

“Wrong pan.”

Vincent said coldly, his arms firmly crossed as he stood behind Rody who was desperately trying to guess which pan he should use to cook this steak. His nervous gaze shifted between at least a dozen other sizes and colors. “Erm—sorry. Aren’t they all the same?”

He chuckled a little, there was a long sigh coming from behind him as Vincent came around and moved Rody out of the way with his body. He reached a hand into the cabinet, if he wanted to he wouldn’t have needed to open his eyes to have grabbed the correct pan.

Placing it into Rody’s dumbfounded arms, he expectantly gestured toward the stove. “Well? Aren’t you going to cook?”

Rody startled and in his haste set the stove on high. Vincent slapped his forehead as he watched in distraught.

Rody threw him an apologetic smile, although he had no idea what he had done wrong.

Vincent’s tired gaze finally rose, his dark eyes shone with slight irritation. “I thought you wanted to become a chef?”

He asked, Rody fiddled with the temperature. Hoping to stop on command by Vincent’s reaction to his twisting and turning.

Not having the right timing. He was jumping up and down on the temperature scale. “I do, it’s just—y’know, this is a little harder than I thought.”

Vincent rolled his eyes,

“You’re cooking for people to enjoy, of course it’s going to be *hard*. Be happy I’m even giving you lessons in the first place.”

He huffed, shaking his head. Rody sent him a wild look, out of his own enticement he grew curious. Smiling like an idiot, he asked.

“I’m grateful, have you ever taught someone yourself before?”

Vincent grew silent, his eyes narrowed as he fell without an answer. Rody, knowing he struck a nerve, smirked. Vincent, oddly enough, smiled back, something he’d rarely ever do. But it was a wickedly evil grin. “The stove’s on fire.”

He said calmly, Rody whipped his head around. Expecting to see his pan set ablaze. Yet nothing was there, gullible as he was. He shot Vincent a glare from the side. He was no longer smiling,

“I don’t see a fire.” Rody exclaimed, “There will be if you don’t start already.”

Vincent rolled his eyes, this time much more exaggerated. Rody didn’t like the way that sounded, his gaze slowly shifted from Vincent back toward the pan.

He carefully reached over and unwrapped the steak, but before he could place it in the pan. Vincent’s gaze sliced butcher wounds into the back of his scalp. He turned his head back, “What am I doing wrong now?”

He grumbled, Vincent approached. Without any warning he shoved his arm over and switched the temperature back to medium. He was a few inches taller than Rody. So his gaze naturally fell to look him in the eyes, there was a short pause.

His gray lips thinned into a sharp line, turning his head away. *Tsk*, Rody’s

expression puzzled.

Vincent stood with his back turned, Rody decided not to bug him any further and placed the steak in. Nervously moving it around.

Hoping to achieve some form of 'good food,' at least to Vincent's standards. "Go ahead and grab some seasoning from the ingredient cabinet."

He instructed lightly, Rody gave him a thumbs up and confidently moved toward the cabinets.

He made a wild guess and reached toward his left, his hand gripped the knob. It was so cold that for a second he nearly thought it was scolding.

Yet before he could open it, Vincent was suddenly standing right behind him. His hand was locked hard on Rody's wrist. "No."

He muttered darkly, Rody shivered and nodded his head slowly. He couldn't see Vincent's expression. But he knew it was nothing pretty, Vincent didn't let go either. Instead he moved Rody's hand toward the cabinet on his right. "This one,"

He corrected, finally he'd let go. Rody let out a silent breath of relief, there was a rough pinkish handprint on his wrist now. "Heh—that's my bad chef." He laughed nervously,

"It is, now hurry up. Food doesn't wait." Rody sighed and reached into the cabinet to grab a couple different types of seasoning that would compliment the steak.

His brows knitted a little as he became a little more annoyed at Vincent's constant corrections. *Maybe it's just you who's impatient.* He thought to himself.

Bringing the seasoning over, he went to smack the bottom of the bottle as it faced downward. In his ditch of bad luck, the top loosened and the entire bottle was dumped out onto the half cooked steak.

Rody gritted his teeth, scratching the back of his neck he dared not look to see Vincent's expression. Who of which, was ready to throw a knife at his guest's spine.

"Just start ov—"

"No, no! I can save it—"

Rody insisted helplessly, grabbing the steak with every intention to make a good meal.

He pried the powder seasoning with a spoon. But the steak wasn't looking any better. Taking a bite out of it, one would cough as their mouth was overrun with intense flavor.

With his process of common sense, Rody began to flip the steak. Pouring different types of seasoning in a last-ditch attempt to save it. Vincent had his head in his hands as he watched this, he finally intervened and pushed Rody away.

"Stop, just stop. You're making it worse. I'm going to throw it out, you can just start over—"His voice was relatively calm, maybe even disappointed. But he wouldn't drive the effort to make Rody feel bad about it. Mistakes happen after all, especially when cooking. So, it was no big deal. All of a sudden,

Rody burst into a frenzy, grabbing Vincent by the shirt.

“NO! W-wait, Just let me...” His voice was loud at first, and his grip shook on Vincent’s clothes. But his voice slowly died into a croak. *What's wrong with me? Why am I...* He was clueless as to the sudden lash he struck toward the person trying to help him.

Vincent’s eyes were wild with anger for being grabbed all of a sudden. The smell of burnt meat filled the room.

Vincent calmed down just a bit, and he slowly reached with his hands. Gently grabbing onto Rody’s as he guided them off of his shirt. Rody stared at him, like a puppy who accidentally nipped at its owner. “I’m...sorry.”

There was a long drag of silence. Vincent didn’t know what to say, but he eventually let go of Rody’s hands.

Giving him his back as he grabbed the pan. Turning on the sink he sprayed cold water across the burnt steak and threw it out. “I’ll cook dinner, go sit on the couch.”

He instructed coldly, Rody gave no argument and did as he was told. Quietly making his way toward the uncomfortable couch and sitting down. He put his head in his hands, he couldn’t comprehend why he was so mad at Vincent for saying those words.

‘*You can start over.*’ ‘*You’re making it worse.*’ It was just a steak, nothing special about it at all. Vincent was right anyway, he could have just started it over. Why was it so difficult to hear that? To say something so easily, to do it without a second thought or care. *Why was it so **important**?*

The smell of perfectly cooked meat filled the apartment, his stomach rumbled at the smell. Whether his thoughts led him to a spiral of time, or it

was the speed of Vincent's cooking. He eventually arrived with a large platter of perfectly crafted steak.

Rody didn't know what to say, he was still left with guilt. Vincent placed the platter down onto the coffee table, he sat beside Rody who was lost in thought as he stared at the ground.

His sharp brows knitted, and he took up a fork. The meat was so tender it had no need to be cut, as a small piece was torn from the corner of its lovely flesh. He raised it up toward Rody.

"Pay attention." He demanded, Rody's head snapped up to look at Vincent. He smiled awkwardly, not yet processing the meat being held in front of his face. Vincent grew impatient to his unawareness, and reached over with his hand.

Gently grabbing Rody's jaw, his thumb moved up and pressed down on his lower lip to pry open his mouth.

He'd then press the fork inside until Rody accepted it. He bit the fork and drew the flesh off of sharp silver.

Chewing it between his teeth. His gaze instinctively fluttered away, he wasn't used to someone feeding him. "Chew with your mouth closed."

Vincent scoffed lightly, Rody wanted to roll his eyes. But begrudgingly obeyed and shut his mouth. He smiled a little as he swallowed.

"Oh! Wow, this actually tastes really good. Can I have some more?" He asked, like a puppy wagging its tail at its owner to get attention from under the table.

Vincent couldn't resist smiling, and slowly nodded his head. Rody meant to

eat on his own, but Vincent didn't seem to understand that. Believing his food would taste better if it was hand served.

Rody deemed the situation a little awkward, but decided not to comment since Vincent seemed pleased.

"Do you like it?" Vincent asked lightly, Rody was about to answer until he shoved another piece into his mouth.

The flavor was a little plain, but its texture fit just right to Rody's tastes. "Mhm! You cooked through it really well...for never having seen you in the kitchen, you're actually great at this."

Another piece was shoved into his mouth, Vincent loomed over slightly as he watched Rody's expression carefully.

As if examining every bite through his reaction. His eyes went up irritably. "Of course I am. I have a degree in culinary school. I own a restaurant."

He said bluntly, Rody wanted to take back his original comment. But instead he just fell silent and continued to eat from Vincent's fork. Counting the pieces to see how long he'd be until the awkward torture would end. By the time he finally ate the last piece, he was completely full. His back hurt from sitting up straight the whole time, he closed his eyes and arched back slightly to get a good stretch.

Vincent's cold gaze swept over Rody's face, it was deeply shivering all the way to the bone. Still holding the fork, he reached over with his open hand. Barely tracing it across the side of Rody's cheek.

His eyes flashed open as he became startled, it felt like a sharp piece of glass

grazing over his sensitive skin as it sent a shiver running through his spine.

“Vince is there something—”

“—You have food on your mouth.” Vincent corrected him sharply, his expression did not flicker for a moment. He drew himself in closer.

Instead of wiping the speck with his hand, he dived in unexpectedly, capturing Rody’s lips.

That same hand came around and prodded into Rody’s hair, feeling at his scalp with terrifying interest.

Rody made a sound of surprise. He shuffled back and moved deeper within the couch. Only confiding Vincent’s intention as he deepened the kiss with his tongue.

This all felt like a feverish dream, that was growing hotter by the second. As if the fog from cooked food became so overwhelming that it drew sweat from his back.

Vincent’s overwhelming presence whispered, ‘*No talking*’ at every small attempt Rody made to try and communicate. Even those thoughts were taken over by the sweet taste of peppermint that Vincent had sucked on earlier.

“Vince—I can’t...”

He gasped for air between the intense kisses that left him speechless. Vincent finally stopped to look at Rody who was a muttering mess. His tie was loosely undone, as for his face, he was flushed to the very muscle of his cheeks. He covered his lips instinctively. As if it were a form of protecting himself. Although he felt drawn to continue, he was unsure if he should. Vincent leaned over him like the devil, a strikingly dreary one at that. All of a

sudden, an easy going smile plastered his lip. Stained with accomplishment and desire.

“Can’t? For some reason, I feel like I can almost taste the steak you ate from just kissing you. I feel complete when I...”His voice was low from the beginning, but became shallow by the end.

“T-taste?” He inquired. As though his phrase was the missing ingredient to a delicious recipe.

Vincent smiled again, he pushed himself on top of Rody, who felt a drawing to give Vincen exactly what he desired. Vincent’s eyes grew dangerous, like a sizzling hot pan. Ready to set ablaze and melt pure steel. He trapped Rody between both his arms on the couch, his gaze so frigid it left Rody breathless. As he leaned his head down to feed into his desires, an obnoxious bang sounded at the door.

Vincent’s expression changed into what could only be described as a murderous look. He was terribly irritated as to be interrupted, slowly getting off of Rody.

He patted himself off and opened the door to handle whoever had arrived. Rody’s nerves were shot, and his chest rose up and down with a mixture of excitement and fear. *The hell was that!? Was he about to...was I about to?*

He fell in silence, unable to comprehend what had just happened. He touched his lips, desperately trying to recall how he felt about the intimacy. Vincen’s voice was washed out by Rody’s loud thoughts.

The sound of the front door slamming shut made him jump, he whipped his head over. Only to see Vincent heading for two large glass doors that lead to

the balcony.

He'd proceed to the railing, where he slipped out a cigar and lit it. Rody felt insulted to be left alone without another word. He stood up, heading for the balcony as well.

He awkwardly approached Vincent's left, glancing over at him before staring off into the distance of lit city lights. They illuminated the dark look in Vincent's eyes, giving him beautiful highlights.

Rody found himself staring for longer than he should, Vincent coming to notice this casually turned his head to look at him. He took the joint from his lips, long strips of smoke escaped Vincen's lips. "Would you like to try?"

He asked solidly, making the mistake of assuming that Rody had been staring because he wanted to smoke.

Unable to escape the offer, Rody smiled nervously, scratching the back of his neck. "Heh—why not? It doesn't taste bad, does it?"

Vincent was heard chuckling under his breath, approaching as though there was a time limit. He took a deep breath in with the joint, his steps were assertive and bold. Leaving Rody to nervously back up into the metal railing. His arms came around as he grabbed on from behind. Laughing as though I'd be his last.

Oh fuck, not again!

A cold pale hand held his draw, demanding too much from this poor man. He pressed his lips close, letting the smoke held in his lungs slip into Rody's. "Mh!"

He made a sound of surprise, wanting to turn his head away. His eyes were desperately kept shut, afraid that Vincent's piercing gaze would truly slice him open.

Vincent grew impatient, and forced his head back. His touch fell and pressed against Rody's nape, while his thumb traced his Adam's apple.

A cruel grin traced along his expression. Rody's throat bobbed as he coughed violently, not used to breathing in cigar smoke. "You'll get used to it, the smell, the lingering taste...it doesn't feel good at first. But the more you take in the better it gets."

He explained frigidly, like a stubborn block of ice. He cruelly whispered into Rody's burning ear, practically biting at his earlobe. "V-Vince...who was that at the door?"

He desperately attempted to change the subject. His hands pressed against Vincent's broad chest. He wasn't sure if he should close his fists or not. Terrified it would startle up something else. Vincent laughed beside his ear, "Some mail...I know what you're trying to do, just stop, it's useless."

He kissed the side of his neck. Rody visibly shuttered, his hands clenched into fists against Vincent's black long sleeved shirt. He couldn't take this anymore, the sizzling hot passion within Vincent's eyes infected his heart.

He dipped his head into his shoulder, submitting to defeat. Vincent was humbly pleased, drawing Rody's head back over as he captured his lips. Tasting every piece of lingering flesh he could get from his mouth. The emotion behind their bodies was deeply satisfying.

Vincent threw the cigar off the balcony and aggressively took hold of Rody's

waist. Slamming him further against the railing with a starving crave. Rody let out a grunt but ignored it, grasping at Vincen's hair as if it was his only form of control within the whole situation. "Rody..."

He gasped between breaths, saying his name nearly a dozen times. Finally Rody bore the energy to respond, "Vince—" Vincent found this arousing, pulling Rody by the waist and shoving him back inside.

Eagerly thrusting Rody back onto the couch, he breathed heavily. Face burned hot as his lips grew swollen and pinkish.

He didn't know how much more he could handle, but hoped that Vincent could tire easily.

Vincent advanced over Rody's figure, trapping him between his arms once more. He pressed his index finger against his lips, looking down at him as though he'd swallow him whole. "Would it help to consider shutting up for once? Maybe then you'd be able to actually **enjoy** the things you are given."

He said, his voice raw like bloody meat ready to be prepped for dinner. Rody regarded him, he was unsure as to feel either terrified or down bad. Honestly both, he couldn't contain the thundering excitement beating in his chest and the heat tumbling down his waist.

He had never experienced this with someone who was so forward and cold at the same time, much less his own boss.