

The Fundamentals of Caring

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/8976517) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/8976517>.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Yuri!!! on Ice (Anime)
Relationships:	Katsuki Yuuri & Victor Nikiforov , Katsuki Yuuri/Victor Nikiforov
Characters:	Katsuki Yuuri , Victor Nikiforov , Yuri Plisetsky
Additional Tags:	sick!yuuri , Sickfic , in which Viktor and Yuuri are in Russia , Fluff , Hurt/Comfort , Sick Yuuri , and Yuuri gets a cold and becomes very delirious / touchy , and Viktor has absolutely no idea what to do with him , (and Yurio is secretly concerned but acts like he doesn't care) , Domestic
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of in sickness & in health
Collections:	BestOfTheBestFanfics , Rain Recs , Pat's fave fanfics of all time , Mint's Saved Fics , Ashes' Library
Stats:	Published: 2016-12-23 Completed: 2016-12-24 Words: 20,878 Chapters: 2/2

The Fundamentals of Caring

by [braveten](#)

Summary

“Let me guess, you’re going to go take care of Yuuri while he sleeps? Just in case he sneezes or something?” Yurio rolls his eyes, folding his arms across his chest. “Viktor, you’re whipped.”

Viktor rubs the back of his neck as he leans against the wall. “What does that mean?”

“It means that if Yuuri asked you to do a little dance for him in nothing but a coconut bra and a hula skirt, you’d do it.”

Viktor pauses, confused. “And that’s a bad thing?”

[chinese](#)

Notes

SO THE SEASON FINALE HAPPENED. I am still not over it. That ending watered my crops, cleared my skin, ruined & saved me simultaneously, etc. Anyway, I started writing this before the finale, and I really hope you enjoy it! It will be two parts in total and MA in the second chapter.

Be sure to leave a comment and let me know what you think & thanks for reading! :D

(Also, there is a bit of Russian/Japanese in here for the plot, and alas I am monolingual so if there are any mistakes please feel free to blame Google Translate / let me know!!)

- Translation into 中文-普通话 國語 available: [照顧人的基本原理](#) by [betty5271](#)

The Cold

“Viktor, I’m dying.”

Viktor’s fingers, which were currently tapping against the counter at a local cafe in St. Petersburg, freeze. “*What?*”

On the other end of the line there’s a sniffle, then a cough. Then silence. Bare silence. Viktor glances down at his phone and realizes that Yuuri has hung up on him. It takes less than a second for his thoughts to shift into worst-case-scenario mode, downward spiraling into a dark abyss.

“Everything alright?” the barista asks innocently, raising an eyebrow.

(He forgets the coffee.)

He runs back to his flat, where he’d stupidly left Yuuri alone in a foreign country he’d never even been in before. He could be dead or hurt or something *worse*, and yet here Viktor was, getting *coffee*. He should’ve waited for Yuuri to wake up first, should’ve taken him with him. Definitely, definitely should not have left him alone.

He swings the door to his flat open and doesn’t bother to check if it shuts behind him, eyes flickering around the foyer immediately for any signs of Yuuri. Eventually, he sees signs of life on the couch in the form of a barely visible tuft of black hair.

“Yuuri?” he asks, hurrying to the front of the couch to get a better look.

He definitely *looks* dead. His cheeks are pale and his mouth is open as he sleeps, a tiny bit of drool glistening on the corner of his lips. Viktor feels his heart skip a beat as he assesses the situation, notices the way that Yuuri doesn’t react at all to the sound of his own name.

There’s a cold sweat on Viktor’s palms and he wipes them on the front of his jeans, kneeling down in front of the couch and shaking Yuuri’s shoulder gently. He can see his chest rising and falling and he lets out a sigh of relief. He’s alive. Alive. “Yuuri?”

The younger man’s eyes blink open slowly, as if the task requires an exorbitant amount of effort. “Vik-tor?”

Viktor wasn’t sure why he was saying his name like that, the syllables oddly detached, but he nods anyway, placing the back of his hand on Yuuri’s forehead. His skin feels hot to the touch—like coal in a stove. “What happened?”

“I woke up and everything hurts,” Yuuri explains simply, eyes shutting again as he rolls onto his stomach, causing Viktor to pull his hand away.

“What hurts?” Viktor insists, because he knows where the nearest hospital is, knows the fastest route and is already preparing a method to carry Yuuri to the nearest taxi and

wondering how much money he'd have to pay the driver in order to get him to speed and run every red light to get them there as quickly as possible and—

“Stomach. Head. Chest. Throat. Everything's hot, then cold. It all hurts. Do you... aspirin?” Yuuri's voice is muffled by the couch pillows.

Viktor blinks, then takes action. He hurries to his cabinets, sorting through them, and surely, *surely* he has an aspirin, right? After he has sorted through every drawer, every possible location, he rubs at his forehead, annoyed with himself.

“I'll get some,” he offers. “Can you wait here for five minutes? I'll be as quick as possible. There's a pharmacy just down the block.”

“Don't leave,” Yuuri begs, and his voice is higher than usual, desperation dripping from his tone. “I don't need aspirin, it's fine.”

Viktor wavers, trying to think on his feet. “I'll get somebody to get some.”

“Who?”

Viktor pulls out his phone and turns to his contacts. Somebody in St. Petersburg. Yakov? Mila? No, there's another person he can count on.

(Well, he can't *count* on him, but he can trust him.)

(Well, he can't trust him either, but he'll do.)

“Yurio?”

“That's not my name.”

Viktor pinches the bridge of his nose. He *really* doesn't have time for this. “*Yuri*.”

The black-haired Yuuri looks up from the couch, his cheeks flushed far, far too red for Viktor's liking and his bangs falling in front of his eyes in a way that hardly looks comfortable. “Yeah?”

“Talking to the other Yuri,” Viktor explains, offering him a sympathetic smile.

“Oh, hi Yurio,” Yuuri calls, then breaks out into a coughing fit, and Viktor hurries over to the couch, watching him and unsure of how to help. He feels like a fish out of water, awkwardly resting a hand on Yuuri's shoulder and keeping the phone gripped to his cheek with the other.

“Yuuri is staying with you while you two visit St. Petersburg?” Yurio demands, sounding annoyed.

Viktor rubs the back of his neck. “Yes, and I need a favor. Could you bring us some aspirin? And some other medicine, too. I'll pay you back for whatever you bring. He's not feeling well.”

There's an awkward silence.

"Let me get this straight. You want me to drop what I'm doing, go to the store, buy medicine, and come bring it to you because Yuuri has a *headache*?"

Viktor stares at Yuuri, his heart hurting as he watches him tug a blanket up to his neck, staring straight up towards the ceiling, his eyes looking glazed over and unfocused. "That's exactly what I want," Viktor answers.

Another pause. A sigh.

"Alright. Give me, like, a half hour. You'll owe me one, Nikiforov."

"Is Yurio coming?" Yuuri asks before coughing again.

Viktor takes a moment to fully take in Yuuri's appearance, his initial panic having dampened since Yuuri seemingly isn't about to die on his couch. His hair is a rat's nest, the black strands tangled and messy and sticking out in every direction. His glasses have been discarded on the coffee table, and Viktor figures that explains the slightly squinty look in his eyes. Everything about him is just slightly *off*. Slightly *not Yuuri*.

"He's coming," Viktor assures him. "He's going to bring medicine. I'll text him and tell him to bring food for you as well. Maybe soup?"

"I don't want food," Yuuri whines, shoving his face back into the pillow. "Just thinking about food makes me sick."

"Even pork cutlet bowls?" Viktor tries, offering a smile that Yuuri can't see anyway.

"Even pork cutlet bowls."

That's when Viktor realizes that Yuuri is truly, truly sick. He's just glad that there's no competitions in the immediate future—they'd simply come here after Rostelecom as a sort of training-vacation. They can easily cancel their flight back to Japan and reschedule it if need be. And, judging by the way that Yuuri has already fallen back asleep, it appears as though the need is there.

Viktor watches him for a moment, noticing just how *small* he looks as he lays there on the couch, his arms tucked against his chest. Viktor sits down on the side of the couch beside him, rubbing his shoulder and smiling as the younger man instinctively leans into the touch, his head bumping into Viktor's thigh.

~

Twenty minutes later, the doorbell rings, and Viktor sprints to answer it. "Thank you so much for coming," he praises, accepting the bag of items from him. He pours out the contents on

the counter.

Aspirin, anti-inflammatories, cough drops, *everything*.

Viktor could kiss Yurio—if he wasn't fifteen and annoyed by seemingly everything that Viktor did.

Then, he peeks in another bag that had been pushed off to the side and sees a tub of chocolate peanut butter ice cream. Viktor stares at him, a smile playing on his lips as he realizes. Yuri Plisetsky had willingly, of his own accord and without prompt, bought Yuuri Katsuki ice cream.

The sight warmed his heart.

“What?” Yurio demanded, folding his arms across his chest.

Viktor lets the smile consume his features, rocking back on his heels as they make eye contact, neither of them wavering. “Nothing.”

“What?” Yurio repeats, hands now balling up into small fists.

“I didn't say anything.”

“You're *thinking* something. I just thought he'd like ice cream. It's not a big deal, alright? You're paying for that, too, by the way.”

Viktor places a hand on his shoulder and squeezes, feeling perhaps too much satisfaction from the way Yurio cringes as if he'd been burned. “It was nice of you.”

“Whatever. Where is the sick pig, anyway?”

Viktor gestures towards the couch and follows Yurio as he approaches the sleeping man, staring wide-eyed. “He was sleeping when I went to get coffee this morning, then I got a phone call and found him like this,” Viktor explains.

“He *is* out of it,” Yurio comments, whistling. “Isn't your flight tomorrow?”

Viktor waves a hand. “I could move it. We'll see.”

“Well, I'm going to raid your fridge,” Yurio explains, walking over to the kitchen and making himself at home.

Viktor just smiles.

Yurio turns around after a moment, as though feeling Viktor's eyes on him, and scowls.

“*What*, Viktor?”

“You bought Yuuri ice cream.”

“Shut up!”

~

When Yuuri wakes up, there's some sort of ambient noise in the room.

Everything aches. Every bone in his body. Bones he hadn't even known existed. The white noise around him batters his eardrums as he sits up, grabbing onto the arm of the couch for support. Suddenly, there's a hand on his forearm and he allows it to help him up until he's sitting upright, back pressing into the soft cushions.

A couch? And whose hand was that?

Where is he, again?

He glances up and there are gorgeous blue eyes staring at him.

(Gorgeous. Blue. They look like crystals. Magical crystals. Like something out of a video game, he thinks. Or sapphires? Or wait, were sapphires a dark blue or a light blue? Dark blue, maybe. Probably. So not sapphires.)

For a second, he manages to forget about the pain in his head, but then it's back and the world turns blurry and he just keeps staring at the pair of eyes, sinking back into the couch. "Hello," he greets, and his voice comes out scratchy. He clears his throat, but the effort just ends up turning into another cough. Luckily, though, the figure doesn't move, remains right where it is.

"Yuuri," Viktor's voice is saying, and there's still a hand on his arm, he realizes, rubbing it. It feels nice. Soothing.

"Hi," he greets again lazily, trying to smile but unsure if the mental effort is reaching his lips. He supposes it works, because suddenly Viktor is smiling back at him, and since when was Viktor so attractive?

(Oh right—since always. He'd just forgotten.)

"How are you feeling?"

He squints at Viktor, realizing he's not wearing his glasses and that the other man has shifted far away enough so that he's blurry, now. "Where are my glasses?" he asks, glancing around.

His eyes land on a blond figure, who waves at him. "I was starting to think you were dead, Katsuki," the figure says.

"Yurio?" he asks.

"That's not my..." Yurio starts, but Viktor shoots him a look and the sentence ends abruptly. "Hey."

Yuuri stares at him, confused. “What’re you doing here?”

“I brought you medicine,” he explains, then smirks. “While your boyfriend here watched over you.”

His head burns. Boyfriend? He had a *boyfriend*? Then he follows Yurio’s gaze, all the way to... Oh. Viktor. Viktor Nikiforov. His coach. Boyfriend, now? He looks at Viktor for confirmation, but he is already walking away. And why would Viktor be walking away? Why would his boyfriend—or coach?—be walking away?

“Viktor,” he whines, well, he hadn’t intended to whine, but it had sort of come out that way.

“I’m going to get you some medicine. Do you think you can swallow a pill?”

He nods.

“Yuuri?” Viktor asks, looking over his shoulder as he digs through the pharmacy bag.

“He nodded,” Yurio explains. “I think he’s still out of it.”

“Out of what?” Yuuri asks, rubbing at his temple, which hurts, too, and why does everything hurt? What is happening?

“Nothing,” Yurio responds.

Then, suddenly, the blue eyes are back and Yuuri leans closer to get a better look. The movement is a bad idea, because suddenly he’s falling forward and his hands dart out to catch himself on the coffee table, nausea swirling in his stomach.

“Easy, there,” Viktor’s voice says, and arms help him back up.

Strong, gentle arms. Possibly the strongest arms he’s ever felt in his life. Viktor must work out. A lot. How else would he be so strong? Because he skated, obviously he skated, but that just meant he had really, really strong legs, too. “Do you work out?”

Viktor smiles at him, Yurio is cackling, but Yuuri doesn’t know why. Viktor holds something out towards him. “Okay, swallow this. Here’s water.”

(It bothers Yuuri that he didn’t answer his question. Was it a secret?)

With shaking hands, he takes the pill and manages to swallow it on his second attempt, washing it down with the water before collapsing back on the couch, suddenly freezing cold. Because of the water, probably. The water had been cold, then he’d drank some of it, and now he was cold. He grabs for his blanket and brings it up to his shoulders but it’s not nearly enough. “Cold in here,” he mumbles, trying to warm himself.

“You’ve got a fever,” Viktor tells him, and there’s something to his voice, something that Yuuri could probably decipher if he wasn’t in the process of dying.

“Cold,” Yuuri simply repeats, his eyes falling shut because he doesn’t have the energy to keep them open anymore and he’s just so, *so* tired. More tired than he thinks he’s ever been in his life.

And then nothing happens for a minute.

There’s just the sound of his teeth chattering.

Then, suddenly, another blanket is draped around his shoulders. He hums and burrows into it, yawning again. “We’ve got our flight soon?” he asks Viktor, though he’s not sure where he is, if he’s even still in the room.

(He hopes that Viktor is still in the room. Surely he would be, right?)

He jumps when Viktor’s voice is right beside him. “I’ll move it. Find us another one.”

“Another flight?”

“Another flight,” Viktor confirms.

“But we’ve gotta get back to...”

Where were they going again? And where are they right now? China? No—that’s not right. China had been ages ago. He’d just finished a competition somewhere else, but where had it been?

“To Japan?” Viktor finishes.

“Where are we?” Yuuri asks.

“Wow,” Yurio comments, and Yuuri can see him in the corner of his eyes, making a face at Viktor. “What did you *do* to him?”

“Nothing!” Viktor protests, raising his hands. “I think he’s just sleepy.”

Now *that* Yuuri can agree with. He’s exhausted. The pull of sleep is a force to be reckoned with. The blankets are soft and Viktor’s voice is calming and *everything* in his body is begging for him to sleep right now. He yawns again before he can help it.

“Viktor?” he asks, reaching towards Viktor’s arm before realizing that his depth perception is completely thrown off and Viktor’s arm was actually much farther away than he’d anticipated. How annoying.

Luckily, Viktor—genius, gorgeous Viktor—moves closer. “Yes?”

He tugs on Viktor’s arm and he seems to get the message, sitting closer to him. Yuuri lowers himself so that his head is on Viktor’s arm—no, not his arm. His chest? No. That’s not right, either.

Oh, he's on his lap. His head is on his lap and one of Viktor's hands is on his shoulder and the other is in his hair and why are there strange noises coming from Yurio? What is happening?

He decides to ask Viktor.

"Nothing's happening," Viktor assures him.

His fingers drift through his hair and Yuuri strains to open his eyes to see him in the light but it only lasts a second before he shuts them again, yawning and wondering how Viktor's lap is more comfortable than any pillow he'd ever experienced before. The cold is gone, now, the warmth from Viktor's hands and blankets more than enough.

Yuuri decides to believe him and goes back to sleep.

~

Viktor stares at the man currently sleeping with his head on his lap, wondering if Yuuri will disappear if he takes his hands off of him. It feels sort of like a dream, the ephemeral kind that one never wants to wake up from. He ignores Yurio's many, *many* comments about the situation and just smiles at Yuuri, wishing he'd feel better but also guiltily enjoying the intimacy.

"Can we keep playing video games now?" Yurio complains.

"You'll have to pass me my controller," Viktor informs him, gesturing towards Yuuri.

Yurio pretends to gag, but passes it anyway.

~

Yuuri wakes up again an hour later. Viktor smiles down at him, but quickly pastes his eyes back to the television, knowing that Yurio will show him no mercy if he doesn't pay attention to the game for a single instant. Yuuri yawns beneath him, squirming, and Viktor dies in the game, causing Yurio to let out a victorious cheer.

He figures it's worth it to reach down and touch Yuuri's hair, stroking the soft strands with his fingers. Yuuri hums and cuddles into him, wrapping an arm around Viktor's torso. Viktor wonders if it's possible to die from love.

"Your relationship sure has changed since I came to Japan," Yurio tells him, and Viktor notices he's talking in Russian—quick Russian.

Yuuri blinks beneath him, turning his head towards Yurio. “What’d you say?”

“Changed how?” Viktor responds in Russian, cupping Yuuri’s cheek comfortingly, successfully quieting him and causing him to nuzzle into the touch. Viktor feels warmth spread throughout his body and looks down at him, part of him never wanting to leave Russia, wanting to stay in his flat with Yuuri forever.

“A lot touchier,” Yurio informs him. “It’s like you’ve found yourself another poodle.”

Viktor shifts on the couch, Yuuri giggles a bit when he’s jostled by the movement. “Well, he’s sick.”

“Is that Russian?” the man on his lap inquires.

“You know that’s not what I mean,” Yurio comments, ignoring Yuuri. “I noticed it at Rostelecom, too. Not to mention on Instagram. Is there anything you want to tell me?”

And, suddenly, Viktor uncovers his meaning. “Oh, we’re not... We haven’t... No, Yuuri and I aren’t like that.”

“I heard my name,” Yuuri points out, and Viktor knows that he speaks a bit of Russian but either they’re talking too fast or Yuuri is far, far too out of it to comprehend anything other than his name. “Are you talking about me?”

“Are you hungry?” Viktor asks in English, changing the subject. “Or thirsty?”

“No,” Yuuri answers, and he cuddles closer into Viktor, pressing his face against—oh. Viktor freezes, a breath catching in his throat. Yuuri was pressed against his abdomen, but his cheek was now resting on a very risky part of his body. Yuuri doesn’t seem to notice the problem because he sighs, and his breath is hot against Viktor’s chest and it only makes everything worse. “You’re comfy.”

“Comfy?” Viktor repeats slowly.

Yurio snickers. “See what I mean?”

“Absolutely not,” Viktor answers in Russian, pushing some of Yuuri’s hair out of his eyes. Then, he switches back to English. “Do you need anything? Are you feeling any better?”

“Head still hurts. A little less, though. But now I’m hot.”

Viktor peels blankets off of Yuuri one at a time and Yuuri sighs in contentment, his lips drifting innocuously against Viktor’s navel through his shirt. Viktor considers the precariousness of the situation and uses all of his power to keep the situation the way that it should be: completely innocent. He’s sick, after all.

Completely, completely innocent.

(Which is practically impossible given the current location of Yuuri’s head.)

(And it's as though Yurio *knows*.)

Viktor needs to get out of this situation as quickly as possible. “Yuuri?”

“Mmm?”

The vibrations from his humming are too much to handle. Viktor takes in a sharp breath. He won't be able to keep himself under control for much longer in this scenario, and he knows that if Yuuri brushes against something hard and says something, he'll never hear the end of it. “Let's walk you to my bed, okay? You can sleep there.”

“Can't walk,” Yuuri complains.

Yurio laughs. “Oh—this ought to be good.”

Viktor considers his options. Then, he scoops up Yuuri in his arms—one supporting his shoulders and the other under his knees, and lifts him upwards with ease. Yuuri looks shocked initially, but the moment they start walking he wraps his arms around Viktor's neck, hugging him gently.

Viktor considers the pros and cons of never setting him down. Of staying in this position for eternity.

“Nice muscles, Viktor. Do you work out?” Yurio comments and Viktor rolls his eyes, carrying Yuuri to the bedroom. “Can't be easy to carry a weight like that.”

Luckily, he said the last part in Russian.

Viktor fumes.

“What is Yurio saying?” Yuuri asks, blinking up at him through dark lashes, his eyes tired, lines visible beneath them. “I wish you two wouldn't talk in Russian. I can't keep up.”

“I'm sorry, I won't anymore,” Viktor promises him, pressing a kiss to his hair. Yuuri smiles at him sleepily.

“It's like if I always talked in Japanese,” Yuuri babbles, and Viktor is fairly certain he doesn't even know that he's still talking out loud. “You wouldn't be able to understand me. あんたは僕にとって、今まで見た中で一番綺麗な人だ。”

“What does that mean?”

Yuuri just starts giggling.

Viktor frowns, setting him down on the bed. “Under or on top of the covers?”

“あなたの下に。”

“English?”

“Under.”

He tugs down the covers and helps Yuuri wiggle underneath them. Yuuri smiles when he finally gets comfortable, staring up at Viktor with a look that should be illegal, in Viktor’s opinion, because it’s constricting his lungs and turning his stomach and everything about him is just so ridiculously *charming*. “Viktor?”

“Hmm?”

“Thanks for taking care of me.”

Viktor feels his heart soar in his chest and he reaches down to touch Yuuri, his fingers drifting across his cheekbone. Yuuri’s eyes close in response to the touch, his jaw slack. “Of course.”

“Would you stay?”

Viktor falters, remembering Yurio in the room next door and biting his lip. “Er...”

“Please?”

When he sees Yuuri’s pouty lower lip extended to full, Viktor-convincing capacity, he knows he doesn’t stand a chance. “Okay, just give me one minute.”

Yurio raises an eyebrow at him when he walks into the living room. The blond had started the game again and was currently kicking around Viktor’s unmoving, defenseless character. “Let me guess, you’re going to go take care of him while he sleeps? Just in case he sneezes or something?”

“Yurio...”

“Viktor, you’re whipped.”

Viktor rubs the back of his neck, leaning against the wall. “What does that mean?”

“It means that if Yuuri asked you to do a little dance for him in nothing but a coconut bra and a hula skirt, you’d do it.”

“Is that a bad thing?”

Yurio just rolls his eyes, turning back to his game. Viktor isn’t sure if he’s annoyed at the fact that Viktor *would* do a dance in a hula skirt for Yuuri or that he still doesn’t quite understand the term ‘whipped.’ Probably both. “Depends.”

“On?”

The boy shrugs. “Dunno, just depends. But go ahead. I won’t stop you.” Then he grins. “I just won’t let you live it down.” He turns his voice into a horrible, inaccurate impression of Yuuri’s. “Oh, Viktor, would you be my coach? Oh, Viktor, would you sleep with me while I’m sick? Would you feed me pork cutlet bowls and stroke my hair? Read me a bedtime story?”

Viktor frowns, rocking back on his heels. “That sounded nothing like him.”

“That’s funny, it did to me.”

“Goodbye, Yurio.”

“That’s not my name!”

~

“You’re back,” Yuuri smiles when he sees those blue eyes again, instantly reaching out his arms for Viktor, because how’s he supposed to sleep without him? And how’s he supposed to get better if he doesn’t sleep? It’s basic arithmetic. He needs Viktor.

And then Viktor is laying down beside him and everything is right in the world as he wraps his arms around him, cuddling against Viktor immediately, his presence providing an instant warmth that no amount of blankets could give him. “Are you surprised?” Viktor asks, and Yuuri has no clue what he means.

“Surprised by what?”

Viktor just laughs. Yuuri doesn’t get the joke, but he laughs, too.

“Nothing.”

Yuuri’s hand moves to Viktor’s hair and his fingers run through the strands, the sensation long and endearing, Viktor sighs as he leans into the bed, letting his eyes fall shut. “Your hair is soft,” Yuuri mumbles against his shoulder.

Viktor smiles. “Is it?”

“And so’s your skin,” Yuuri informs him seriously. “You’re so pretty, Viktor. The prettiest person I’ve ever met. 非常にきれい.”

He freezes, staring down at the top of Yuuri’s head. “I’m the prettiest person you’ve ever met?”

“Mmm,” Yuuri agrees. “I love you.”

Oh.

Oh.

Viktor licks his lips. Obviously Yuuri is out of it and doesn’t even know what he’s saying. Obviously none of this means anything. Viktor tries to detach himself from his words, simply enjoy delirious Yuuri and not take any of his words to heart.

“Do you love me, Viktor?”

He shifts on the bed, wondering if Yuuri will remember any of this the following day. “I do.”

(Why not be honest?)

Yuuri grins and kisses his chest through his shirt, the action innocent in every possible way and yet it sends an involuntary shiver down Viktor’s spine. “Yuuri, you really ought to sleep.”

“Can’t sleep,” Yuuri complains.

“Why not?”

“Don’t want to.”

“...And why’s that?”

He responds by sneaking a hand up Viktor’s shirt, his fingers splaying across his abdomen. Yuuri’s fingertips are like ice against his warm skin and he jumps a little, making Yuuri giggle uncontrollably. He shifts on the bed, unsure as to whether or not he should move closer to Yuuri or farther away.

(He knows what he *wants* to do, but he’s not sure what he *should* do.)

(He moves closer.)

“Because you’re here,” Yuuri responds, like it’s obvious, like Viktor is the one with the jumbled thoughts right now. “Why would I sleep if you’re here?”

“Because you need to feel better.”

“Oh.”

Viktor regrets his words when Yuuri removes his hand from underneath Viktor’s shirt, tucking it back against his chest and sighing gently, eyes fluttering shut. “Goodnight, Yuuri.”

“I told you I’m not going to sleep.”

As Yuuri yawns again, Viktor smiles at his cute, pointless protest. Within a few minutes, his breaths have evened out and his lips are parted. Viktor hugs Yuuri against his chest and pulls his phone out of his pocket, ready to cancel their flight for the following day.

~

When Yuuri wakes up, there’s a distinct, Viktor-shaped void beside him. He groans and presses the heels of his hands to his eyelids, head aching. Why does his head hurt so bad? Had he hit it on something? “Viktor?” he calls, glancing around the room.

Where is he, anyway?

The bed has light blue sheets, like the color of ice, Yuuri thinks, and the walls are bare and boring. There's a desk in the corner that looks as though it has never been used, and the only item of character is the wardrobe, which has one door ajar and reveals a glimpse of a rack of clothing. The object appears to be stuffed to the brim.

Yuuri sits up and regrets it immediately. Nausea swirls in his stomach and he groans, leaning forward and placing his hands on his knees. Dead inside. He stands on wobbly legs—hungry, that's it, he's hungry—and leans on the wardrobe.

He's hot, too. He needs to take this long-sleeved t-shirt off. It's going to be the death of him. So he pulls it over his chest and sorts through the wardrobe, finding a simple white t-shirt and tugging it on before he has a chance to die of exhaustion or heat.

Then he fumbles with the doorknob. It won't open. His hands seem to slip right off of the metal. Some sort of trick? Witchcraft? No—it's probably locked. Has to be locked. Is there a key? A key, somewhere?

What if he'd been locked in here on purpose? Who would do that? He knocks on the wood, then waits for a response.

The door opens. A miracle. "It wasn't locked," a voice informs him.

Not-Viktor stands in front of him.

What's his name again? Is it Not-Viktor? No—that's not a real name, is it? He squints hard, the blond figure blurring in front of him. "Who're you?"

Not-Viktor raises an eyebrow. "You don't know who I am?"

"Yurio!" he realizes suddenly, smiling and leaning against the doorway for support. "Are you... What is..."

He frowns, forgetting what he was going to say. What was happening again? Where had he gotten this t-shirt? Maybe he was still sleeping. That would explain a lot. But why would he be dreaming about Yurio? Normally he dreamt about Viktor.

"Viktor went to go get you some muffins. Something about making you feel better. We've already got ice cream, so I don't know what he was thinking, really. Although you *do* look worse."

'Viktor' and 'went.' Those are the only two words that Yuuri manages to process. "Not here?"

Yurio looks sympathetic. It's an unfamiliar look. "Not here," he confirms.

"Alright," Yuuri responds, moving out of the door and past Yurio, looking around. "What are you doing here?"

“I brought you medicine, remember?”

Yuuri remembers, but he’d thought it was a dream. In the dream, Yurio had been there, and so had Viktor, and he’d slept on Viktor’s lap and then somebody had carried him to that bed and fallen asleep beside him. Had it been Yurio? No—Yurio wouldn’t sleep with him. Hopefully. That’d be weird.

“Did you sleep with me?” Yuuri asks, yawning and sitting down on the couch, staring at the blank television screen and wondering why nothing is playing, because he wants something to be playing and yet nothing is happening. Shouldn’t it be turning on?

“What?”

Yuuri squints at Not-Viktor again. Wait. Yurio. Not Not-Viktor. “Last night?”

“It’s three in the afternoon.”

Yuuri just groans and buries his face in the couch. “What day?”

“Monday.”

It takes Yuuri a moment to realize that this information has not helped him whatsoever. If anything, he’s more confused. “And we’re in Russia?”

“I don’t know why I’m talking to you. This is a lost cause.”

Yurio sits on the couch across from him, watching him with a curious expression, like somebody studying something. Yuuri just smiles at him, hoping that he’ll smile back, but he doesn’t. He still looks sort of sympathetic. Why would he be sympathetic? Makes no sense.

“Viktor slept with you, by the way.”

“Viktor *Nikiforov*?” Yuuri asks, shocked. Because that had been in his dream, so it couldn’t have actually happened. Besides, Viktor Nikiforov was...

Not-Viktor laughs and Yuuri has no idea why. “No, the *other* Viktor,” he says, and he’s smiling, now. Slightly less sympathetic. More amused. Amused by what? The other Viktor? Was the other Viktor funny?

“Oh, the other Viktor,” Yuuri repeats, trying to think of any other Viktors that he knows. He can’t think of any, but Yurio is still smiling, so he figures that he must be telling the truth. “Alright.”

“Do you want tea or something? Ice cream, maybe?” Yurio offers, and he’s looking down at his fingernails, now. Yuuri wonders what about his fingernails is so interesting. He strains his head to see but he can’t get a good look from over here.

Ice cream, he thinks. Ice cream would be... “What flavor ice cream?”

“Chocolate peanut butter. It’s my favorite.”

“I want some,” Yuuri confirms.

Yurio stands up and leaves. Then, he comes back a minute later with a bowl and a spoon.
“Here you go.”

He grins at Yurio, and what’s that English word again? “Thanks,” he remembers, grasping the bowl and sitting up to eat it. He digs in immediately and the taste of the chocolate and peanut butter mixture is frankly overwhelming. He wonders if this is what heaven tastes like. Wonders if this is the best thing in the world. Wonders why everyone on Earth isn’t eating peanut butter chocolate ice cream at all times.

Yurio is smiling at him. It’s an expression he’d seen earlier. A weird smile. One that didn’t suit his face. “Good?” he asks.

“Great,” Yuuri answers.

“So tell me about you and Viktor,” Yurio asks, and he’s smiling even bigger now, and his voice doesn’t sound like Yurio’s normal voice, and why is he holding a phone? The phone is pointed at him.

“Me and Viktor?” Yuuri repeats, frowning. “Viktor Nikiforov or the other Viktor?”

Yurio frowns, suddenly. “Who is the other Viktor? There’s another Viktor?”

Yuuri has never been more confused in his life. “What?”

The blond boy waves his hand, dismissing the subject. “Nikiforov.”

“I love him,” Yuuri answers simply, shutting his eyes and remembering his dream, remembering Viktor’s arms around him, the smell of his cologne. It feels so real and he takes another large scoop of the chocolate peanut butter ice cream into his mouth, lips closing around the cold metal spoon. Tastes like heaven.

Yurio looks shocked. “You...?”

“Love him,” Yuuri finishes for him, smiling because he can’t help himself. He always smiles when he thinks about Viktor, really. (Nikiforov, not the mysterious other Viktor who he is still trying to remember.) “I named my dog after him.”

“Your *dog*?”

“Vicchan,” he informs him happily. “And I used to have posters of him all over my room. Every wall. And I started skating competitively because of him.”

Yurio’s jaw has dropped, his mouth forming a small ‘o’ shape. He’s still holding his phone for some reason, but his arm has gone slack a bit. He stutters for a second, shaking his head. “You... You named your dog after Viktor? And had posters of him all over your room?”

“Mmm,” Yuuri agrees, remembering. “Viktor is talented and kind and wonderful.”

The blond boy swallows and suddenly he has lowered his phone, shoving it into his jeans pocket. “Right, er... He’ll be back soon.”

Yuuri has finished his ice cream so he sets the bowl on the table and leans back into the couch, cuddling into the pillows and trying to get a piece of hair out of his face. It’s just one little strand but for some reason he can’t get a grip on it and it’s driving him mad.

Then there’s a noise coming from the other side of the room and Yuuri jumps, staring at Yurio wide-eyed. “Is somebody here?”

“It’s Viktor, probably.”

“What if it’s a murderer?”

“I don’t think any murderers have keys to Viktor’s flat.”

“This is Viktor’s flat?”

Yurio doesn’t respond, just rolls his eyes. “At first, it was kind of funny seeing you like this, but now it’s starting to get annoying.”

Yuuri frowns, squinting to get a better look at him. “Seeing me like what?”

“Never mind.”

And then, suddenly, Viktor is there. (Nikiforov. Not the other one.) He’s smiling down at Yuuri and Yuuri grins up at him, extending his arms towards him. Viktor hugs him tight and he can’t stop smiling, all of his pain forgotten as he’s held tight. “Hi,” he greets dreamily, smiling at him.

“Я думаю, что ему хуже,” Yurio tells him. Viktor frowns, looking concerned. But why would he be concerned?

“What’re you saying?” Yuuri asks, tugging on Viktor’s sleeve, because Viktor has been here for about thirty seconds now and yet he’s still standing and Yuuri is laying down and that just won’t do. If they’re together, why would they be in different positions? That just seemed inefficient.

Viktor responds in Russian. It’s a jumble of syllables that he can hardly make out. Yuuri hears his name and shuts his eyes, wanting to argue but lacking the stamina. Why wouldn’t Viktor just lay down with him already? Viktor, lovely Viktor.

Then Yurio pulls out his phone and he’s talking in English again. “I’ve got something to show you later, by the way.”

“What did you do?” Viktor asks, still concerned, rubbing at his temple. His temple looks soft. Yuuri wants to kiss it and tries tugging on Viktor’s sleeve again, and why won’t he *move*?

“We just had a talk,” Yurio says, grinning devilishly.

Viktor's eyes flick between the two Yuri's for a moment before he glances back at the kitchen counter. "I got you a muffin, Yuuri. Do you want it?"

A muffin. Blueberry, blueberry, *please* be blueberry. "What kind?"

"Blueberry."

Viktor Nikiforov is his hero, his idol, his everything. "Yes, please."

He devours the muffin in record time.

Then Viktor is giving him some sort of medicine—a liquid, this time, that's odd—and he swallows it. It has a bad taste and he sputters, coughing into his elbow and scrunching up his nose. Viktor touches his shoulder, though, and he realizes that they're sitting together on the couch, now, so he does what he'd been meaning to do before.

He leans over and kisses Viktor on his temple. Viktor's cheeks turn red and Yurio is laughing and Yuuri doesn't understand the joke.

There's more talking in Russian. Viktor defensively wraps an arm around Yuuri's side, pulling him closer. Yuuri doesn't complain, just glances between them, wondering what they're saying. He hears his name a couple of times. Viktor sounds annoyed. Yurio sounds more annoyed, but he always seems to sound that way, so Yuuri isn't sure if he really is or not.

"Stop talking like that," Yuuri complains. "English. Eng-lish."

"Sorry," Viktor apologizes, pressing a kiss to his hairline. Yuuri smiles sleepily at him, resting his head against Viktor's shoulder and leaning back against the couch. "I moved our flight to Friday, by the way. I figured you'll be better enough by then?"

"Better," Yuuri agrees. "What day is it?"

"Monday," Yurio reminds him again, and—oh, he'd already asked that before, hadn't he?

"I missed you," Yuuri tells him.

"How long has he been awake for?" Viktor asks, and his words are obviously directed at the blond boy, not Yuuri, and he feels slightly annoyed. Why was Viktor asking Yurio questions about Yuuri? Nonsensical.

"Not long enough to miss you," Yurio snickers.

Yuuri pulls away and suddenly there are blue eyes looking down at him and when had those gotten there? "Yurio gave me ice cream."

Viktor glances down at the coffee table, examining the empty bowl. "He did, did he? How kind of him."

"Shut. It."

“So we’re going to be in China for another week?” Yuuri asks, thinking about doing this for another week, clinging to Viktor and sleeping beside him in his dreams and hugging him and having nice talks and ice cream with Yurio. He smiles.

Viktor has the same sympathetic look Yurio had had, except there’s a few differences. There’s another emotion mixed in with it. Like he’s happy and concerned at the same time. It’s confusing to look at. Yuuri squints to try and figure it out, but it’s a pointless effort. “We’re in Russia.”

“Oh, that’s what I meant.”

“Yes, for four more days. We’ll leave Friday morning if you’re well enough.”

“I like it here,” Yuuri tells him, toying with the hem of his own shirt and wondering when he’d bought this one.

“Where’d you get that shirt?” Viktor asks, and Yuuri wonders if he can read his thoughts somehow. Given that it’s Viktor Nikiforov, he figures that that is entirely possible. Viktor probably had all sorts of superpowers. Maybe that was how he’d gotten that natural hair color.

“I don’t know.”

Viktor frowns and turns Yuuri around in his arms—Yuuri complies easily, laughing at the feeling of Viktor’s fingers tickling his ribs accidentally—and examines the tag on the back. “That’s my shirt.”

Yuuri starts laughing harder, because the idea of him wearing Viktor’s shirt is just ridiculous. “Your shirt?” Then, he remembers getting it from the wardrobe. He sneezes. “Oh, it *is* your shirt. Do you want it back?”

Viktor pulls him back into his arms and kisses him firmly on the part in his hair, his lips lingering and his hands on his sides, making him shiver. He smells great, cologne and shampoo and blueberry muffins and all sorts of wonderful things, and Yuuri can’t quite believe that he’s being held by Viktor Nikiforov right now.

(He wonders what he did right. Makes a mental effort to figure out what he’d done so that he could do it again so that Viktor does this again in the future, as often as possible.)

(Maybe it was sneezing? Should he sneeze more often?)

~

It doesn’t take long for Yuuri to fall asleep again. He knows Yuuri values his sleep on the same level he values his skating, but Viktor is still not sure he’s ever seen someone sleep this much in his lifetime.

Yurio pulls out his phone. “I need to show you this.”

Viktor cringes. “You video taped him?”

The blond just shrugs. “It’s funny.”

Viktor rolls his eyes but watches the video anyway, horrified. “Yurio, he’ll be so embarrassed.”

“Can I upload it?” he asks, and it isn’t like Yurio to ask for permission to do things like that and Viktor smiles internally, knowing that he cares enough about Yuuri to not instantly upload it without his consent. Yurio was growing feelings—Viktor could tell.

“No,” Viktor says. “Delete it.”

“*Delete* it?!”

Viktor thinks for a moment. He drums his fingers along his legs. “Okay, send it to me, then delete it.”

“So it’s fair for *you* to blackmail Yuuri but not fair for me to do the same thing?”

“I’m not going to blackmail him,” Viktor explains, eyebrows shooting up towards his hairline.

“Oh, right. You just want to hear him calling you wonderful on an endless loop,” Yurio points out. “That’s a bit egotistical, isn’t it?”

Yuuri rolls on the couch beside him, one of his arms falling off of the couch and touching the carpet beneath. His face is smushed against the cushions, the thin white t-shirt having ridden up to his stomach and the strip of skin slowly driving Viktor insane. There was something about seeing Yuuri in his clothes, in his flat, that words couldn’t apply to. A feeling of domesticity that makes him warm.

His phone buzzes in his pocket. He pulls it out and stares at the text—a video—before glancing up at Yurio, who is already walking across the room. “You’re welcome,” the blond says grudgingly. “I’m not deleting it off of my phone, though. Just so you know. It could be valuable in the future.”

~

The moment Yuuri wakes up, he sprints out of the bed and into the bathroom, finding the nearest toilet and promptly vomiting. His eyes roll back in his head as he grips the edges of the toilet seat, chest heaving and his heart racing in his chest. There’s sweat on his forehead and his hair is sticking to it and he’s never felt so *disgusting*.

“Yuuri!”

There’s a hand on his back, suddenly, rubbing comforting circles. Yuuri groans and flushes the toilet before falling back and leaning against the nearest wall, his entire body hot and his head pounding. “Ow...”

Viktor, he realizes. Viktor is there, looking concerned. Why is he concerned? “Are you alright?”

He still feels nauseous. “The blueberry muffin hurt me,” Yuuri explains, leaning against the bathtub and resting his head on the porcelain. It’s cool to the touch and he huddles farther into it, placing his hands on the surface, too.

Viktor sighs, picking him up and taking him away from his cold porcelain. Yuuri doesn’t mind, though, because he wraps his arms around Viktor’s shoulder and he smells like cologne, familiar, lovely cologne, and it’s perfect. “Viktor?”

“Yes? I’m bringing you back to the bed.”

“I love you.”

“I know.”

As they exit the bathroom, he remembers something. “Brush my teeth,” Yuuri complains, shutting his eyes.

“Oh, alright.”

Viktor sets him down on his feet and he grips the sink with white knuckles trying to stay balanced. After he has brushed his teeth, Viktor guides him with a hand on the small of his back. “Everything hurts,” he complains, because surely Viktor could make the pain go away. Viktor could do *anything*.

“I can’t do anything,” Viktor laughs gently. “But if I could make the pain go away, I would.”

Oh, had he said that out loud?

Yuuri stops in his tracks, staring Viktor in the eyes with a sobriety that could kill. He wants—no, he *needs*—Viktor to believe him. “You *can* do anything, Viktor.”

Viktor blinks, surprised. “Thanks for your confidence.”

“Anything. You’ve won so many medals, and your quadruple flip is like...woah.”

Yuuri pauses, trying to gain his balance because all of a sudden the world is spinning. Viktor steadies him. (Of course he does.)

“C’mere,” Viktor says, moving towards the bed.

Yuuri struggles to get underneath the covers but the moment he does, Viktor is with him again, and it's like the dreams he'd been having. Viktor sleeping with him. Not in that way, of course, though he wouldn't mind doing it in *that* way. In fact, he'd thought about doing just this in *that* way plenty of times before.

"That way?" Viktor repeats, looking surprised and flustered.

Yuuri can no longer tell what is in his head and what is out loud. "You know, *that* way," he emphasizes. "Like, a sexual way. It's not like that, though."

"It's not," Viktor agrees, and is that disappointment in his voice or is Yuuri more tired than he thinks?

"We're just friends," Yuuri explains, because Viktor must not get it. "I'd like to be more, but you're *Viktor*, so we're just friends."

Viktor's hand, which had been rubbing his back, pauses its motions. "What do you mean?"

"Well, you're Viktor."

"So?"

"So we can't."

Viktor shifts, and suddenly he's not holding Yuuri as close anymore, and Yuuri is confused, chasing after him selfishly. "Yuuri, you're not making any sense."

Yuuri frowns. Had he done something wrong? Why wasn't Viktor holding him anymore? He rubs at his arms, trying to replace the warmth. "I'm making plenty of sense."

"English?"

Oh. Oops. "I'm making plenty of sense," he repeats in English.

"What do you mean we can't because I'm Viktor?" Viktor asks, and it's a bit weird to hear him speaking in the third person like that. Well, it was first person, because he'd used "I'm." But then he'd used his own name. Which was third person. How confusing.

Viktor, Viktor, Viktor.

It was a pretty name. Sounded funny on his tongue. Just like Yuuri's name sounded funny on Viktor's tongue. He liked it, though. A good sort of funny.

"Yuuri?" Viktor asks, snapping him into focus.

"Sounds funny," Yuuri mumbles, grinning and reaching up to touch Viktor's cheek, brushing a strand of hair out of his eyes.

Viktor frowns. "What?"

Yuuri doesn't answer, captivated by his hair. It's soft and silver, and was it really natural? He had never asked. He's about to ask when Viktor reaches up and grips his wrist, lacing their fingers. They're holding hands, now. "We're holding hands."

"We are," Viktor agrees, smiling. "Is that okay?"

"We should do that more often," Yuuri complains. "Feels like we never do that."

"Alright. But now will you talk to me, Yuuri?"

Yuuri blinks. He tries to decode Viktor's words, but it's pointless. The Russian beside him is making *no* sense. Zero. Zip. Nada. "We're already talking."

Viktor just smiles again. What the heck? Was he missing a joke?

"I want you to explain what you mean when you say that we can't be more than friends."

"Well," Yuuri begins, "I mean, meta...meta-something. What's the word?"

"Metaphorically," Viktor provides.

"Metaphorically," he pronounces slowly, "we could be more than friends. You know." He glances down at their joint hands, swallowing. "Partners. But you're Viktor, and you've won like, five billion medals and I still can't land a quad salchow half the time. And you're attractive—like, really attractive—and so it wouldn't really work out."

Viktor looks shocked.

Yuuri offers him a smile. "But that's okay!" he insists, wanting to see Viktor smile again. "More than okay. I like this." To prove his point he nudges Viktor's chin with his head, pressing a kiss against his exposed collarbone. Viktor shivers. Why'd he do that? Was he cold?

"Are you saying that you don't think you're attractive?" Viktor asks, and his voice is low, and it's not comforting and cute like it had been a minute ago, now it's serious. Almost angry. Not angry. But almost. Upset, maybe?

Yuuri purses his lips, thinking about it. He'd used to think that he was unattractive, but he had more self confidence lately. Probably thanks to Viktor. A lot of nice things in his life were thanks to Viktor. "I don't know. Not as attractive as you."

(*That* he is sure of.)

"Oh, Yuuri."

"Mmm?"

"You are so, *so* wrong."

"About?"

“Your attractiveness.”

“My what-ness?”

Viktor touches his hair. It feels lovely. For whatever reason, it reminds him of sunflowers. Sunflowers in tiny brown pots lined up along a windowsill. A soft sunset. He hears humming then realizes it’s coming from him. That’s odd.

“Attractiveness,” Viktor repeats slowly, drawing out every syllable. “You’re wrong about that.”

“I am?”

“You’re gorgeous.”

Yuuri blinks. Those two words coming from Viktor’s mouth didn’t seem to fit together right. Didn’t seem applicable. “I just threw up in your bathroom.”

“Still gorgeous,” Viktor assures him, and his fingers leave Yuuri’s hair to drift along his jawbone instead, the touches light and delicate. Yuuri leans closer to him for more contact and Viktor chuckles.

“You think I’m attractive?” Yuuri asks, wide-eyed. Surely Viktor’s words didn’t mean what he thought they did. After all, he’d been misinterpreting a lot of things recently. Perhaps this was just another in a long line.

“That doesn’t even begin to describe it,” Viktor murmurs, and his fingers are still on Yuuri’s face and Yuuri shuts his eyes.

When his hand pulls away, Yuuri chases the touch, leaning closer towards Viktor. “Don’t stop doing that,” he pleads.

“Okay, I won’t.”

Viktor starts again and this time one hand is in Yuuri’s hair and the other is on his cheek. Yuuri doesn’t know where to focus his attention so he just bundles the fabric of Viktor’s shirt in his hands, mumbling incoherent syllables and letting his eyes fall shut. “I love you,” he tells him, because it’s true.

“I love you too, Yuuri,” Viktor responds, and he kisses his head and Yuuri wonders if being sick for the rest of his life might be worth it if this is what he gets.

The Aftermath

Chapter Summary

Yuuri is no longer delirious, and Viktor has to confront the fact that he doesn't remember anything from the night before.

Chapter Notes

Thanks so much for all the kind comments on the first chapter!! This one took a lot of rewriting, so I hope that it doesn't come out too patchy. Please let me know what you think :D :D

Oh, for the record, this chapter is NSFW. If you'd like to skip that part, then skip the section that is cut off by the extra-long separators (~~)! You have been warned!

When Viktor rolls out of bed in the morning, Yurio is, unsurprisingly, gone. He smiles when he sees that he had taken the remainder of the ice cream with him.

Yuuri has shoved all of the blankets off of him in the middle of the night and is laying on his stomach in Viktor's t-shirt and the same pajama pants from the night before. His head is resting on the sheets, not the pillow, and Viktor wonders how he could have possibly been comfortable sleeping like that.

Viktor takes a shower, and as he shuts off the water he can hear Yuuri's voice. He frowns, trying to listen as he dries his hair, slipping on a pair of track pants before exiting the bathroom.

"I'm sorry I forgot to tell you," Yuuri is saying, voice still muffled by the sheets as he presses a phone to his ear. "I'm in Viktor's apartment. Yeah. No—he's been taking care of me."

Viktor smiles, leaning against the doorway and watching as Yuuri lifts himself up by his palms, leaning back against the bed frame, still unaware of Viktor's presence. His words are coherent, now, finely pronounced, less foggy than they'd been the day before. Viktor guiltily forces down the twinge of disappointment that rises in his thoughts. It was *definitely* immoral to be upset that Yuuri was feeling better. Definitely, definitely immoral.

"I'm fine, really," Yuuri is insisting, probably to his mother. "Just a cold."

As if on cue, he sneezes.

“I’m fine, I swear!”

Viktor laughs and Yuuri’s head darts around, staring at him. “Viktor!”

Yuuri says some quick words in Japanese before hanging up the phone and tossing it on the bed beside him. Viktor sits down beside him, brushing some hair out of his eyes. “How are you feeling?”

“Better,” Yuuri answers, and there’s a flicker of surprise at Viktor’s touch, but then it’s gone. “Everything hurts less. My head is still pounding, sort of.”

“Want more medicine?” Viktor offers, already standing and approaching the door.

“No, I’ll be fine. ‘M just tired.”

Viktor figures he has seen the last of delirious, sick Yuuri. He almost feels like he should hold a funeral. “We’ll spend the day inside,” he promises. “We could play board games—I’ve got Monopoly—or watch a movie! We could invite Yurio back over, I’m sure he’d love to come.”

Yuuri laughs. “Oh, I’m sure he’d *love* to. Honestly, I don’t think he’s my biggest fan. But I guess we’ve known that for a while now.”

“He brought you ice cream,” Viktor points out. “That has to count for something.”

His grin fades, the corners of his mouth turning downward. “Ice cream?”

Viktor pauses, hand coming up to rub the back of his neck. “You... You don’t remember?”

“Remember ice cream?” Yuuri asks, confused. “I don’t think so. When did we have ice cream? Yesterday? It’s all a bit blurry.”

And this is just peachy, isn’t it?

The universe managed to let him and Yuuri confess their attraction for each other only to have Yuuri forget it the next morning. Peachy. Wonderful. Fantastic. About a thousand other adjectives.

(Typical.)

“Don’t worry about it,” Viktor says, and he smiles but he knows it isn’t reaching his eyes, know it won’t appear genuine.

Yuuri can tell. “Did anything else happen?”

So, so much. “No. You were out of it, though.”

The black haired man ducks his head, cheeks flushing. “I hope I didn’t say anything embarrassing.”

Viktor can feel his phone in his pocket, remembers the video. “Nope. Nothing of the sort.”

Yuuri reaches out to grab his hand and squeezes it. “Good. Thanks for taking care of me, Viktor. You’re a great friend. I bet it wasn’t easy to rearrange the flight.”

It hadn’t been, so Viktor decides to take the credit, smiling back. “Of course.”

Then, Yuuri appears to notice something. He glances around the room, eyebrows drawing together in concentration. His eyes catch on the wardrobe. “And this is... your room?”

“Yes,” Viktor confirms, rocking back on his heels and watching Yuuri’s expression carefully. It appears as though he’s still a little rough around the edges judging by how long it had taken him to come to that conclusion.

“And we were sleeping? In your bedroom?”

Oh. This may be hard to explain. “Yes.”

“And... I don’t remember packing this shirt.”

Viktor stumbles to come up with an answer. “That’s... That shirt is... That would be mine.”

“I’m wearing your shirt,” Yuuri repeats slowly, touching the fabric with his fingers, as if it’s made out of some magical substance other than polyester.

“You sort of... took it.”

“Oh.”

Yuuri looks horrified, now. His eyes are large and he’s still touching the end of the t-shirt, as if unsure if it’s truly there or not. Then he looks at the bed, the crumpled up sheets and the place where Viktor had been. His eyebrows draw together and a small wrinkle forms between them, one that Viktor has seen many times before when Yuuri is thinking particularly hard about something.

Viktor scrambles to come up with a way to remedy the situation. “Um, do you want to take a shower? Might make you feel better.”

“Yeah, okay.”

He looks more than happy to hurry into the bathroom.

Then, a few minutes later: “Viktor, I forgot to bring clothes in.”

“I’ll leave some in the bedroom then shut the door.”

He tries to clear his mind of images of Yuuri standing naked in his bedroom, but it’s a futile effort. Instead, he focuses on looking around the foyer and figuring out what he should do. Should he get out the board games? Should he offer to take him sight-seeing? No, he probably wouldn’t want to go sight-seeing—he’d just recovered from being sick.

He tugs his phone out of his pocket and selects Yurio's contact, leaning back against the couch.

"Viktor? Is everything alright?"

Viktor smiles. "Concerned for Yuuri?"

"Shut up. I'm n— I was just..."

"He's feeling better, I just wanted to know if you'd want to come over and hang out with us. We're going to, uh..." He thinks for a moment. "Do something."

"Do something?" Yurio repeats.

Viktor shrugs to himself, eyeing the bedroom door and wondering what was taking Yuuri so long. "Maybe Monopoly?" Then, he remembers. "Or Cluedo?"

He hears the break in Yurio's resolve. Like the sound of glass shattering. "Cluedo? Well, I guess I'm free for the day. Might as well make sure you two don't set your flat on fire or something."

Viktor grins. "Great! See you."

"Viktor, you're not supposed to say great when I—"

Viktor hangs up.

The bedroom door swings open and Yuuri stands there, rubbing at his forehead, looking more presentable than he had the day before. He's wearing a long-sleeved blue t-shirt and jeans that are far too tight for Viktor to possibly be expected to keep his eyes off of them. His hair is combed back, glasses perched on his nose.

"Yurio is coming?" Yuuri asks, sitting down at the kitchen counter beside Viktor, still palming his forehead. "My head is aching. Maybe I will take you up on that medicine."

Viktor nods and retrieves a pill and a glass of water. "Yeah, he's coming. He loves Cluedo."

"Cluedo?"

"Yuuri—tell me you've played Cluedo before."

Yuuri falters. "Um, I don't..."

"I'm afraid I can't be your coach anymore," Viktor says regretfully, handing Yuuri the pill and then dramatically collapsing on the counter, burying his head in his hands.

"Viktor," Yuuri complains, shoving his shoulder. "Viktor, get up."

"Nope, you've broken me. I cannot believe you haven't played Cluedo. It's a *classic*."

“Well, you can introduce me,” Yuuri promises, smiling before breaking out into a coughing fit, covering it with his elbow. “Sorry.”

Viktor stares at him, concerned. “Are you okay?”

Yuuri’s smile is sad and tugs at Viktor’s heartstrings. “I’ll be fine.”

“Come here,” Viktor offers, and he guides Yuuri to the couch where he sits down beside him. It feels different, though, this time. They both sit upright, their thighs touching but the rest of it completely platonic. He remembers when Yuuri had instantly fallen asleep on him and wishes he’d do that again, wishes he would remember.

(It feels unfair. Unfair in the most selfish of ways.)

“I hate being sick,” Yuuri complains, glancing around. “Have you got any tissues?”

Viktor fetches a box shaped like Makkachin. Yuuri smiles at it, pretending to pet the head. “You’re already feeling better, though,” he points out.

“Every second I’m sick, I’m not practicing,” Yuuri responds. “Maybe tomorrow we can go to the rink.”

“Tomorrow?” Viktor repeats, shaking his head. “No, you’re off the ice until we get back to Japan. Maybe longer, depending on how you feel.”

Yuuri looks crushed. “Viktor, the next competition is the Grand Prix. I can’t afford to waste any practice time. Nobody else is going to. Besides, I already feel better than I did before.”

“Nobody else is sick,” Viktor informs him. “And practice can wait. Your health is more important.”

Yuuri doesn’t look satisfied by this answer. Instead, he scoots away from Viktor towards the end of the couch, leaning against the arm of it and grabbing at the television remote. It does something to Viktor—seeing Yuuri so at home like this in his tiny apartment. His shoes and socks are off and his feet are on the couch and it would all be *perfect* if he didn’t look so annoyed right now.

“Your health is more important,” Viktor tells him again, crawling across the couch to be closer to Yuuri, placing a hand on his shoulder. Yuuri looks at him wide-eyed, lips parting. “And you’ll still win the Grand Prix.”

“How can you know?” Yuuri asks quietly, still pressing buttons on the remote, though neither of them are looking at the screen.

“I just do.” He kisses Yuuri’s hair, and it’s something he hadn’t done before yesterday but he wants it to be a permanent thing so badly so he does it, hoping that it’ll trigger some sort of remembrance in Yuuri.

Instead, Yuuri just looks at him, smiling. He’ll take it. “Thanks.”

~

Later, there's a knock on the door. An aggressive one.

"I'm going to kick your sorry butts in Cluedo," Yurio informs them as he marches inside, sitting himself down at the kitchen table.

"Hi, Yuri," Yuuri greets, waving from the couch where he's clutching the tissue box, his nose red and glasses forgotten on the coffee table in front of him.

Yurio stares at Viktor, then Yuuri. "I see you're feeling better."

"Much better."

"Like, you can form words," Yurio points out, surprised.

"Um, could I not form words yesterday?" Yuuri asks, blushing.

Yurio stands up and moves over to Viktor's pantry, searching through it for the board game. "You thought we were in China. And you forgot my name."

"I thought we were in China?"

Viktor wants to strangle Yurio because Yuuri looks embarrassed now, his eyes downcast toward the couch as he wrings out his fingers. "It was pretty funny," Viktor informs him, trying to make light of the situation.

"Sounds like it," Yuuri responds, and there's a bit of a smile there, now. Viktor would pat himself on the back if he wasn't surrounded by two people who would judge him immensely.

"I found it!" Yurio announces as he holds up Cluedo. "Alright, let's do this. And Nikiforov," he points a threatening finger at Viktor. "If you cheat, *I will know*."

~

"You cheated!"

Viktor smirks. "Just because I won doesn't automatically mean that I cheated."

"It does!" Yurio protests. "I always win at Cluedo. Always. We're playing again. Best two out of three."

Yuuri has grown accustomed to the rules of the game, now. His chair is awfully close to Viktor's—Viktor had slowly but surely moved closer towards him over the course of the first round—and when they both reach for a piece at the same time, he feels himself blushing.

Yurio complains loudly. Something about them being gross, probably.

Viktor is blushing back. Yuuri grins.

After two more rounds, Yuuri has one once, then Viktor again. Yurio is fuming. The others laugh. "This isn't funny," he declares. "You two are conspiring."

"Conspiring?" Yuuri asks, shaking his head.

"I might conspire to make an Instagram post about how the king of Cluedo isn't the king after all," Viktor threatens playfully.

Yurio growls. "We'll keep playing. Just you wait, Nikiforov. Just. You. Wait."

~~

"What movie do you want to watch?" Viktor asks later that afternoon, after Yurio had left, outraged at his inability to win a single round of Cluedo.

Yuuri yawns and sits down on the couch, eyeing the large bowl of buttered popcorn that Viktor had set on the coffee table. Instinctively, he leans forward and devours a handful. "Whatever you want," he responds.

As he grabs another handful, he sees Viktor watching him. "What?" Yuuri asks defensively.

"Nothing," Viktor answers, looking amused.

Suddenly self-conscious, Yuuri backs away from the popcorn and leans back into the couch. "What movies do you have?"

"Only Russian ones," he shrugs.

"Any ones with subtitles?"

"I don't think so."

Yuuri shrugs as Viktor sits down beside him on the couch, scooping up some popcorn. "You could translate it for me?"

Viktor smiles at him, reaching out and brushing a strand of hair away from his eyes. "Not a bad idea. That could be fun."

“Yeah?” Yuuri asks, a little too breathlessly for his own liking. Viktor pulls his hand back to his side and suddenly Yuuri is all too aware of the space in between them. He wants nothing more than to pull Viktor against his side, to place his head on his shoulder and watch whatever it is he wants to put on—Yuuri really could care less.

“Yeah. Hang on, I’ll pick something.”

Viktor begins to explain the plot of the mystery drama, which Yuuri, if he’s being honest, doesn’t pay attention to because the way that Viktor leans closer to him as he translates the dialogue is intoxicating. His voice is low, as if to not cover the sounds coming from the television, and occasionally his leg brushes against Yuuri’s.

“What actor is that?” Yuuri asks, because the tension in the air is palpable and, really, he doesn’t care what actor it is, nor does he know anything about Russian movies.

Viktor responds with a name he’s never heard of. Yuuri simply nods, taking eating more popcorn. “Why do you ask?” Viktor adds, and Yuuri freezes.

“Um, I don’t know. Just curious, I guess.”

“Do you think he’s attractive?”

Yuuri coughs, almost choking on his popcorn. He stares at Viktor wide-eyed, and the other man’s blue eyes are calm and serene, as if it was a normal thing to say. And, to be fair, it was a normal thing for Viktor to say. After all, he was *Viktor*.

“I didn’t say that,” Yuuri responds, voice squeaky. He’ll blame it on the sickness.

Viktor smiles at him before casually picking up a piece of popcorn and tossing it into his mouth with an accuracy that makes Yuuri think that it should be an Olympic sport. “I know. That’s why I’m asking.”

Yuuri rubs the back of his neck, searching for the right words. “Well, he’s not *ugly*.”

He realizes that there has been a ton of dialogue that they’ve both missed, and the story has progressed to another scene. Yuuri has no clue what is happening on the television in front of them. Judging by the way Viktor’s gaze is focused entirely on him, he figures Viktor doesn’t know what’s happening, either.

“So you *do* find him attractive?” Viktor asks.

Yuuri shifts uncomfortably on the couch, glueing his eyes to the television. “Does it matter?”

“Not really.”

“Well, no, not really. Like I said, he’s not ugly, but...”

“And how about me?”

Yuuri wonders if this is really happening or if this is some horrible, sick-induced nightmare. He sneezes.

“Bless you,” Viktor says, smiling.

An actor on the television is yelling about something and Yuuri wonders if he keeps staring long enough, looks as invested as possible in the plot, if Viktor will forget the question he’d just asked. But the weight of his gaze is like the sky and Yuuri is Atlas, trapped endlessly underneath it with no choice but to hold it up.

And then, suddenly, there’s a cold hand on his wrist and Yuuri shivers, eyes slowly drifting over to Viktor. He’s watching him with a look akin to objective observation, his eyebrows raised slightly and his hair messier than usual. “Yuuri?” he asks, and his voice isn’t pushy, yet somehow that just makes it worse, makes Yuuri panic even more.

“...Yes?”

“‘Yes’ as in that’s your answer to the initial question or ‘yes’ as in what was I about to ask you?” Viktor asks, his fingers on Yuuri’s wrist moving down so that their fingertips are touching, now, and the feeling is electric and Yuuri is tempted to grab at his hand to feel the sparks but he’s frozen, trapped by the other man’s control.

And it didn’t even seem like he was *trying*.

(Did Viktor know what sort of effect he had on him? Surely he did. He *must*.)

Yuuri stumbles to find an answer. “Um, both?”

(What had happened yesterday? Did it have anything to do with why Viktor was doing this here, now?)

Viktor smiles at that and leans closer to him, gaze drifting down to their hands. Their faces are only inches apart, now, and the noise and view of the television have been blurred to the point where they’ve forgotten about its existence altogether. The couch is soft and Yuuri sinks into it, a blanket caught around his waist falling down to the floor.

Then Viktor’s free hand is on his knee and Yuuri shivers again, and though he wants to blame it due to the sickness and lack of a blanket he knows it’s Viktor, and Viktor seems to know it too, knows that all of Yuuri’s attention is completely locked onto him, that he’s hyperaware of every movement, every breath. Everything about him is captivating, every inch of his skin, every word that leaves his lips. Yuuri wonders if it’s tiring to be so intriguing at all times, wonder if it truly is as effortless as he makes it seem.

There’s a breath and it’s hot against his cheek, causing Yuuri to let his eyes fall shut, let his head lean forward. His entire body is aching for contact, arousal already affecting him, his hands balling up into unconscious fists, the tension from his back escaping and moving into his white knuckles instead.

A phone rings.

(It takes Yuuri a full ten seconds to comprehend the obnoxious noise.)

(Viktor still hasn't moved. His hand is still on Yuuri's knee.)

(Yuuri scrambles off of the couch.)

He grabs his phone from the coffee table, heart thumping in his chest. "Oh, it's Phichit," he explains, wondering if he should answer it or not answer it all and *oh god*, what had been about to happen? Viktor was his coach. Surely they couldn't...

Yet he wanted to.

He presses the button and sits back down on the couch, making sure to leave far more room between them than had previously been there. With shaking hands, he pulls the blanket back up onto his lap as Viktor pauses the movie. "Hi, Phichit."

Phichit tells him a story about some awkward experience he'd had while grocery shopping before asking what Yuuri is up to and—*oh, you're still in Russia? You're sick? Why didn't you tell me?*

Viktor is scrolling through his own phone, though Yuuri can tell that he's listening in on the conversation.

"So you're with Viktor right now? In his flat?" Phichit is asking.

Yuuri smiles and puts the phone on speaker. "Say hi, Viktor."

"Hi Phichit," he offers, smiling at Yuuri. Yuuri feels himself blushing and ducks his head despite himself, because the other man hadn't even done anything and yet the room feels as though it's growing smaller every second, as if the walls are closing in on them.

"Hi Viktor," Phichit says. "Alright, well I'll leave you two to, er, *it*. Call me when you're back in Japan, Yuuri?"

"I will," Yuuri promises before saying goodbye and hanging up.

There's an awkward silence after the phone is hung up.

Yuuri wants more than anything to go back to where they'd been before, to feel Viktor's skin on his own, to hear the way his voice had gone breathy when he'd leaned in closer. Yet the sensation was already starting to feel like a distant, ephemeral memory. Like something that would never happen again.

(He figures it probably won't.)

"Are you feeling tired?" Viktor asks, and he's brushing another strand of hair out of Yuuri's eyes and he hasn't done that before these last few days but now it seems as though he's doing it every other second and the action is driving Yuuri *insane*. It's innocent and endearing and domestic.

“A bit.”

His eyebrows draw together in concern and it's all just too much. “And your other symptoms? Any better?”

“My head and throat still hurt, but everything else is a bit better. I'm sort of thirsty, though.”

Without hesitation, Viktor is standing up and walking to the kitchen. “Water? Or something else?”

“Water is fine,” Yuuri answers. “Thank you.”

“Of course. And I suppose you should go to sleep. You need as much rest as you can get.”

He doesn't want to sleep. At least, mentally. Physically, he's more exhausted than he'll let on, his entire body begging him to rest. The day had gone by quickly and he hadn't had time to catch up. “You're probably right.” Yuuri lays down on the couch and tugs the blanket over his body, adjusting himself.

“Yuuri—no. You're taking my bed.”

“I don't mind the couch, honestly,” Yuuri offers, rubbing the back of his neck. “It's comfortable, actually.”

(He remembers waking up in Viktor's bed that morning. Viktor had been in the shower, and the sheets on the entire bed had been ruffled, but had Viktor slept on the couch? What had happened the night before, really?)

Viktor rolls his eyes. “I am not fighting with you on this. Get up or I'll carry you.”

Yuuri feels his cheeks warming as he stands up, running a hand through his hair. He doesn't miss the way that Viktor watches the motion, captivating his attention for an instant. “Where will you sleep?”

“The couch,” Viktor explains, and he's steering Yuuri towards the bedroom. “If you need anything, just come get me. Doesn't matter what it is.”

And then Yuuri has an idea. An insane one. The type of idea that is absolutely terrible when you look back on it later, but in that instant it feels like the right thing to do. One of those. “You could sleep on the bed with me.”

It's not a novel idea, they'd slept together plenty of times before. Hotel rooms, back at the hot springs, practically everywhere. Yet this feels different.

Viktor blinks. “Well, if you're okay with that.”

“Of course. Besides, it's a big bed.”

(In all fairness, it *is* a big bed, but it's not *that* big.)

Yuuri grabs sweatpants and a t-shirt and heads into the bathroom to the change. When he leaves, he sees Viktor in the bed, the blankets pulled up just above his navel, already dressed in a too-big black shirt. He knows that Viktor normally sleeps shirtless and notes the change, half disappointed and half relieved.

(As he crawls into bed beside him, the disappointed half wins out.)

“Are you sure you want to sleep beside me even though I’m sick? I *really* don’t mind the couch,” Yuuri offers one more time.

Viktor smiles and reaches towards Yuuri, and he wonders if he’s going to touch his hair again because he’s not sure his heart could take it, but instead he just removes his black rimmed glasses and folds them, placing them on the nightstand beside the bed. Somehow, the action is even worse and Yuuri stares at the now-blurry figure in front of him, lips parted and fingers tapping nervously on his lap.

“I don’t think you’ll infect me,” Viktor teases. “Just don’t cough on me.”

Yuuri pretends to cough on him and Viktor yelps, huddling away from him. “There, now you’re infected and we don’t have to worry about it anymore.”

Viktor smiles before leaning over and turning off the lamp. Suddenly, Yuuri’s heart is thumping even harder in his chest because every movement makes him feel as though he’s about to bump into Viktor, every breath makes him feel more self-conscious about his own actions. Which is ridiculous, because they’re just in the same bed, after all—it’s not that dramatic of a situation.

Yet he rolls around more than he usually does to get comfortable, tries hugging the pillow and tries shoving the blankets down to his waist, tries everything, and yet all he can focus on is the man beside him.

“Can’t get comfortable?” Viktor asks and Yuuri cringes, knowing how stupid he must seem right now.

He sighs. “Sorry.”

“Don’t be—come here.”

Yuuri shifts closer to Viktor, unsure of exactly what the other man wants him to do. Then, there’s an arm wrapped around his torso, tugging him closer until his back is pressed firmly against Viktor’s chest. Viktor’s other hand drifts up to his hair and the movements are slow and languid and comforting and perfect.

A warmth spreads through his body as he shuts his eyes, sighing and relaxing underneath Viktor’s touch. His fingernails scrape Yuuri’s scalp and the action is so innocent yet so infatuating that Yuuri can feel his blood rushing south and he’s glad he’s not on the other side of this cuddling scenario.

Without meaning to he lets out a breathy sigh and Viktor just hums in response, his fingers magical and his presence so lovely that Yuuri isn't sure how he'll ever sleep alone after this, isn't sure how he'd ever managed to sleep alone in the first place. He remembers, eons ago, when Viktor had asked to sleep with him in his room and he'd turned him down out of sheer terror. If only he'd *known*.

"You have nice hair," Viktor tells him, his voice sultry and smooth in Yuuri's ear.

"So do you," Yuuri informs him, and it takes all of his willpower not to moan when Viktor's fingers flicker across the sensitive skin behind his ears and then move back into his hair, gently tussling the strands.

"Mmm. Not as nice as yours," he argues. "It's soft."

Yuuri's body shifts back against Viktor against his will, his back gaining more pressure against Viktor's torso, their shoulders bumping and Viktor letting out a breathy laugh. He wishes he could see Viktor's face in that moment, wonders what his eyes look like, what his skin looks like in the dark lighting. But he's too horrified to turn around, horrified that Viktor will stop touching him or that the spell will be broken.

Viktor's arm around his side tightens its grip and his hips are pressed against Yuuri's own and Yuuri isn't sure if he's imagining the hardness currently pressed against his lower back, but he prays that he isn't, and judging by the way Viktor's breath catches in his throat when Yuuri wriggles against him to get more comfortable he figures that his senses are telling him the truth.

"Yuuri," Viktor mumbles, and the syllable sounds more like a prayer than a name.

Yuuri realizes that he hasn't breathed in the past minute. He takes in a deep breath and releases it, annoyed when Viktor's fingers on his hair still. "Don't stop doing that," he pleads, and for some reason the situation is vaguely familiar but he doesn't know why, doesn't know how he remembers something like this happening. It's a sense of *deja vu* and he's not sure if it's due to his muddled mind or due to the arm currently wrapped around him right now, clouding his thoughts.

(Most likely it's the way Viktor's fingers resume their movements, the way that Yuuri's form fits perfectly against his, the way that the only sounds in the room are their own and that they can both pretend they're the only people on the Earth, that they don't have anywhere to go the following day or the following week or the following year.)

And he needs to ask Viktor something, *has to*, but he can't remember what or if there even was a question in the first place. Then, Viktor stills his fingers again—damn it all—and uses the free hand to turn Yuuri around by his shoulders so that they're facing each other.

The only lighting in the room comes in from a window to the left with the blinds cracked open slightly, and Yuuri can hardly see any of Viktor's features in the darkness but that makes it easier, makes him more comfortable, in a way. Because he's not sure he'd be able to handle Viktor's look right now—the dilated pupils, the parted pink lips, the crystal blue eyes. He can hardly handle the thought of it.

“You’re gorgeous, Yuuri.”

(That sounds familiar, too, but Yuuri pushes those manic thoughts to the back of his mind because some weird realistic dream he’d probably had five years ago is definitely *not* what he needs to be thinking about right now.)

(But there’s something in Viktor’s tone, a hint of desperation. As though he’s trying to remind Yuuri of something.)

He doesn’t know how to respond, just reaches up a hand to cup Viktor’s cheek, his fingers brushing against his sharp jaw bone. Viktor leans into the touch and Yuuri smiles shyly, wondering if by some miracle he has the same effect on Viktor that Viktor has on him. Then his fingers drift up to Viktor’s hair and he mimics his movements from earlier, removing a strand from where it had fallen in front of his eyes.

Yuuri leans closer and suddenly their foreheads bump, lips merely an inch apart, and he can feel Viktor’s hot breath on his skin, the sensation inviting. “Viktor?” he asks, and he tries to carry an implicit meaning in the name though it’s difficult when he doesn’t even fully understand what he’s asking.

(Viktor does. Viktor always does.)

He kisses him. Somebody kisses somebody. Yuuri doesn’t know who starts it. Doesn’t know how it starts.

(But it does.)

But Viktor’s lips are on his and he tastes like mint chocolate and his mouth is hot and *addictive* and Yuuri can’t get enough, couldn’t possibly get closer if he tried, he continues to grip Viktor’s cheek with one hand and brings the other to his hip to anchor himself so that he doesn’t fall backwards, so that he can keep up this awkward position and maintain as much contact as possible.

Viktor’s lips part underneath his and suddenly his tongue is in his mouth, causing Yuuri to release a moan that doesn’t even sound human, and Viktor just kisses him harder. Eventually, though, Yuuri needs to breathe so he pulls away, his breaths coming out in embarrassingly quick pants and his entire face flushed.

Before he can dwell too long on his own self-consciousness, Viktor is kissing him again, this time slower, less rough, one of his hands on the small of Yuuri’s back and the other still in his hair, doing those same movements that are driving him absolutely mad. And though he’d dreamed of this experience before, nothing—*nothing*—could compare to the real thing. Nothing could prepare him for the way that Viktor’s body would move beside his, for the way that his lips would taste.

Viktor pulls away, then. “Yuuri,” he breathes, and his hands move to the bottom of Yuuri’s shirt and lift up the fabric, placing his hands on his torso experimentally. Yuuri shivers under his touch and feels his eyes roll back as Viktor continues his exploration, lifting the shirt up and over his head and tossing it off of the bed.

He leans down and places his lips on his upper chest, kissing his way down to his nipple and circling it delicately, placing his hand on the other side and his fingers are so cold and his lips so warm that the contradiction makes Yuuri buck his hips towards Viktor unashamedly, letting out a quiet gasp.

Viktor laughs—*laughs*—and sucks on his nipple, gently scraping the skin with his teeth before moving down even lower towards his navel, exploring and kissing every inch of skin on the route. His hands have made their way into the waistband of Yuuri's sweatpants, fingers grazing along his hips on top of his boxer briefs.

As he starts to tug down the sweatpants, Yuuri can't help but notice that the situation is starting to get very, very uneven. He kisses Viktor as he gets to work on his shirt, lifting it up halfway before being sidetracked by the newly exposed, smooth skin. His stomach is flat and muscular and tempting but Yuuri continues his work, pulling his lips away just long enough to tug the fabric up and over Viktor's body and throwing it off of the bed.

Yuuri pauses, squinting in the darkness to try and get a good look at him but it's a futile attempt, so instead he just touches his pectorals, testing. Viktor has paused, as though allowing Yuuri time to think everything through, and Yuuri leans closer, mimicking Viktor's actions from earlier by kissing his chest, circling his nipple. He smiles when Viktor gasps at the action, his grip on Yuuri tightening a nominal—but noticeable—amount.

"Yuuri, you're..."

His words trail off when Yuuri lowers his hand to Viktor's own sweatpants, hand moving straight to the firmness between his legs, grazing across it with his fingers. Viktor arches into his hand, a breathy, whiny noise escaping his lips, and Yuuri gapes as he realizes he'd just made Viktor Nikiforov make that noise. He had. Genuinely. Just now.

Viktor Nikiforov.

(The most decorated male figure skate currently alive.)

The situation hits Yuuri like a punch to the face.

"Please, Yuuri," Viktor is begging—*begging*?—and tugging down Yuuri's sweatpants, palming him and—oh god, no wonder Viktor had made that noise.

Yuuri has never felt anything like it. He can feel the coolness of Viktor's hand even through his boxer briefs and he arches up without meaning to, even more aggressively than Viktor had, a moan escaping his lips as he chases Viktor's hand, eyes slamming shut as he needs more friction, needs it more than air, water.

"I've never..." Yuuri starts, pausing to swallow for a moment. "I've never done anything like this before."

Viktor looks at him, his exploring hands stilling on his sides, holding Yuuri still against him. "We can do whatever you're comfortable with. If you don't want anything, just tell me to stop, okay?"

Yuuri nods, not trusting himself to speak because all he wants is more friction, wants Viktor's body against his, wants to hear him say his name in that breathy voice again. Then, something occurs to him. "Aren't you going to get sick now? We just..." He searches for a phrase that's sexier than 'exchanged body fluids.'

Viktor chuckles, a low sound that causes Yuuri's stomach to turn. "Do you really think I care if I get sick right now?"

"I..." Yuuri starts, shaking his head. "What if... I don't want..."

"Don't worry about me, Yuuri—I want you to worry about what you want."

Yuuri blinks at him, swallowing thickly. "I don't know what I want."

"Can I make a suggestion? Would you want me to do something about this?" Viktor palms him through his boxer briefs again and it takes all of his willpower not to cry out, but he does arch into his hand and duck his head into Viktor's shoulder, breaths already coming quicker, his muscles weak.

Instinctively, he reaches down a hand to touch himself, but Viktor grabs his wrist before he can, kissing the corner of his mouth. "Yes," Yuuri answers immediately, because he *needs* Viktor to do something, anything.

Viktor tugs down his boxer briefs and tugs down the sheets in his way until Yuuri is fully exposed to him, his body still pressed tightly against his own. Viktor makes his way downward, kissing across his chest and down to his navel. "Viktor, what are you...?"

Yuuri's vision is blurry when Viktor places a kiss on the head of his penis, a hand wrapping around the base of it. He whimpers, though he's not sure if it's in his head or out loud, and his body presses back into the sheets as he turns onto his back, Viktor following him and straddling his legs.

"Is this okay?" Viktor asks, and Yuuri can feel his breath against his cock and it's too much, far, far too much for him to handle. Everything is the exact opposite of okay.

"Please," he repeats, taking in a shaky breath. "Please, please, please, *Viktor*." He's not sure he can manage any other words, not sure he remembers how to pronounce anything else.

Viktor lowers his mouth onto him again and Yuuri moves one hand to the back of his head, his fingers weaving through silver hair. Viktor's tongue does one long stroke up his length and Yuuri wonders if this is what heaven feels like, wonders if he should get sick every day for the rest of his life if this is the treatment he'll receive.

Yuuri can feel himself babbling in Japanese but he can't bring himself to care, and Viktor just smiles up at him, looking more attractive than Yuuri has ever seen him. "Gorgeous, Yuuri," Viktor tells him and places a kiss to the head again, causing Yuuri to buck his hips involuntarily. It's too gentle, too gentle—Yuuri needs more. He tries to tell Viktor, but he's not sure what language his words come out in, not sure if any words come out at all.

He starts a slow, steady rhythm that quickly has Yuuri gasping, using all of his energy to keep his hips lowered on the bed. His free hand tangles in the sheets, knuckles white as he grips the fabric. Sparks fly behind his eyes and he keeps them shut tight, not trusting himself to open them. “I’m gonna...” he starts, but his words trail off as Viktor takes him into his mouth again.

When he comes, Viktor helps him ride it out, increasing his pace and sucking harder than before, cheeks hollowing and Yuuri can’t help but cry out, practically about to tear out the bedsheets beneath his hand. Then, Viktor falls on the bed beside him, panting just as hard and —*oh*.

“Viktor?”

“Mmm?”

There was no way. *Impossible*.

(Viktor Nikiforov. The world’s most decorated male figure skater.)

“...Did you...?”

Viktor blushes. Hard. Harder than Yuuri has ever seen him blush before. It’s adorable and endearing.

“I did,” Viktor admits and he ducks his head into the sheets and it’s so cute that Yuuri has to lean over and kiss him hard on his lips, their foreheads knocking together more forcefully than he’d intended but they just laugh it off. “It was just as good for me as it was for you.”

Yuuri stares at him, shaking his head. “That’s arguable.”

Viktor mutters something in Russian, the syllables barely audible, and kisses his hairline.

“What does that mean?” Yuuri asks, tracing random shapes on his shoulder with his fingers. He sees Viktor’s head turn to watch the movement, as though in a trance.

“It means that you’re perfect.”

Yuuri isn’t sure how to respond. “Viktor...”

“Shhh,” Viktor hums, hugging Yuuri against his chest and touching the hairs on the back of his neck. “You really ought to sleep, now.”

He’s more tired than ever, his eyelids already trying to fall down without his permission. His entire form is lethargic, sinking into the sheets and a yawn escaping his lips. “How am I supposed to sleep *now*?” he asks, half joking and half serious, grinning.

“Should I sing you a lullaby?” Viktor jokes.

Yuuri bumps him on the shoulder, mock offended.

Viktor yawns, too. “I’m going to go clean up a bit, I’ll be back. Do you need anything? More medicine or some water?”

“No thanks. If you’re not careful I’ll get used to you taking care of me like this,” Yuuri responds. Viktor moves away from him and out of the bed and he feels his absence like a nipping sensation against his skin, the reaction instant.

“I’d be okay with that, I think,” Viktor teases back, and Yuuri can catch a glimpse of his smile in the darkness before he’s gone.

~~

Viktor’s eyelids are heavy when he first wakes, his nose brushing against soft, black hair that smells of shampoo. He turns on the bed, yawning as he finally forces his eyes open, finally getting a glimpse of the man he’s currently cuddling.

Yuuri’s lips are parted, his arms tucked in front of him and his knees brought up to his chest. The blankets fall just underneath his collarbone, revealing soft, pale skin. Viktor leans closer and places a kiss to where his neck meets his shoulder, sucking lightly on the spot. He knows Yuuri needs his sleep, but it’s all too tempting, and he’s a weak, *weak* man when it comes to Yuuri Katsuki.

Yuuri’s eyes flutter open as he strains his neck to get a look at Viktor, staring up at him through impossibly dark eyelashes.

Viktor’s voice is muffled by his neck, and the skin is so soft and Yuuri’s body against his already has him half-hard, which is *completely* inappropriate given he’s sick and probably tired and needs as much rest as he can get. But then he remembers what had happened the night before—he’d gotten off by just giving Yuuri a blowjob, which was insane, albeit slightly embarrassing—and a tingle runs down his spine. “Good morning.”

Yuuri doesn’t answer.

“Yuuri?”

Yuuri sits up and looks scared, his hand on his throat and his eyes large. The blankets fall down to his hips and Viktor glances down, disappointed to see that at some point, Yuuri had put his boxers/briefs back on. Then, scolding himself for getting distracted, he looks at Yuuri’s eyes again, trying to determine the source of the fear.

“What’s wrong?” Viktor asks, sitting up. “Your throat? It hurts?”

Yuuri opens his mouth to speak but nothing comes out. He bites his lower lip and shakes his head, worried.

Viktor tries to remain calm. “You lost your voice?”

A nod.

“Does it hurt?”

He pauses, then shakes his head. Yuuri makes a gesture with his hand, placing it flat in the air and wiggling it back in forth to indicate it hurts a little. Viktor winces and places his hand on his cheek, stroking it. The other man offers a small smile, lowering his hand from his own throat and trying to talk again. A small noise comes out, as though his vocal cords are protesting.

“You might make it worse,” Viktor informs him, and Yuuri shrugs. “Here, I’ll find something for it. I’ll be right back.”

Yuuri squeezes his hand before he stands up and it’s weird, having one-sided conversations like this. But it’s frustrating more than anything to have to watch him go through pain like this, unable to help. Helplessness isn’t something Viktor is used to.

He grabs some medicine and brings it back to the bedroom. Yuuri swallows it without protest. Then Viktor leans back against the bedrest with an arm around his waist, watching him carefully. Yuuri stares ahead, his eyes sparkling as though he’s thinking about something. Viktor is about to ask what he’s contemplating when he remembers just how cruel that would be.

“Does your head still hurt?” he asks instead.

Yuuri shakes his head, offering a sad smile. A sad smile that makes Viktor hug him closer to him, wonder if there’s anything else he can possibly do. Then, Yuuri wriggles out of his grasp and moves over to the desk, searching for something. He holds up a pen and notebook, eyebrows shooting up as he silently asks for permission.

Viktor pats the area on the bed beside him and Yuuri sits back down, the bed sinking a little bit. He places the little plastic cap between his teeth and Viktor stares unashamedly—well, maybe with a bit of shame—at the sight of his pink tongue peeking out between his lips.

(He has never wanted to be a pen cap before. But now...)

Yuuri scribbles something, eyebrows drawing together as he focuses, and then displays the paper to Viktor. It’s a small picture of an ice cream bowl, the drawing surprisingly detailed, and Viktor smiles, squeezing his forearm with his hand. Obviously Yuuri could’ve just written the words, but the fact that he had doodled instead fills Viktor with an odd sense of pride that he can’t quite narrow down.

Yurio had taken the rest of the chocolate peanut butter, but luckily Viktor had anticipated this moment and bought more yesterday afternoon. “I’ll go get some.”

Yuuri draws a heart on the paper.

(Viktor almost passes out.)

(He considers hanging the page on his wall. Considers submitting it to a museum. It's a masterpiece. It's everything he never knew he needed and more.)

He kisses Yuuri. Yuuri's cheeks flush in the most perfect way and he kisses him back, smiling against his lips.

When he returns with the ice cream, he can hear the shower running, so he sets the bowls down on the nightstand and sits, pulling out his phone to scroll through missed text messages. When Yuuri emerges, his hair is wet and slicked back and he's wearing a long sleeved maroon t-shirt and jeans. Viktor isn't sure he's ever looked more attractive, which is a feat in it of itself.

Yuuri smiles at the sight of the ice cream and digs in immediately, mouth opening to say thanks before he quickly remembers his voice is missing. He settles down on the bed beside Viktor, legs crossed and hair still dripping a bit—Viktor finds that he doesn't mind in the slightest.

A companionable silence settles between them, but then Yuuri sets down the bowl and grabs the notepad again, scribbling something.

Talk?

Viktor eyes the heart on the paper again, his own heart swelling. "What about?"

Whatever you want.

Yuuri picks up the bowl again, and Viktor watches, mesmerized, as the silver spoon disappears past his lips. He notices Viktor watching him and playfully bumps him with his shoulder, as though reminding him.

"Well..." Viktor begins, unsure of what to say. "I like your hair like this."

Yuuri looks surprised, a hand reaching up to touch his wet, slicked back hair. He tries to speak again, but nothing comes out. He grabs at the notebook, pen cap back in his mouth, and Viktor contemplates giving him a monologue about that very sight. Who knew a plastic pen cap could be so intimidating?

I like yours, too.

"It's the same as it always is," Viktor points out.

Yuuri just turns his head, shy. Oh. He puts the pen to paper again, and this time it's a doodle of a figure with long hair and a flower crown. He adds skates and a rough sketch of an ice rink in the background, doing a row of tiny adjacent circles to represent an audience.

"You liked it long?"

Yuuri nods, but then draws another figure, this time just standing, with short hair. He doodles a heart beside it.

“Both?”

He nods again, smiling.

Viktor takes the pen and attempts to draw Yuuri sitting on the bed, but the picture comes out looking less cute and more horrifying. “I can only do stick figures,” Viktor complains, and Yuuri just laughs breathily, grabbing the pen and drawing a heart beside Viktor’s drawing, too.

“I’ll leave the drawing to you. Why didn’t you tell me you could draw?”

Yuuri is blushing. *I can’t draw that well. Requests?*

Viktor sets aside his now-empty ice cream bowl and shifts so that he can have a better view of the notebook in Yuuri’s lap, their shoulders now pressed against each other. “How about you draw something and I’ll guess what it is?”

Yuuri nods and sets to work, drawing a building with intricate details.

“Haesetsu?”

He grins and turns the page. Then there’s an image of a figure skater on the ice, and he adds black hair. “It’s you,” Viktor points out. Yuuri nods, but the drawing is incomplete. He adds a figure next to himself. “And me? Are we skating together?”

When he realizes he’s correct, he leans down and kisses Yuuri, his lips tasting entirely of chocolate. Yuuri sets the notebook to the side and leans back into the bed, slipping off of the headboard and onto the pillow while Viktor kisses him, his head sinking into the soft cushion.

Viktor tangles his fingers in Yuuri’s wet hair, taking a moment to breathe in the smell of shampoo and soap, and places his other hand on Yuuri’s thigh. Yuuri breathes quicker in response to the touch and Viktor feels Yuuri’s lips open underneath his own, their tongues meeting.

He lazily strokes Yuuri’s thigh as they make out, Yuuri’s hands tangling in his shirt as he leans upwards to meet him, his eyes half-lidded and the tips of his ears tinted pink. He’s completely silent, and it takes Viktor a while to remember why.

“This doesn’t hurt?” he asks.

Yuuri shakes his head quickly, kissing him again, as if he needs to. Viktor needs it just as badly, needs it as bad as air, as water, forgetting to breathe as Yuuri’s teeth clash with his own, his own eyes falling shut as he lets out a quiet moan that is quickly swallowed by the other man.

Viktor squeezes his thigh and Yuuri sighs underneath him, eyes finally falling shut and his dark eyelashes looking beautiful and long against his pale skin. “I hardly ever see you in red,” he tells him, toying with the neck of his t-shirt. “I like it.”

Yuuri's lips are bruised from kissing and his breaths are still heavy and Viktor isn't sure he's ever seen a more seductive sight, the other man lying underneath him, his hips making small movements towards Viktor's hand. He reaches out a hand for the notebook and scrambles to find it. He writes a quick note, turning on his side to do so.

I wish I could talk. This is annoying.

"What would you say?" Viktor asks him, leaning down to kiss his neck so that he can still make contact while Yuuri writes. He runs his teeth along the spot where his neck meets his shoulder, lightly nipping as he goes and then soothing the spots with his tongue. When Yuuri slips his fingers underneath the back of Viktor's shirt and touches his back he shivers, tilting his head to see what he'd written.

He's surprised to see that it's not words, but another picture instead. There's a man on skates and then another one watching him. The drawing is rough—Viktor can see several spots where the pen scraped against the paper, and he realizes that that must've been whenever he'd nipped at his neck, and smiles—but all of the details were put into the observer's eyes. "Which one is you? And which is me?"

Yuuri points to the person on skates and then pokes Viktor in the chest.

"I think it should be switched," Viktor informs him. "Recently, I've been watching you skate far more than you've been watching me."

He shakes his head and draws a box around the image of Viktor. Viktor frowns, watching closely. Yuuri adds little sticks poking out of the top of the box and then cheesy hearts around the image of himself. Then, after a moment, he adds a medal around Viktor's neck, making the shine of it obvious.

"A television?" Viktor asks, and Yuuri nods. "It's you watching me on television?"

He begins another drawing beside it. This time, it's obviously him on the ice—he colors in the hair, dark. Viktor is on the sidelines, smiling.

Viktor kisses him and then picks up the pen. "There we go. Oh, hang on, I have another idea." He scribbles a golden medal around Yuuri's shoulders, trying to match the one that Yuuri had drawn before.

Yuuri bumps his shoulder playfully, plucking the pen out of his hands.

"It looks better on you than me," Viktor informs him, kissing his temple. Yuuri rolls his eyes, but he's smiling, too, despite his attempts to hide it. Then, he starts coughing into his elbow, and when the fit is done he's lost his breath, rolling onto his back and tugging a fallen blanket onto his lap. He yawns and rubs a hand down his face, as though trying to keep himself awake.

"Are you going to sleep?"

Yuuri shrugs, eyes staring up at Viktor, curious. He reaches for the notebook.

Will you stay?

“Of course I will.”

And there’s a sense of familiarity to it. A sense that Viktor knows Yuuri doesn’t feel as he cuddles into his side again. His voice is gone but he’s more expressive than ever, the fabric of his t-shirt soft against Viktor’s still-bare chest.

~

They fly back to Japan on Friday.

Yuuri’s parents are fawning over him immediately, asking him about his cold and Russia and how on *Earth* he’d survived without his mother’s soup to help him through the sickness. Viktor feels a bit out of place among the family discussion and heads to his room, pulling out his phone to check up on the social media accounts he’d ignored for the last several days due to being occupied by a far, far more captivating Yuuri Katsuki.

Later, he finds himself walking to Yuuri’s room, already missing him after a single hour, and hears him talking to someone. He stands outside the door for a moment, unsure as to whether or not he should come inside.

“How was Russia?” Phichit’s voice asks, and Yuuri laughs for whatever reason—maybe something Phichit had done over video chat.

“It was good, very pretty,” Yuuri answers, and Viktor can hear the smile in his voice and he’s absolutely *adorable* and he’s more tempted than ever to walk in and pick him up and take him to his bed and never let him leave again.

Phichit hums. “I’ll *bet* it was pretty.” There’s a mocking tone to his voice, a hint of mischief.

Yuuri laughs harder this time and Viktor has to dampen the jealousy that hits him suddenly, because if he had his way he’d keep Yuuri to himself at all times, preferably in a bed, a large one, and preferably with an appreciable lack of clothes between them. “Phichit…” Yuuri starts, voice trailing off, as though trying to lecture him.

“What? I don’t get to hear about it?” Phichit complains.

“It’s not like that,” Yuuri protests.

Viktor can practically hear Phichit’s melodramatic eye roll. “It’s not like that?”

Makkachin comes running down the hallway and pounces on Viktor’s lap, two feet on the ground and the other two on his thighs, the dog smiling up at him and wagging his tail. Viktor winces as he hears Yuuri stand up and walk to the doorway. “Viktor?” he asks upon spotting him, running a hand through his hair.

Yuuri frowns at him, eyes shifting down to Makkachin as he lowers himself to pet the dog. Viktor rubs the back of his neck, “Sorry, I heard you talking to Phichit and I was just about to come back later.”

“You can come in,” he insists. Viktor falters, rocking back on his heels. He knows that Phichit and Yuuri often talk over video chat, and he really hadn’t meant to come interrupt. “Come say hi.”

“Hi Phichit,” Viktor greets, and he doesn’t know the other skater that well so the dynamic is a bit off-putting but Phichit smiles and waves back at him. After all, Viktor isn’t an awkward person, but he feels as though he’s barged in on something of the upmost importance.

Phichit eyes Yuuri, who sits back down on his desk chair—and Viktor feels as though there’s an inside joke that he isn’t quite getting and it bothers him far, far more than it should. “So are you two, like, a thing yet? Officially?”

Yuuri looks horrified. His cheeks flush red and he death-stares his phone. “*Phichit.*”

“What? I was going to ask you anyway—does it matter if Viktor is in the room or not?” Phichit asks, grinning.

Viktor shrugs and sits down on the arm of Yuuri’s desk chair, crossing his legs and leaning one arm on the back of the chair to maintain his balance. “We’re not a thing yet *officially*,” Viktor says, because he can tell what Phichit is trying to do—even if Yuuri can’t—and decides to play along.

Yuuri gapes. Mission accomplished.

“You... You’re... We’re...?” Yuuri fumbles, shaking his head slowly.

“Oh, you should tell everyone at the Grand Prix!” Phichit suggests. “Maybe kiss in front of the cameras. That’d be *so* perfect. If you do end up doing that, let me know first and I’ll take a picture for Instagram. Imagine the likes. Oh—imagine the *comments*.”

“Phichit!” Yuuri repeats, burying his face in his hands. “Of course we’re not going to kiss in front of the cameras in Barcelona.”

“We’re not?” Viktor asks, extending his lower lip in a perfect pout.

Yuuri looks as though somebody has just punched him in the face. His pupils dilate, jaw dropping. He stutters to find an answer, shaking his head and staring at Viktor in disbelief. “You want to... You...?”

Phichit makes a clicking sound with his lips and teeth. “You’re disappointing your boyfriend, Yuuri.”

“Boyfriend?!” Then, realization seems to hit him like a bag of bricks. “You two are teaming up on me,” Yuuri complains, staring at Viktor with a desperate look in his eyes. “*Not* fair.”

“Very fair,” Phichit teases. “Anyway, I’ve got to get back to practice—I’ll see you two. And remember, let me know what the plans are for going public. I want to be there.”

Yuuri groans in protest. “Bye, Phichit.”

“And Viktor?”

Viktor looks at Phichit’s image on the phone, raising an eyebrow.

“Go easy on him, yeah? He’s sort of crazy about you.”

“*Phichit!*”

~

He’s already hung up and Yuuri moves over to his bed, burying his face in the sheets. “That is *so* embarrassing,” he complains.

Viktor smiles and sits on the bed beside him, swinging his legs. “Have you talked to him about me?”

“Maybe. A little.”

“A little?”

“Okay—a lot.”

“Aww, Yuuri,” Viktor teases, hugging him from behind and wrapping his arms around his chest.

Yuuri groans into the sheets. “Shut up.”

“Make me?”

Yuuri turns around in his arms and kisses him firmly on the lips, a hand coming up to tug on the ends of his hair. Viktor smiles and lets Yuuri turn the tables, pushing him against the bed and straddling his legs with his own. “At least I know how to make you be quiet now,” Yuuri jokes, poking him in the chest.

Viktor’s eyes are shut in please, his head back against the mattress. “I’m okay with that.”

Yuuri’s lips move to his neck and he nips at his collarbone, eliciting a gasp from Viktor. It’s new, taking control like this, but Yuuri figures that everything they’ve done in the last few days has been new. A welcoming sort of new, but new all the same. When his phone goes off across the room, Viktor curses in Russian, leaning back into the mattress with a sigh. “Would you mind getting that for me?” he asks.

Yuuri shakes his head, a bit dizzy from the kissing, moving off of the visibly annoyed Viktor to cross the room. “It’s a text from Yurio. Do you want me to open it?”

Viktor waves a hand in the air, a vague gesture. “Sure.”

“He just said...”

Yurio’s last text to Viktor, which is visible above the new message, was a video. And in the thumbnail was...

“What’s this?” Yuuri asks, clicking on the video.

It’s him. Him on the couch in Viktor’s house, blankets piled on his lap.

He glances over at Viktor on the bed and the man has gone visibly stiff, sitting up and staring at Yuuri, wide-eyed. “That’s—er... It’s from a few days ago, when you were sick. Yurio took a video of you.”

The video plays.

“So tell me about you and Viktor,” Yurio prompts from behind the camera, sounding amused

“Me and Viktor?” Yuuri looks as though he’s about to pass out at any second, sniffing and rubbing at his forehead with one hand. “I love him,” he answers after a minute.

Yurio sounds shocked. “You...?”

“Love him,” Yuuri finishes, louder this time, as though it were ridiculous that Yurio hadn’t understood him the first time. “I named my dog after him.”

“Your dog?”

“Vicchan. And I used to have posters of him all over my room. I’d get them for my birthday every year from everyone I knew. I started skating competitively because of him.”

“You... You named your dog after Viktor? And had posters of him all over your room?”

Yuuri smiles at the camera and hums. “Viktor is talented and kind and wonderful,” he adds naturally, looking as though he’s about to keep going when the phone is lowered and the video abruptly ends.

When he looks over at Viktor, the other man looks scared more than anything else, his eyes wide and his hand nervously running through his hair as he sits on the bed, legs crossed and cheeks still flushed from when they’d been kissing just moments ago.

Yuuri sets the phone down on the desk. “You told me I didn’t say anything embarrassing while I was sick.”

“It wasn’t embarrassing!” Viktor protests. “You were delirious and Yurio took it because he thought it’d be funny. I wasn’t even around.”

Viktor is kind and talented and wonderful. Yuuri cringes and buries his face in his hands, shaking his head back and forth. Maybe he’ll wake up and this will have just been a dream.

He could pretend that Viktor had kissed him a few days before without the prior knowledge that Yuuri had adored him, the knowledge that Yuuri worshipped him, would do whatever he suggested. Of course, he'd probably already known half of that before the video, anyway, but... "What else did I say?"

There *has* to be more. He can tell by the look on Viktor's face.

"Yuuri..."

"Tell me."

Viktor falters, standing up and moving closer to Yuuri. Yuuri places a hand on his chest, keeping him an arm's length away. He doesn't want to be comforted, doesn't want Viktor to act as though he's frail. "I figured you didn't mean any of it—you were out of it. Completely out of it."

"What else did I say?" Yuuri repeats, slowly this time, trying to add a sense of gravity to his voice and failing miserably when it cracks.

"Most of it was nonsense. Nothing important. But then..."

"Then what?"

Viktor swallows thickly. "You told me you thought I was attractive. And... And that you loved me."

Yuuri pauses, taking in the information. So that night, the night that they'd slept together... Viktor had known all of that. All of that and more, probably.

"And... You tried to kiss me. And I didn't let you keep going, but we slept in the same bed. You asked me to."

His dream. Everything clicks.

Yuuri stares at him, licking his lips and waiting for something, *anything* that will allow himself to forgive Viktor. Because despite how upset he is (mainly at himself), all he wants is to fling himself in to Viktor's arms, to wrap himself in his embrace and to hug him tight.

(And that's part of the issue, isn't it? Whenever he's upset, Viktor comes to him. Viktor is his coping mechanism. So now what does he do?)

"And you didn't think to tell me any of that?"

"I didn't... I didn't know that you meant any of it until that next night, Yuuri, I swear. I figured there wasn't any reason to embarrass you by showing you the video."

Yuuri feels tears pricking at the corners of his eyes and he's not mad at Viktor anymore, not really, he's just mad at himself, mad for being so stupidly in love. Mad because he'd thrown himself at a man who had already known that he was in love with him, a man who probably

thought he was pathetic and too-eager. Every time he closes his eyes, the words *Viktor is kind and talented and wonderful* ring in his head again and it's painful.

(How could he have thought that a relationship like this would come so easy? He'd been in love with Viktor for ages, and he thought that he could just kiss him and Viktor would kiss him back and it would all work itself out magically?)

"Yuuri, please don't be upset," Viktor is pleading, and his voice is so easy to listen to, his personality so easy to forgive. "I'm sorry I didn't tell you earlier, but please, please forgive me."

Yuuri bites his lower lip. "You must think I'm so pathetic."

"Yuuri, why would I—"

"Because I threw myself at you when I couldn't stop myself. Because I called you attractive and talked about naming my poodle after you, Viktor. Because I had a poster collection of you. How could I have been so *stupid*?"

Viktor reaches for him again, and this time Yuuri pulls away quicker, backing up against his wardrobe and hunching his shoulders forward, trying to make himself as small as possible. A look of hurt flashes across Viktor's features and it hurts but Yuuri just keeps sitting there, his hands shaking slightly, his mind clouded with racing thoughts and the remnants of his sickness.

"You're not pathetic," Viktor assures him. "I've never thought that, and I never will."

"I am," Yuuri argues. "I've practically been in love with you for years, Viktor, before I even met you, and meanwhile you only found out I existed less than a year ago. Don't you think this relationship is a bit lopsided?"

And there it is.

The ball dropping.

Because Yuuri has loved Viktor for years, *years*, and to Viktor, Yuuri was probably just another fling. He'd probably move on as soon as Yuuri didn't win the Grand Prix Final. Or, even if he did, he'd just stick with him until he retired, anyway, and he had already been contemplating retiring after this season...

Lopsided.

(Lopsided. The word hangs in the air like a threat.)

Viktor's mouth opens, then closes. He laughs—it's dry and humorless. "Apparently you have... absolutely no idea how I feel about you. Which is my fault."

"And you have every idea how *I* feel about *you*. Don't you see?" Yuuri snuffles, rubbing at his forehead with the back of his hand because his head still aches and everything is painful.

Viktor reaches out an arm and wipes away a tear that strayed onto Yuuri's cheek. Yuuri doesn't pull away despite the temptation. "Can I try and tell you, then?" Viktor pleads. "No matter how embarrassing it is?"

Yuuri doesn't say anything, just ducks his head and stares at the floor. Then, there are fingers on his chin and his head is being tilted up, his eyes meeting Viktor's. Realizing that the other man is still waiting for an answer, Yuuri offers a small nod.

"I've loved you since the day I met you at the banquet," Viktor tells him, his voice quiet and meaningful, fingers drifting from his chin to his cheek. "Then your video inspired me, Yuuri, more than anything else ever had. And you've changed me as a person in so many ways."

Yuuri wipes desperately at another tear that betrays him by falling down onto his cheek. His knees feel weak and his head still aches but he's hanging onto Viktor's words like a life raft, struggling to stay afloat even as the water rises around him.

"You're the most beautiful person I've ever met," Viktor tells him, smiling.

Yuuri laughs, shaking his head. "That's all nice, but I hope you realize that none of that was embarrassing."

"Hmm. What if I told you that I started dreaming about you when I first came to Japan?"

"You did?"

Viktor bites the corner of his lip, eyes drifting up towards the ceiling. "All the time. I dreamt about everything about you. The way you skate, your eyes, your lips, your laugh, not to mention the sight of you in the costume for Eros..."

Yuuri's eyes grow large. "The Eros costume?"

Viktor shakes his head regretfully, voice lowering to a mumble. "Someday, I'll give you a several hour long rant about how you look in that costume."

"I didn't know you liked it that much," Yuuri admits, biting his lip unconsciously.

"Oh, Yuuri," Viktor mumbles, pressing an innocuous kiss to his cheek, lips lingering there, "you have no idea what you do to me. *Especially* in that costume."

Yuuri turns his head so that they're kissing properly, his hand raising to cup Viktor's cheek. "You really mean all of that?"

"Every word," Viktor assures him, breath hot against his lips.

"I can't believe you dreamed about me," Yuuri mutters, shaking his head. "If you'd told me that back then..."

Viktor blushes. "I've never been good at admitting things."

"I like you admitting things."

Laughing, Viktor lifts Yuuri up by his waist, lowering him down onto the bed and straddling his legs with his own, kissing him firmly and peppering kisses on any exposed skin he can find—his face, his neck, his shoulders. “I love you.”

“I love you too,” Yuuri tells him, pressing a kiss to his head.

“Does this mean we’re okay?” Viktor asks him, a worry in his eyes that Yuuri wants to relieve, a worry that tugs on his heartstrings.

Yuuri grabs his hand in his own and squeezes his fingers. “Depends on whether or not you give me that monologue about the Eros costume.”

Viktor cringes. “Yuuri...”

“I never see you embarrassed,” Yuuri teases, lifting his head up to kiss his cheek. “So I’m ready for the several hour long rant you promised, please. Make it sappy. And don’t leave out any details.”

“But—“

“That is, unless you don’t want me to forgive you. Which is fine. I’ll just go cry about the video alone in my room,” Yuuri threatens, putting on his best fake pout. Then, his expression turns thoughtful as he bites his lower lip, watching the way that Viktor’s eyes focus on the movement, his tongue darting out to wet his own lips instinctively. “And I’ll never get to do to you what I’ve been planning on doing to you ever since we got back to Japan.”

(He’d never actually had anything planned, but Viktor doesn’t know that.)

Viktor’s eyes light up the way Yuuri had hoped, eyebrows drawing together adorably. “What do you mean, what you’ve been planning on doing...?”

Yuuri places a finger on his lips and gives him a look.

Viktor swallows thickly, all signs of his earlier protests gone. “Well, I guess it started when you first put it on...”

~

A few days later

~

“Yuuri, I’m dying.”

Yuuri blinks, phone almost falling out of his hands. “*What?*”

There’s violent coughing on the other end of the line and then he glances down to see that Viktor has already hung up on him. Yuuri gapes at the screen and sprints back down the road towards the hot springs. He had been going for an innocent jog since he couldn't sleep, and why was Viktor even *awake* at this hour? Was he dying? Surely his family would’ve heard him? Surely somebody was helping him?

When he makes it to Viktor’s room, he sees him curled up in a tiny ball on the mattress—a position that Yuuri has never, *never* seen him in before—with Makkachin by his feet, sleeping soundly, undisturbed. “Viktor?” Yuuri asks, horrified.

Viktor doesn’t move.

He was normally so full of life, and yet here he was, silent.

Yuuri falls to his knees and shakes his shoulders before feeling for a pulse on his neck. Luckily, there was a steady beat. “Viktor? Viktor, wake up.”

Then, after a moment, he shifts. Viktor blinks up at him through cloudy irises and sniffs loudly. “I think you got me sick.”

“I’ll go get medicine—I’ll be right back,” Yuuri offers quickly, already turning around on his heels when an arm grabs him.

“You’re going to have to take care of me now,” Viktor teases, and there’s a mischievous glint in his eyes but the image is ruined when he sneezes and then groans in pain, the back of his head pressing into the pillow as he reaches down to grab Makkachin.

Yuuri smiles sympathetically and brushes some hair out of his face. He looked like a mess. His eyes were rimmed with red and there were already prominent lines underneath them. His black shirt was wrinkled and his lips were parted and chapped.

(There was nothing quite like seeing one’s idol as a complete mess to boost one’s self confidence.)

(It humanized him, in a way.)

“Peanut butter and chocolate ice cream?”

“Please.”

Works inspired by this one

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