his eyes slip shut. Perhaps he was being over dramatic, perhaps he could find it in himself to push through all the pain but it didn't stop him from wanting Tin. If there was anyone he could fake happiness for though, it was the two women who were with him now.

"Um... I think... love happened to him," and love wasn't as beautiful as he'd always hoped it would be, the rare occasions that he'd actually found himself wanting it. It hurt. He wished it had never come his way, that he could erase it as though it hadn't ever happened. He could feel his mom nodding as she pushed his hair out of his face, a sigh escaping her as she

seemed to turn her attention on Ley. It was clear he wasn't going to add anything to the conversation.

"I thought it might be a girl, I didn't know he even had a girlfriend. It must have been serious, I haven't seen him shed a tear since he was a child," it was a fair assumption, he hadn't told her that he didn't like girls. Ley knew, his friends knew he was gay, but where his mom was concerned that door was still shut tight. There had been a time that girls were all he'd talked about because it was what he thought he wanted, what he thought was normal. Ley had assumed the same thing, often teasing him and threatening to tell their mom where his stash of porn was hidden so he'd do what she wanted. The only reason she found out he was gay... he'd moved the stash and hid it someplace he thought had been better when the magazines full of girls had been replaced with men. Tucked ever so carefully inside a few of his comic books he knew she had no interest in. Ley, his nosy little sister, had been looking for something and found it. Whether or not it was really an accident, she'd knocked one of his comics off the shelf and... his luck of course it opened to a very naked man. She'd never cornered him so fast in his life, and he'd never been pulled to her room so quickly. All so she could do what he could only call a scream whisper of *are you gay* and after she managed to wiggle the information out of him, launch into a full discussion about guys she thought was hot and his opinion on them.

His sister was so weird.

"Yeah... I guess... it's something like that," and he silently thanked her with every part of him that wasn't breaking for keeping it quiet until he was ready.

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In the days that he'd allowed the pain to practically suffocate him, he'd turned his phone off, he'd done so right after he'd gotten the text from Tul telling him he could take time off, after he'd replied that he needed a week then he'd be back. He only turned it back on as he sat on a bus that would take him to a stop as close to the Medthanan mansion as he could get. The moment everything on his phone loaded back up it took nearly the entire ride there to stop buzzing. Messages were from Ae, Pond, Good, Techno, Type... even Pete had messaged to check in on him. Pete, it appeared, had heard from Tin about it, but thankfully he didn't give specifics on what had been said.

Can didn't want to know.

The rest of the messages had been from Tin himself. He knew damn well he shouldn't read them before he walked into his job, but he couldn't resist. There were so many. He rubbed at the back of his neck as he slowly scrolled through them.

Can, where are you? Are you at home?

Are you okay?

Fuck, come on, answer me.

Can please, stop ignoring me.

I'm so sorry, this was not meant to happen this way. Please just talk to me, let me explain.

I can't explain to dead air, Cantaloupe, is your phone even turned on?

I talked to Pete, he said you aren't answering anyone, come on Can you're scaring me.

Pete said he talked to your sister, she said she and your mom are really worried, that it's bad. I didn't mean to hurt you, if you'd just let me explain.

The messages continued like that, his heart hurting more with each one. At some point, as the bus finally stopped, he deleted the messages without reading the rest of them. What was the point in hurting himself more? His first day back, he planned to do everything in his power to avoid Tin. Instead, he was going to stick Tul, and if Tul needed him to do anything in the house without him, he was going to pretend Tin didn't exist if he showed up.

Ley that morning had practically attacked him in his room as soon she realized he was getting ready to go to work. He'd told her he didn't care how he looked, but she'd insisted that once she was done Tin wouldn't be able to keep his hands off of him. It didn't help, it wasn't quite what he wanted - well... it was but he was taken. Once she had an idea though, it was impossible to stop her.

Next thing he knew, he was wearing a pair of dress pants that were form fitting, tighter than he liked which was why he never wore them. Last time he had he'd been graduating. She'd picked a shirt she claimed was his nicest, emerald green in color, and a tie to compliment it. He'd hoped that was all she had planned for him, but next thing he knew she was attacking his hair. He'd never changed it, he always just pulled it forward, let it fall in his eyes, when he tried to pull it so that it did just that she'd smacked his hands away. Next thing he knew it was brushed back, parted slightly to for the first time actually reveal his entire face. If that wasn't bad enough, she'd decided he needed tinted lip balm on top of it. Thanks to her, he was stuck with lips that were ever so slightly tinted red.

"I bet Tin would really love having a super cute, smaller guy with red lips beside him! Just go with it, P'Can!"

He wanted to wipe it off, but she threatened that she'd find out and the knife he hadn't seen in a few years made an appearance. He didn't actually believe she'd ever use it, but she still

terrified him to his very core sometimes, so he listened. He left it as it was though he didn't see the point in any of it.

The moment he walked in, he hurried to the office he knew Tul was probably sitting in. His heart pounded wildly in his chest because it always meant walking past Tin's room. Before that had been his favorite part of the day, this time he found he hated every second of it. Most people went through several stages of grief and he'd been so sure everyone went through them in the same order. For him, it seemed it went into despair, even more despair... and then an unexpected surge of anger that brought despair barreling down on him with it. Half of him wanted to push open the door to scream at him, but he didn't. He focused on the task at hand.

Upon finding Tul, he had to admit he didn't much like the look on his face, the glee he barely just hid under the surface as his eyes moved over his appearance. *The slow nod of approval*. What it meant he didn't know, and he didn't want to know.

When he finally did run into Tin, it seemed the hell Ley had put him through had done something. He'd never seen Tin look so surprised, his mouth had actually hung open as he walked past him, doing everything in his power to pretend he hadn't even seen him. A piece of toast Tin had been holding fell to the ground, and Can actually had to step over it to move past him. He felt his eyes on him the whole way, they burned their way down his spine, and from what he could tell they didn't leave him until he'd turned to walk out of the room. Whatever he'd wanted to say, it was clear he'd lost his train of thought, and as for Can, he sent a quiet little thank you to his favorite girl, his little sister, for the work she'd put in. As ridiculous as it all was.

As ridiculous as she was, his crazy little sister.

And my heart is a hollow place for the devil to dance again

Chapter Summary

As much as he enjoyed the way Tin had looked at him, he made great efforts to avoid him the rest of his shift. The way his heart ached in his chest whenever he was nearby didn't feel worth it. Seeing him brought a flash of anger with it, but the anger was always quickly replaced by despair, the pain that never quite left his chest increasing ten-fold.

Chapter Notes

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

As much as he enjoyed the way Tin had looked at him, he made great efforts to avoid him the rest of his shift. The way his heart ached in his chest whenever he was nearby didn't feel worth it. Seeing him brought a flash of anger with it, but the anger was always quickly replaced by despair, the pain that never quite left his chest increasing ten-fold. Tul didn't make it easy, he seemed keen on working anywhere Tin seemed to frequent in the house, and once or twice he'd actually pulled him along beside him as he passed Tin's room, conveniently just as Tin was going somewhere. Tul hadn't ever touched him before, a professional arm length between them whenever they worked together. Suddenly his hand was on his back when Tin was looking, he stood closer, leaned closer yet when he spoke, and it all left Can feeling uneasy. It felt like he was on display, as though Tul was using him as some kind of show. He didn't like it, but what he didn't like more was the look of hurt that pulled at Tin's face whenever their eyes met, the look that seemed like he'd been slapped whenever he caught sight of Tul with his hand anywhere near him. It didn't make any sense. What cause did he have to hurt? Unless it was just because Tul had done something else to him, in which case he felt like throwing a fist, but it wasn't his place. It never was, he shouldn't have ever been the person Tin confided in. It should have been Orn.

As he was leaving, Ae called, and for the first time since his world had fallen apart he picked it up. He and Pond were going out to the bar they sometimes frequented, just for a few drinks. Half of him wanted to say no, but he also knew he couldn't continue to avoid his friends in his heart break. At home, he showered, ate so he had at least a little something in his stomach, though it wasn't much because his appetite was completely shot, any food that was eaten was forced. Before he had a chance to leave he was once again attacked by Ley in the very same way he had been when he'd left for work.

"Oy Ley! I'm going with Ae and Pond! They don't care how I look, Tin didn't care either-" a blatant lie, but she didn't need to know about the toast incident. He'd mentally thanked her, but that didn't mean she needed to know, "why does it matter anyway, huh, there's no point to

any of this, I'm just trying to forget it all ever happened. Why are you being like this?" He spoke quickly, his voice hushed so that their mom didn't hear from where she was downstairs.

This, this was why he needed to move out.

"Maybe you'll meet someone, you don't know! Maybe I want you to make an effort, don't question me P'Can, just let me do this!" It was with a pout that he let her do this same thing she'd done that morning, but he made it very known how unhappy he was about it. Meeting someone else? Out of the question. Moving on from Tin? Impossible. He talked quietly in anger the entire time she worked. Hair done, the stupid lip balm, and a nicer pair of jeans with a tank top. He fought the jeans, literally kicking them away from him when she presented them, because he'd already been wearing a pair he liked. They were more holes than jeans but he liked them that way. She'd practically beat him with his own jeans until he put them on.

Ley was just impossible.

For most of the day he'd done well, he'd tried really hard to set his pain aside, but it crept up the moment he was meant to be having fun. It attacked him in waves now, it swallowed him whole and pushed him down until he felt like he had a whole ocean pressing down on him. He downed a drink the moment he got there, and while Ae and Pond talked loudly, arguing over something perverted Pond had said, he sat silent, his eyes focused hard on the table without actually seeing it. It felt like his chest was trying to cave in on itself. Out of the corner of his eyes he could see them trying to discreetly watch him, and he found that in his pain, he didn't care much. *Let them see it.* As long as they were silent about it, he didn't care. The only one who wasn't was silent Pete. He'd started to sit beside Ae when he'd arrived but as he noticed him sitting there, silent, tears threatening to form in his eyes, he'd opted to sit beside Can. He hadn't even known that Pete was coming.

"It'll get better, Ai'Can, I know it will," how he knew he didn't understand, and Can finished his drink in one giant gulp - drink number two - before he slowly lifted his gaze to look at Pete. The question of how he knew died on his tongue as he followed his gaze. Tin stared at him from near the doorway, and now Can knew why he thought it would get better. Now he knew why Ley had insisted he look nice, now he knew why Ae and Pond hadn't pushed him to talk. Why they hadn't even seemed confused about his appearance.

It was set up. What were they thinking? How was this at all helpful? How was it that he was the only one that seemed able to remember that Tin was engaged?

Can clenched his jaw for a moment, his eyes blinking quickly as he pushed his chair back and stood. He couldn't do this, he actually couldn't do this, he couldn't be there when Tin was.

The last time they'd been in a setting that was casual, he'd ended up with a broken heart. Through the pain, he felt that surge of anger return. His jaw clenched tighter, his hands balling into fists. The exit to the bar was now closed to him, Tin was in the way and he wasn't willing to walk up to him. He shot an accusatory look in his direction. Instead of going anywhere near him, he turned, his eyes scanning the bar. If he couldn't leave, if he couldn't stand to be close to Tin, maybe someone else was an option. There were plenty of girls, but just as Tin closed the door to the bar, he had closed that door long ago.

He didn't even look at what the guy he'd chosen looked like, he instead marched straight up to him and tugged on his arm. He was sitting alone, so if he had a date there wasn't any harm, he could just turn him down. Rejection hurt a lot less than what he was already going through anyway. He caught Tin's eye before he turned his attention back on the guy. "Do you want to make out with me?" The words flew from his mouth, and off to the side he could hear Pete choking on whatever he'd been eating, and Pond groaning that someone needed to put a filter on him. As if he was one to talk. The guy, whoever he was, didn't look uninterested, what he did look was surprised, maybe scared. It took about two seconds for Can to realize why he might be scared, as he felt his arm pulled, he tripped as he was pulled out of the bar and down the street. His eyes finally landed on Tin's face, he looked angrier than he'd ever seen him, his face actually turning various shades of red.

"Are you crazy?" The simple answer was yes, but he still glared up at him as he pulled his arm away.

"What does it matter to you! Huh?! Where's your fiance? You should be with *her* and not fucking with my head," He shot back, the anger, the pain spilling over, one single tear rolling its way down his cheek as he brushed it impatiently away, his other hand pushing angrily at Tin's chest with an accusatory finger. "Why do you keep fucking with my head?!"

"Are you serious right now? Were you really about to go make out with some random guy? If you'd read your messag-" Can pushed him back again, the pain over taking the anger as more and more tears fell, unchecked, without his permission. He hated every single one of them, but was past the point of being able to stop their flow.

"You don't get to care about what I do, Tin! I can't... you have to stop, I can't," the words were broken, his voice cracking as pain clenched around his heart like an iron fist. It wasn't like him to break so easily, *what was Tin doing to him?* He knew the answer before he had even finished the question... he was breaking his heart. Over and over again. The arms around him were unexpected, just as they'd been the day he'd told him about Tul. Can struggled against it, his body tensing as he tried to push away. For the briefest moment, he pressed his face into his chest, his teeth pressed hard together before he gasped for air and pushed hard against his chest.

“Can, stop... wait a minute let me explain, we need to talk about this,” he needed to get away, he needed Tin to stop touching him, and he needed his friends, his sister to stay out of this part of his life, to stop trying to play matchmaker. It hurt, how could they not see how badly it hurt?

“You don’t get to hug me either!” He cried out, deciding he didn’t give a single fuck that he was creating a scene. “I already liked you, don’t you get it, I was trying to push down my feelings but you won’t let me! You’re always there, Orn figured out how I felt, why couldn’t you?! What do you think you’re doing? If this is some kind of game to you, just fuck off, you can fuck right off because I can’t do this anymore! It fucking hurts!” His hands had balled into fists, hitting against Tin’s chest as he struggled against it, crying out in his anguish

“I broke it off with Orn, I ended it, it wasn’t even real, not in the way you thought it was. It was about business, it was all written in a contract.” Can let his eyes shut as the words washed over him, his fists slowing until they fell limp at his sides, his face back pressed into the other man’s chest as he tried to breathe. Everything seemed to click into place in his head at such a rapid pace that it overwhelmed him. That was why she always looked so angry when he interrupted them right before they kissed... it was all new. She hadn’t ever gotten to kiss him. How dumb could he be? “I don’t know what idea’s you’ve built up in your head about why I kissed you, or what was happening with Orn, but I can promise you they’re not only all wrong but they’re damn stupid. Seriously, were you really going to just go kiss some random guy?”

It fit the damn mood that he felt a few drops of rain fall on his cheeks as Tin spoke. He took in a breath, all the anger slowly melting from his face as confusion took over. “Why did you kiss me?” He questioned, his voice soft as the rain started to pour harder. He didn’t care, he was going to stand right there and talk this out, Tin said he wanted to talk about it, so he was going to stubbornly stand there with his face pressed into his chest until they were done... at least the rain masked some of the tears.

“The same reason I wanted you at the party, the same reason you’re the first person I text every day. You realize I don’t need to be at home when you work, I have places I can go... but I hang around hoping my brother will send you, because I want to see you. I want to be with you. I want you, but if you’d rather go kiss whoever that was...” He hated more than anything that Tin didn’t sound angry, he sounded disappointed, sad... and Can hated that he’d misunderstood everything. But what else was he supposed to think when no one had ever given him the truth about Tin and Orn’s relationship? He scowled as he saw Tin gesture back towards the bar out of the corner of his eye, he didn’t need to say the words, he knew exactly what he was saying. *You want to go make out with some random guy, be my guest.*

This was why he didn’t like relationships. This was why he ran from them before anything could happen, for fear of this sort of pain, of jealousy, of not understanding one another to the point that one of them acted out. “I wasn’t going to kiss him, Tin,” he pushed his hair, now

soaked from the rain back out of his face, sniffing slightly before he rubbed at his eyes, his face finally leaving his chest “I wanted to make you mad. I only want to kiss you, I thought it was serious with Orn, you were engaged, I thought you loved her.” He had no reason to believe otherwise, an engagement ring usually only meant one thing, that it was given out of love. Can let his eyes run over Tin’s face as stared up at him, desperately trying to find truth in his eyes, in everything that he’d said.

Can buried his face in his shoulder now instead, his hands resting on his back as he let his eyes fall shut. This was where he was meant to be, not hiding from him, not pretending he cared so little that he wanted to kiss someone else, but in his arms. “Come on, you crazy idiot,” He heard the words murmured into his hair, just audible above the sound of the rain hitting the pavement. “Let’s get out of here, let me take you to my place for a bit? Before we both catch a cold.”

Chapter End Notes

Slowly starting to get better, so I can both get back to writing and editing. Thank you for your patience <3 I'm working on responding to the comments as well! Appreciate you all.

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