

in a world uncertain

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in a world uncertain

by [bluering](#)

Summary

when there's a gap in the schedule, jimin and namjoon go to busan

(a melancholy song about love and stones)

Notes

song title is from stone by alessia cara :))

enjoy this tiny little thing ,, it is v delicate, be gentle with it

admittedly i didn't write this that recently, but ive been experiencing some mad writers' block of late and it sucks, but this is what i have to offer. i hope u like it

x

the crunch of pebbles underfoot,

down down down to the sea. the rough seam between land and ocean, where the wind is harsher and there is salt on your tongue.

jimin, slowly (slowly) shifts to rest his head on namjoon's shoulder, the pebbles beneath him grating as he moves. a sharp intake of breath, stolen by the wind. namjoon tenses, then relaxes at the feel of jimin's head against his shoulder, the brush of his hair against his cheek as jimin breathes in out in out.

as comfortably regular as the tide coming in, going out. in out in out.

the sky is as grey as it always is at this time of year. jimin told him on the train down that he never likes coming down this early, but their schedules don't permit any space for another trip. so it has to be now.

not that he's told him, but namjoon rather likes the grey, the cold that comes with it. it hurts. hurts good. aches.

we bloom until we ache. that's one he hasn't shared with jimin yet, but it's for him. he can hear it in his mind — somehow out of reach but tangible at the same time.

the warmth on his shoulder disappears as jimin leans away to pick something up.

a stone. satisfyingly round, almost spherical. jimin turns it over in his palm, squeezes his fingers around it, weighs it up.

'i like this one,' he says, holding it up. his short fingers look even shorter wrapped around it, struggling to keep it in his grip.

'why?' namjoon asks, and jimin looks back.

the pebbles crunch beneath them with every movement, a satisfying soundscape, an underscore. it melds with the whisper of the waves against the shore, the lonely cry of the seagulls wheeling in the air above.

'i dunno,' jimin says after a moment of consideration. he examines it again, swipes his thumb across the surface. 'i like the shape.'

'it's a nice shape,' namjoon agrees.

jimin turns, settles on his knees, then holds the stone up next to namjoon's head.

'looks like you, hyung,' he says, squinting.

namjoon snorts.

‘how?’ he asks.

‘just does,’ jimin says with a shrug. he giggles to himself. it’s soft, like spun cotton. ‘found myself a namjoonie stone.’

‘let’s make a collection,’ namjoon says as jimin settles back into his spot in namjoon’s shoulder.

‘of namjoonie stones?’ jimin asks.

‘of any stone,’ namjoon says. ‘any stone we like.’

jimin considers.

‘we’d never get them back to seoul,’ he says.

‘we’ll keep them here, then,’ namjoon says. ‘keep ‘em in your room.’

jimin considers again.

‘okay,’ he says carefully. ‘your turn, then.’

namjoon looks around. it takes him two minutes.

‘this one,’ he says, holding it between their bodies for them both to look. jimin leans in closer. closer closer closer. namjoon can smell him.

it’s flatter than jimin’s, round and smooth and shiny, worn down by hundreds of years at the bottom of the ocean. jimin cups his fingers around namjoon’s, holds on like he’s shielding a new flame from the wind.

‘yeah,’ he says. ‘i like this one, hyung.’

the wind howls. namjoon aches.

we bloom until we ache.

is namjoon blooming? is that what it feels like?

namjoon is no longer sure.

there is little sunset to be seen with a sky this grey, but they stay to watch night fall anyway. somewhere, namjoon slides his arm around jimin’s shoulder. he tells himself it’s to make sure jimin doesn’t laugh so hard he falls backwards, as he’s so prone to doing. but he’s pulling jimin inexplicably closer. closer closer closer.

when are you going to stop lying to yourself, namjoon thinks.

‘sleepy, hyung,’ jimin mumbles into his coat. he nuzzles into the fabric, yawns.

‘you wanna go home?’ namjoon asks. it is almost dark now, the ocean becoming more and more obscured as the sun slips from view. only the brightest stars are on display at this time.

‘yeah,’ jimin murmurs, eyes still closed.

they stagger to their feet.

‘don’t forget the stones,’ jimin says, and namjoon pats his pockets to show him that he has them. jimin nods sleepily, satisfied.

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namjoon lies with his lyric book resting on his chest as he stares up at the ceiling, the dimming glow-in-the-dark stars still clumsily stuck there from so long ago.

jimin’s childhood bedroom may have been vacated many years ago now, but it still sighs with an inescapable *jimin-ness*. he is not so different to the boy he was when he first came to seoul, soft and careful with rounded edges. there was salt on his skin then, and it's still there now. namjoon still thinks he sees him, somewhere down there, beneath all that packed-on muscle and eyeliner and designer clothes.

he sees him most at moments such as these, when it’s just the two of them alone. jimin is simply jimin, and that’s enough.

the boy in question lies in the bed above him. it creaks as he shifts, rolls over so that he’s looking down at namjoon.

his eyes shine in the darkness. a suggestion.

namjoon crawls into the bed beside him, pulls him into his arms without a second’s thought.

‘hyung,’ jimin whispers into the darkness. ‘hyung, kiss me.’

namjoon kisses him soft but deep. he licks the salt off of jimin’s tongue, his lips. trails his fingertips down his jaw, presses into the bone. kisses across his eyelids, across the subtle arches of his cheekbones.

‘god,’ jimin whispers into his neck as he sucks on the skin there, laving his tongue over it to ease the sharp sting his lips leave.

it aches it aches it aches.

somewhere, someone whispers that this is wrong. namjoon imagines this someone in the corner of the room, repeating a quiet mantra that namjoon does his best to ignore entirely.

it's not wrong. he loves this boy beneath him, the boy with all the salt in the ocean crystallised in his blood, raging with the electricity of the waves during a thunderstorm, far far out to sea.

it can't be wrong.

he curls his fingers into jimin's hair, pulls him closer.

namjoon feels stripped raw. his edges are as jagged as the coastline. jimin's mouth smooths them out.

'don't wanna go back,' jimin mumbles. 'tell me we can stay here forever.'

'your parents are just next door,' namjoon smiles, and jimin rolls his eyes. fond.

'don't care,' he says, sneaking another kiss onto namjoon's lips. 'don't care don't care. wanna be here. by the sea. with you. don't wanna dance. don't wanna sing, or be on stage. want people to stop taking pictures of me. wanna be here, with you.'

'wanna be with you, too,' namjoon says, and he means it. he has never been so honest in all his life. 'in the future. we can move back here. get a cottage or something, right by the sea. we'll come back. we can go for walks on the beach every day.'

jimin kisses him, hard and fast.

'i want that,' jimin gasps. 'please, hyung. promise it'll happen. promise me.'

'it'll happen, jimin-ah.' namjoon leans his forehead against jimin's, presses in tight. 'i promise you. i promise i promise i promise.'

between their bodies, jimin links his pinkie finger with namjoon's own. he brings their interlocked fingers up to his mouth, presses his lips against them; soft and warm and barely there.

thank you, he says without saying anything at all.

a lthough you say nothing i feel it.

namjoon falls asleep crushed against jimin's side in that tiny twin bed, the crystalline boy he loves so rawly pressed into his chest under the glow of plastic stars.

there are many more stars

together we're flying

namjoon thinks.

-

jimin's mother makes them *hotteok* the next morning, all of them shoved around the small circular table in the parks' kitchen. it is cold outside, and it presses all around, fogging up the windows.

it always feels different to be cared for in such a way. homemade food, food made by a *mother*. it warms something half-forgotten in namjoon's chest.

jimin's parents smile with their eyes, just like their son. they fill their home with flowers — lilies and peonies and posies and tulips and buttercups. they touch each other softly, carefully; small taps on the back, gentle hugs, chins hooked over shoulders. jimin was raised hearing the words *i love you*; the first thing he'd hear in the morning, the last he'd hear at night.

it explains why, namjoon supposes, jimin's soul is as softened as washed up driftwood. it simmers, it glows. it has been nurtured and cared for, handled carefully, and it shows.

they ride their bikes along the seafront that morning.

they ride in relative silence. it is still early, so the coastal path remains empty as they ride, shivering in the cool stillness of the morning.

they end up, as they always do, on the beach again, their bikes slung to the ground a little further up the shore. this time, jimin sits between namjoon's legs, leaning back on his chest. namjoon's gasp at the sudden contact is, like yesterday, whisked away on the wind. he is grateful.

jimin idly plays with namjoon's fingers, sliding the rings that adorn them on and off, turning namjoon's palms up towards the sky as if he wants to read them, tell his future.

then he links their pinkies again, squeezes tight.

this is not a coincidence

namjoon thinks.

‘we’ll come back,’ namjoon says, reading his mind. jimin sighs, shifts himself on the pebbles beneath him. there is salt in the air. the sun shines weak through the wall of grey, a watery, glowing spot beneath the clouds.

‘when?’ jimin asks. ‘how many more comebacks? how many more songs will we have to release? i wanna be at *home*, hyung.’

‘i know,’ namjoon murmurs. he buries his face in jimin’s hair. breathes. ‘do you wanna quit?’ the question hangs.

‘no,’ jimin says quietly after a short while. ‘no, i don’t wanna.’

‘because it’s okay if you do,’ namjoon continues, feels jimin stiffen in his arms.

‘there have been times when i have,’ he says delicately. ‘but not now. we’ve come too far to quit. it’s just...tiring.’

‘yeah,’ namjoon says. ‘tiring.’

they sit in silence for a little longer, namjoon allowing himself one small, singular kiss to the nape of jimin’s neck.

‘we gotta find a new stone,’ he murmurs eventually, lips moving against jimin’s neck as he speaks.

‘can’t just pick any one,’ jimin says. ‘it’s gotta be the right one.’

they find the right one twenty minutes later, right down at the shoreline where the water creeps so close that it almost wets the toes of namjoon’s shoes.

this stone is a light reddish brown, a satisfying oval shape that fits neatly into namjoon’s palm. jimin takes it from him carefully, closes his eyes, rubs it against his cheek. smooth.

‘like it,’ jimin says, reopening his eyes to examine the stone once again. ‘this is good.’

namjoon nods.

‘this is good,’ he repeats, because right there on that beach under a grey sky, the roar of the ocean in his ears, the crunch of pebbles underfoot —

seoul seems miles and miles away.

and that is good.

jimin learnt to love from two people who got to know it well.

jimin loves wholly, fully, with all his being. he loves with his whole body. he loves with his hands, his palms, his fingers, with every callus and crease; he loves with his eyes and his lips and his teeth. he loves he loves he loves. it leaks out of every seam, like light spilling beneath the crack under the door, around closed curtains in the morning. it drips down onto his sheets throughout the night, stains them gold. namjoon's hands are sticky with it.

because that is all that jimin has known. to love with all his head and his heart and his soul is the brave thing, the noble thing to do, for park jimin and his family.

they love they love they love.

namjoon has always found love to be rather more of a weakness. his family do not show their love in the quiet but insistent way in which the parks love. the love he is best versed in is the type that is swept under the rug, shrugged off until the time is right (and the time is almost never right). it is never a constant thing. its grip is weak, fingers failing to cling on.

it was there, it existed. it was just never of utmost importance.

so loving jimin, for namjoon, is unnatural. he has never had to give more of himself to a person. namjoon feels raw around jimin because jimin has seen the eighty percent of himself that he never ever shows. beyond the face of Kim Namjoon that the media sees. beyond who he is around anyone and everyone else.

jimin has reached down namjoon's throat and closed a fist around his heart. it pulses in his fingers, all bloody and spongey and fragile

— but so warm.

-

‘i think i miss them.’

they are arranging their small collection of stones on jimin's mantle — just the three. it doesn't take much arranging, but jimin, as he so frequently does, is engaging entirely, focused so carefully on making it right.

‘who?’ namjoon asks.

‘them,’ jimin says simply. ‘the others. jeonggukkie and taehyungie and hoseokkie-hyung and yoongi-hyung and jin-hyung. i think i miss them.’

namjoon looks between jimin and the stones on the mantle.

‘let’s find four more stones,’ namjoon says. ‘three plus four makes seven. we’ll have seven stones in total.’

‘oh,’ jimin says. ‘yeah, hyung. hyung, that’s perfect.’

‘i think they’d like that.’ he smiles to himself at the thought of their separate reactions to something so menial that would no doubt cause such genuine excitement.

jimin appears to have the same thought.

‘hoseokkie would be so excited,’ he says. he looks impossibly fond. ‘and yoongi-hyung would pretend to not be interested but but he’d secretly love it.’

‘jeongguk-ah would probably carry his around everywhere,’ namjoon supplies. ‘give it some kind of name. taehyung-ah would make it in a necklace. and seokjin-hyung would...stick googley eyes on it.’

both of them laugh.

namjoon reaches out to link their fingers, squeezing softly.

‘we’ll find the others tomorrow,’ he says quietly, and jimin nods.

-

that night, namjoon presses jimin into the bed, licks the salt off his tongue, his lips, hears the ocean in the way he gasps beneath him.

you’re my penicillin

namjoon thinks.

you’re my calico cat

namjoon thinks.

my angel, my world.

let me love you.

-

they complete the collection of stones over the next two days.

seven stones on the mantle, all arranged neatly.

there's a white one, egg-shaped, speckled with grey like paint flicked off a paintbrush. one dark grey one, with a smooth line of white ringed around it through the centre. a red one, a fragment of something that they supposed used to be much bigger; now small and rough around the edges but with a colour so striking it was impossible to miss. another smaller one, but this one jet black, the surface shiny and untarnished.

they stand back to take them in, their strange little collation. namjoon feels oddly proud.

'think we should take a photo?' jimin asks. 'to show them when we get back?'

when we get back. it tugs at the pit of his stomach a little. by tomorrow they will be back in the smog of seoul, far far far from the sea and the salty air and the crunch of pebbles underfoot.

'no,' namjoon says, after a moment's consideration. 'let's keep them a secret. just for now.' as enjoyable as he knows the other members' reactions would be, he wants this one for himself. for him and jimin.

jimin smiles up at him with all the light of the sun emerging through the clouds after days of grey. something in namjoon's chest is unlatched.

he loves his boy.

namjoon aches.

maybe it's the providence of the universe

namjoon thinks.

the universe has moved for us.

-

namjoon collates all of these nascent lines floating around his brain and puts them down onto paper. he starts the minute he arrives back home, holed back up in his studio.

hoseok brings him coffee. asks him about busan. gently inquires into why jimin looks so sad to be back.

‘it’s not you, seok-ah,’ namjoon says softly. ‘i think he just misses home. i think he always will.’

namjoon scribbles and scribbles and words don’t form right at first but eventually he emerges with something; an ember just before the fire catches, something delicate, something precious.

he calls it *serendipity*.

he works a base track for it, something that makes him think of water, a stream that leads towards the ocean. the stars above, hidden in deep swathes of black. descending into the blue, like submerging yourself in the deep end of a swimming pool. the sun breaking through the clouds.

the crunch of pebbles underfoot.

he records himself — a scratchy but passable melody over the top. imagines what it’ll sound like when the person he really wants to hear sings it.

the ocean is rough and unforgiving, but this song is not. this song is the moment of utter stillness after the wind dies down, the warmth of a body pressed against your own in a bed too small. namjoon could write something cold and harsh to match the roiling of the waves, the grey of the sky, full of angry syllables and no space to breathe in between each line.

but all namjoon can hear in his mind is jimin’s voice, dripping with something bright, achingly soft. a voice to calm even the fiercest tides.

and namjoon knows.

-

he finds jimin curled on his bed. he’s reading, glasses on, his hair damp from the shower.

namjoon slides his earphones into jimin's ears, presses play on his phone. slips the sheet with the lyrics scribbled on it into his hands. studies jimin's face closely as he listens to the track, all the way through.

'that's beautiful, hyung,' jimin says once it's done. he stares down at the lyrics, eyes flickering across them. 'these are gorgeous.'

'it's for you, jimin-ah,' namjoon breathes. 'the song, it's for you to sing. the lyrics, they're about you.'

jimin blinks at him. namjoon does not miss his breath catching.

'what?' he says eventually.

'i wrote it while we were in busan,' namjoon continues. 'they're for you, jimin-ah. all of those lyrics, they're about you. all you.'

'hyung—' jimin whispers.

'will you sing it for me?' namjoon asks, strangely desperate. 'please. it's just for you, only you.'

jimin is nodding before namjoon has the chance to finish his sentence, pulling namjoon towards him by his wrists, wrapping him tight tight tight in his arms.

'yes, hyung,' jimin whispers into his ear. 'yes, of course i will. thank you. thank you, thank you, thank you.'

-

the stones remain on the mantle as night cycles through day, again and again and again they remain. seven stones. unmovable.

the life the seven boys lead is so fleeting, so ephemeral.

but those stones will stay for as long as they are left there. they will breathe, exist.

at entirely their own pace.

'seven kisses for seven stones,' namjoon murmurs one night when jimin is sobbing weakly for his home into namjoon's chest, and namjoon simply places his kisses on jimin's face — his cheeks, the underside of his jaw, behind his ear.

everything tastes of salt.

-

just let me love you

jimin sings.

since the creation of the universe

everything was destined.

jimin sings.

just let me love you.

-

they go back to busan the next year. namjoon thinks he hears lyrics for something new in the way the seagulls wail overhead, in jimin's laugh, high and clear.

they are less formed. they will emerge in their own time, namjoon supposes. he must not rush them.

on the mantle, the stones remain.

jimin whispers the lyrics to *serendipity* to namjoon when they lie in bed at night, voice soft soft soft, soft as starlight.

the stones remain. they remain for the next year.

and the next year, gathering dust but still there.

and all and all and all the years that are left to come.

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