Felix doesn't believe it the first time he sees it happen.

Not that he doesn't believe Chan fucks people—he's shared living spaces with his members for nearly a decade, he knows far too much about the others.

It's more that Felix can't wrap his head around Chan sleeping with *fans*.

“Bokie,” Seungmin calls from the exit, halfway out to their van. Felix whips his head around, finally breaking away from where he'd been staring down the hall of the venue tunnels. The door Felix had watched Chan escort a slim blonde through, his hand firm on their lower back with a dazzling smile on his face, not three minutes ago.

“Aren't– don't we have to wait for hyung?”

Jeongin snorts, half hidden behind Seungmin as his breath fogs in the cold air. “He'll get back just fine, Yongbok-hyung.”

The other van had already left, Hyunjin shoving his three companions out of the green room nearly immediately after they had all changed, stating an urgent need to feed Changbin before midnight.

“Come on, Lixie,” his roommate says again, waving him forward. “You don’t have to worry about Chan-hyung, he’ll make it back like he always does.”

Sure enough, Chan’s at breakfast bright and early the next morning, an easy smile on his face when he enters Minho and Jisung’s hotel room for their catered meal. He leans over, kisses Jeongin’s cheek noisily, ruffles Seungmin’s hair. Squeezes Felix’s shoulder with a tight smile, then sits down in the empty seat beside him and takes a water bottle from the center of the table.

Always does.

What does that even *mean?*

Felix doesn’t have to wait long to figure it out.

After the next show, it happens again.

Felix watches Chan lean over to one of the managers as they’re coming off-stage, just before the encore. Chan points to the audience, the barricade to stage left. Manager-nim nods, purses his lips together, flicks a glance back at the audience. From where they are in the wings, Felix can’t really see much—he doesn’t know what they’re pointing at.

But after the encore song, when they’re leaving the stage for the final time, Felix notices Manager-nim on the floor. At barricade.

Talking to a *fan*.

Felix tries to keep tabs on Chan, but staff members swarm them to strip them of their mic packs and in-ear monitors, removing the merch items strategically pinned to their outfits. He gets ushered into the green room, hands prodding him to remove the stage outfit, and by the time he’s re-emerged, bare-faced and in his lounge clothes, Chan is gone entirely.

He doesn’t see Chan until the early morning, when Manager-nim rounds them up for their flight out.

Chan gets into their van last, after Changbin and Hyunjin have already claimed the back row for themselves and Felix climbs in to sit in the middle row against the window. Chan takes the seat next to him. Minho has the maknaes and Jisung in the van ahead of them, and Chan shoots off a text in the group chat to make sure everyone has all of their belongings before instructing the driver to go.

Felix furrows his brows when Chan flips through the apps on his phone quickly, almost suspiciously. He catches Felix looking, so Chan locks his phone and holds out his hand. Felix shakes his head imperceptibly.

Chan wouldn't be hiding anything from them.

He slides his hand into Chan's, ignoring the warm comfort that settles over him.

And so begins a pattern.

Felix doesn't always catch every step of the process every single show, but he's pieced things together. Chan targets a fan in the audience at some point of the show, telling Manager-nim during the last break. Then, one of the managers or occasionally one of their security staff will approach the fan at the end of the show to bring them backstage.

Sometimes, the fan is a girl.

Often, the fan is a guy.

Always, the fan is blonde. Slender. Tiny in Chan's arms as they giggle up at him while he leads them out to an awaiting car to be whisked away.

After three weeks of watching it, Felix feels nauseous.

"Are you sure you're okay, Yongbok-ah?" Minho leans over him, peering into his face.

"You look a little green, baby." Jisung presses the back of his hand to Felix's forehead. "And you're a lot warm."

"'M fine, jus' need to get some water." Felix looks around, noticing the staff loading their luggage in the vans. "Where's Chan-hyung?"

Manager-nim sighs down at his phone next to Felix. "He's taking a later flight. Dokyun is going to be with him, as well as three of the security team, so he'll be fine," he adds before Felix can argue. Felix sighs and curls his hand around the man's arm, leaning against him. "You really don't look great, Yongbok. I'll sit with you on the flight, just in case."

The flight is awful. Felix can't stop thinking about Chan, and the pressurization messes with his sinuses. He sniffles, leaning over to rest his head on their manager's arm.

"What troubles you, Lixie-yah?"

Felix sighs. "I know about the fans that hyung asks you for."

Manager-nim stiffens, coughing awkwardly. "What?"

"Isn't it dangerous?" Felix chews on his lip, thinking about Chan alone with strangers. Sure, they're fans, but are they normal fans or are they psychos? Could they hurt him–

"Don't worry, Bok-ah, they all sign NDAs and get checked by security before ever setting eyes on Channie."

Felix lifts his head. "What? NDAs–"

"Very specific ones, yes."

"What do you mean, 'specific?' How specific?"

"We had to modify them to include your name too, and–" Felix's eyes widen, and Manager-nim chokes. *Panics*. "O-oh. I mean, well– the group, *the group name,* of course. All of SKZ, yeah." There's nervous laughter coming out of Manager-nim as his eyes dart between Felix's.

He gave something away. Something he shouldn't have. Something specifically to Felix.

Felix plays dumb. "Oh, well of course! Have to protect the group– you're so smart, hyung. Thank you for looking out for Channie." He smiles wide, sees Manager-nim relax, so he leans his head back down on his shoulder and begins to process it.

Chan's NDAs had to be modified to include Felix's name.

After a while, he forms a theory. A theory he decides to test, right before the holidays.

He dyes his hair.

Hyunjin helps him do it, coming over to Felix and Seungmin's apartment with Jisung to make a whole day (and night, "besties sleepover!" Hyunjin exclaims) out of it. Hyunjin dyes Felix's hair while Felix bleaches Jisung's. Seungmin mixes the developer for them, sits on the counter in Felix's bathroom, and reads out funny STAY posts he finds on Twitter and Instagram.

Hyunjin dyes Jisung's bleached hair dark blue and impulsively decides he wants to bleach his own hair, but he gets halfway through the first section of bleach before he begs Seungmin to find him a pair of clippers.

The dance practice the morning after that is quite interesting, watching the other four members and their managers balk as one by one, they walk in: blue-haired Jisung, black-haired Felix, bleached and buzzed Hyunjin.

"I don't know who to look at first," Jeongin says as one of the managers starts crashing out over their schedule next week, yelling something about concept photos.

"I think the buzzcut is my favorite," Seungmin supplies unhelpfully. Felix sets his bag down on the bench and rakes a hand through his hair.

"Lix?" Chan calls from his side, so he turns. "I thought you said you didn't like dark hair, didn't recognize yourself in the mirror with it?"

Felix shrugs, glancing over at Hyunjin. "STAY has been asking for it, so I thought it might be fun to try again."

Chan searches his face—for what, he's not sure—and then looks up at his hair. "It looks great, baby."

Baby.

It shoots through his heart like an arrow, just like it does every time Chan calls him that.

Of course, he's not the only one that Chan calls baby, but—delusionally—he swears he is the only one Chan's tone softens for.

The true test is their next show though.

The special holiday stages are too publicized, so Chan doesn't pick out a fan, instead climbing into the van after Seungmin does. Felix, from behind him, smiles. Smiles harder when Jeongin leans over to rest his head on Felix's shoulder, when Chan turns back to look and notices, his eyes crinkling up when he sees their youngest fast asleep on Felix. Chan holds up his phone, asking for permission, and Felix nods, smiles back when Chan snaps a quick photo. In their private chat, Chan sends him a copy, and Felix heart-reacts immediately.

A few weeks later, they're back on stage. Back on tour. Two back to back shows in the same city.

Chan picks fans both nights.

Interestingly though, the fans both have black hair.

Sure, they're in Hong Kong, and blond hair is less common in the audience here, so Felix suspects it might be a coincidence. But it gets him thinking even more.

"Hello!" he calls out as he enters Hyunjin's apartment. "Jinnieee!"

A loud squeal answers him. "We're in my room!"

Felix kicks off his shoes and wanders down the hall. Hyunjin is in his art room—the room that should be a bedroom, except Hyunjin had all but thrown away his mattress as soon as they'd moved in. He sleeps with Changbin every night, and Changbin honestly prefers it that way. "Oh, what are you working on?"

Changbin's on the couch inside the art room, on his laptop with a pair of headphones around his neck. "Ah, hyung wants my opinion on a couple of tracks he's working on, didn't want to wait 'til tomorrow."

Hyunjin makes a noise, seated at his easel. Felix walks over and throws his arms around him, leans his weight into his best friend's back. "Hi," Felix says, kissing the back of Hyunjin's buzzed head, nuzzling him a bit. "Looks pretty so far."

Hyunjin leans back into him, lifts a hand to pat at Felix's where they're crossed in front of his chest. "Thanks, I was thinking of maybe putting some yellow flowers in the vase." He gestures at the canvas, and Felix stands up properly, pushing up with one hand on Hyunjin's shoulder.

"I like that idea, Jinnie." Felix moves over to flop down next to Changbin. "Hey, hyung, can I ask you something?"

Changbin hums, pausing the track on his laptop. "What's up, Ayen– *Yongbok!* Yongbok-ah, aish."

Hyunjin breaks out into laughter as Felix's mouth drops open. "Yah, hyung!"

Changbin rubs his eyes. "What did you want to ask, Yongbok?"

Felix takes a second to think about phrasing. "Do you… know about hyung's post-show habit?" The soft drag of Hyunjin's paintbrush stops and Changbin freezes. Hyunjin's head swivels around, eyes wide as he flicks them between Felix and Changbin. The reactions give Felix enough confirmation to continue. "Is he- does he pick fans that look like *me*?"

Changbin laughs, forced and shrill. "What?" He clears his throat, avoids looking at Felix's face. "I don't know what you're talking about."

"You're a shit liar, babe."

Changbin sighs, looking over at Hyunjin. "It's not my business to talk about, though." He turns back to Felix, a stern look on his face. "Just– Talk to Chan-hyung, okay?"

Felix absolutely does *not* talk to Chan.

The fan-meeting sneaks up on Felix, caught between his theory and practice—dance practice, that is. Long hours at the company, spent in the vocal rooms to practice singing a song that's not exactly made for his vocal range or coaxing Hyunjin through singing Felix's solo, means less time to find Chan and start a conversation that Felix isn't sure he even wants to have.

Now they're at the venue in Incheon, running through rehearsals, and Felix is so distracted by Chan that he's barely paying any attention to the stage manager. Chan's got on grey sweatpants and a black zip hoodie, hood on over a Chrome Hearts beanie, zipper left wide open over the black tank top stretched *taut* across his tit–

"Lix?"

Felix's head whips around, toward where Minho and Hyunjin are standing with a stagehand. "What?" he flushes slightly at being caught ogling, but Hyunjin just tucks his mouth behind his hand as he laughs softly.

Minho sighs. "Yongbok-ah, why are you so distracted today?"

Felix shrugs, eyes darting quickly back toward Chan, who laughs as he claps a hand on the stage manager's shoulder, his head tilting back as the sound of his amusement rings out sharply across the arena. "Uh, no reason."

When his eyes snap back to Minho, the other man is grimacing. His mouth flattens into a line, neutral as he says, "Right." Minho claps his hands together. "Do you want to go through the choreo one more time?"

Felix manages to focus more, running through the set twice more. Jeongin brings him a bottle of water, checks in about his back pain, since it's been flaring up a bit. Felix manages to con him into skinship, using his "big, bottom eyes," as Seungmin calls it.

Hypocrite. As if he doesn't do the exact same.

"Are you excited about tomorrow?"

Felix's skin tingles at Chan's voice in the same way it always does—always has. "Yeah," he turns his head, smiling at Chan. "I think STAY are really going to love it."

Chan smiles back, leaning his head in closer until he's pressing his nose to Felix's cheek. "They are." Chan's breath fans out over Felix's cheek, and Felix has to fight a shiver.

Instead, he lets out a sharp laugh, tearing his head away and shoving Chan back playfully. Chan giggles, then scrunches his face as he turns to walk away. Felix's eyes drop down to his ass as he walks away, following the movement until Chan disappears off-stage.

The first night of the fan-meeting goes great. Felix manages to nail his performance, complete with fake guitar, and laughs so brightly when Jeongin joins him right at the end to portray a cute version of Minho-and-Jisung's now viral hug. The crowd loves it, and Felix feels incredible.

He watches on the monitors as Jeongin performs, then Changbin's performance up next. Felix has always loved Changbin's singing voice, so he lets the stylists help him into his next outfit while he listens to the rest of Changbin's cover.

He makes it back to the monitors, resting one arm on Hyunjin's shoulder as the song winds down.

The camera shifts, showing Chan on the main stage watching Changbin, before the lighting changes and the focus is on Chan.

Felix feels his breath hitch.

Chan's cover of Hyunjin's song is good. There's probably a lot to be said about his vocals or the overall theatrics, but Felix is locked in on his outfit.

The hair. The black shirt clinging to his pecs. The pants perfectly fitted over his hips.

The fake mullet.

Hyunjin mumbles something next to him, but Felix is transfixed. Chan moves so fluidly—similar to Hyunjin's original choreo but with his own distinct Channie flair. Felix could watch this on repeat.

Then the lights flick off. When Chan is illuminated again, he has the bottom hem of his tight black shirt in his teeth, exposing the rippling plane of his abs.

Felix nearly passes out. Blood rushes to his dick so fast, he lets out a little pathetic whimper. His hand flies to his face, teeth embedding into his curled fist as he watches Chan's hands, his muscles. Hyunjin glances over at Felix but he ignores it, unwilling to look anywhere but at the monitor until Chan is done and walking off the stage.

Chan is breathing heavily as Hyunjin runs over to pounce on his back, quietly yelling that he did so good. Chan's face lights up as he turns his head to look back at Hyunjin, but he catches Felix's eyes instead. The grin brightens, his eyes crinkling as joy takes over, and it slams into Felix right then.

He's in love with Chan.

The second night of the fan-meeting goes as well as the first. Felix tries not to gawk openly at the monitors while Chan performs his cover solo, but based on the knowing look Jeongin sends him, he doesn't think he's successful. Felix is exhausted by the time they wrap up

the show, opting to climb into a van by himself to go home while the rest of the members plan to get barbecue together. Felix stayed up far too late the previous night overanalyzing his complicated feelings for Chan—feelings he's always known existed, but never the true depth of—so he barely slept, instead worrying about what he was going to do and how he would have to get over Chan, since he couldn't have him.

That would ruin the team.

Hyunjin had told Felix that Chan didn't leave with a fan the night before, apparently too distracted by the time the show wrapped up that he had climbed into the van with Jeongin and left. Now, it's Chan spearheading the family dinner, so Felix doubts Chan's going to be sleeping with a fan tonight.

The driver gets them out onto the main road, and the staff member in the passenger seat turns around to say something to Felix, but Felix doesn't get to hear it. There's a sudden horn and the horrible sound of crunching steel, glass breaking, plastic cracking, and Felix is thrown sideways against the van's door. Several seconds of ear-shattering screeching ring through the vehicle as Felix throws his arms up to protect his head, but something knocks into him from behind, and then everything goes dark.

When Felix blinks his eyes open again, he's on his side, being dragged from the vehicle by the driver. The distant sound of sirens and a blaring car alarm hurt Felix's ears, so he whines, closing his eyes again. The driver says something to him, but Felix is being pulled back into darkness. He tries to open his eyes once more, looking up at the sky and the top of someone's face as they lean over him—*a paramedic? Why is there a paramedic?* He must be dreaming.

The next time he pries his eyes open, he's in a sterile white room. The rhythmic beeping of a machine is the only noise, and when he rolls his head to look, he sees the heart monitor spiking with the steady beat of his heart.

The door at the far end of the room opens then, and Chan steps in. He's murmuring something, eyes cast down at his phone. He's wearing the same hoodie and joggers Felix just saw him in a few minutes ago when he left the arena, and Felix is confused. *Why is Chan here instead of at the barbecue restaurant?*

"Chris?" Felix asks, his throat cracking with the effort.

Chan's head whips up to stare at him, something unrecognizable on his face as he suddenly rushes forward. "Lix, *oh my god.*" He makes it to the bed that Felix is laying in, perching on the edge and reaching for Felix's hands. "You scared the fucking shit out of me."

"What happened?" Felix rasps, trying to clear his throat. Chan reaches for a bottle of water on the side table, bringing it to his face as Felix thanks him and drinks it.

"Accident. Someone hit the van hard enough to tip it over, and you hit your head, got a little beaten up."

Felix swallows, staring down at his hands. His left shoulder and upper arm are throbbing. "How bad is it?"

Chan sighs, taking the water bottle and setting it back on the table. "Minor concussion, shoulder sprain. A few surface scratches that will heal quickly." Chan lifts a hand to cup Felix's face. "The important thing is that you're okay."

Felix grimaces. "What aren't you telling me?"

Chan's mouth presses into a thin line. "You have to stay for observation. The doctors won't discharge you until Tuesday."

Felix's eyes widen as he realizes. "But that means–"

“Yeah, you won’t be able to perform tonight.” Chan’s thumb brushes over his cheek, an apology clearly written on his face.

“Wait, tonight? What– How long was I out?”

Chan glances down at his phone, cradled on his thigh. “It’s almost six a.m.”

Felix lets his head drop back, and Chan’s hand falls away. “This sucks.”

“Yeah.”

The doctors don’t make him stay until Tuesday though. He does miss the last night of the fan-meeting, but he watches the livestream on BeyondLive and gets a little teary with pride. One of their managers visits him in the hospital and sits with Felix, even coordinating a recorded voice message from Felix that he gets to see his members react to.

After the show, they all come to visit him, someone paying off the nurse that tries to limit visitors to his room. Jisung and Seungmin lay in the bed with him, one on each side, and they listen to Changbin and Minho tell stories and recount some of the signs they saw in the audience.

“Aish, Yongbok, there were so many for you. STAY loves you so much.”

Eventually, the nurse comes back, and Chan ushers everyone out so Felix can rest.

Except Seungmin, who proclaims that he’s staying the night and nothing Chan can do will change his mind.

So what if Felix sleeps easier with Seungmin curled to his side, while Chan sits in the recliner in the corner and works on his laptop. Felix wakes up a couple of times throughout the night, heart kicking when he sees Chan. Chan worriedly glances at the heart monitor before looking at Felix, who shakes his head and yawns before closing his eyes again. Another time, when he wakes, he sees Chan, laptop tucked back into his bag, curled up with a spare blanket and his head propped on his fist, fast asleep.

Both Seungmin and Chan are still there when the doctor comes to give Felix his final examination, deeming him clear for discharge. Despite hearing this, it doesn’t make either of them any less overbearing for the next few weeks. Chan comes over more, sets his laptop up at the small dining table Seungmin had insisted Felix pick out when they’d moved in last year. Seungmin asks Felix to join him for vocal lessons and even for a few meetings with a fashion house that’s courting him, stating that he values Felix’s experienced perspective.

It’s horse shit, Felix knows, just an excuse to keep an eye on him, but he loves his roommate so he goes along with it.

Chan leaves for a few days to go to Milan, but he checks in with Felix via text and a couple of phone calls, then doubles his attention when he gets back into town, inviting Felix over for dinner or bringing his laptop back to Seungmin and Felix’s apartment to work from their dining table again.

Everything is fine until the day before Felix’s flight for a solo schedule—a trip to Paris. He’ll be walking for Louis Vuitton again, something he’s been excited about for months.

Chan, however, forgot.

“Lix, maybe you shouldn’t go,” Chan says, cornering him in the apartment when Felix gets back from his hair appointment. He’s finally blond again. “You had a concussion, flying–”

Felix cuts him off, a hand extended. “Chris, I’m fine. Please, it’s been weeks, okay?” Chan snaps his mouth shut, nodding, and Felix’s heart aches with how much he loves this sweet man. “I promise, I’m okay.”

It doesn't stop Chan from making Felix share his phone's location, nor does it stop him from asking for all of Felix's travel information. "I want updates, okay? Any delays or problems, you tell me, alright?"

Felix rolls his eyes as he accepts his phone back from Chan, sighing heavily. "Yes, *daddy.*"

He means it to be bratty, as he always does when he teases Chan like this, but something flashes in Chan's eyes and Felix's throat goes dry. He doesn't get to ask about it though, since Chan sweeps out of the apartment suddenly after that. He holds onto it, storing it away for later.

The Paris trip is great. Nicolas spoils Felix rotten, and he feels so grateful to be back with his LV family. He spends the week fawning over beautiful clothes and delicious food, meeting with executives and representatives for his current and future brand deals. The actual runway show has Felix feeling incredibly alive, and every buzz of his phone sends tingles up his spine.

Chan stays in frequent contact, via texts and calls and videochats. One night, as Felix is lounging in the oversized tub of his hotel room, an incoming video call from Chan has Felix even fisting his own cock under the bubbles. The call is quick—*"Hi, sunshine, I'm headed to the gym, thought it would be nice to see those pretty freckles again."*—and as soon as Chan disconnects, Felix sets the phone aside and comes apart, his mouth wordlessly forming Chan's name as he whines and collapses.

The affection doesn't stop when Felix returns to Seoul. Sure, Chan doesn't come over as often, but he asks Felix to join him in the studio a couple times, and together they write a bunch of lyrics. It reminds Felix of a couple years ago when they wrote Runners, just the two of them. Chan buys them dinner, makes Felix sit on the couch instead of one of the chairs, and they get distracted playing Genshin on their phones together for a few hours.

Their mixtape releases, and Felix is happy to be doing promotional social media content for the duets. He always has fun with Jisung, and he really enjoys their song.

He had, however, forgotten about Chan's song with Hyunjin.

The buzz around Escape drives Felix insane. Every corner of STAYville is infiltrated with it, clips from the music video and even past pictures and videos of Hyunjin and Chan together. Felix tries not to let jealousy fester, especially because he knows there's nothing going on between Chan and Hyunjin—at least not anymore, since Hyunjin is very happy with Changbin now. But he's bitter that there was once something there, a few hookups between the recording of Red Lights and Escape later that same year while Hyunjin was running from his feelings for Changbin. Releasing the song all this time later made very little sense to Felix, and he wasn't thrilled about the tour restarting soon and having to hear Hyunjin and Chan perform and talk about the song.

"At least you know he's good in bed," Hyunjin had said to Felix the night that the 00s line and Jeongin had gotten a little bit drunk at Felix and Seungmin's apartment. Felix had scoffed, pushing Hyunjin's pouty face away from him.

"Fuck you, how is that any better?"

"I vetted him for you!"

Felix scowled, and Jisung clambered over to sit between them. "Girls, stop fighting." He winced when both Hyunjin and Felix smacked his shoulders. "This is such a stupid thing to be mad about, Felix."

"You're s'posed to be on *my side,* Sung!" Felix had hiccupped, leaning over to rest his head on Jeongin's shoulder.

The maknae patted his cheek off-handedly. “Here’s a solution: tell hyung how you feel.”

Felix straightened, wobbling a little bit. “No.” His head shook as he declared, “I’m not telling Channie anything. It would ruin the group.”

And then he’d shut down every attempt to keep talking about it.

Now they’re rehearsing for the start of the Latin America leg of the tour, and it’s become impossible for Felix to ignore watching the Escape performance any longer.

He hates how good it is. Hates how he can’t stop watching, how mesmerized he is by Chan’s stage presence. He’s dressed in a hoodie and long basketball shorts, the beanie on his head making him look deceptively small from Felix’s seat on the floor of the gymnasium the company had rented and fitted with raised platforms to emulate the stage layout. Chan sings his lines, despite not needing to. It’s a rehearsal, meant to check the blocking and the choreo, purely technical.

Chan hits his high notes anyway, without a mic pack, without in-ears. Felix’s arm hair stands up on end. Felix groans and drops his head between his bent knees, curled up to his chest. Minho leans over and tugs his hair, giving him a loaded look that Felix swats away.

Seeing the Escape stage through the monitors backstage is not any fucking better. The first night in Santiago, Felix catches one glimpse of Chan in his stage outfit running up the thrust stage and walks away for his own sanity. He doesn’t even watch the full performance until they make it to Peru a week and a half later.

Felix doesn’t see Chan pick a fan to take back to his hotel room either night in Chile or after all three of the Brazil shows. It piques Felix’s curiosity and has him thinking about what the hell Chan is up to.

Aside from doting on Felix, that is. Chan’s attention, both on and off stage, drifts around to Felix more often now. Felix’s back has been bothering him intermittently, so Chan uses every opportunity to check in with him, rub his back, bring him water—any excuse to talk to Felix it seems. Felix falls into the comfort of it, letting himself be touchier with Chan. He’s always relished Chan’s focus, and the way he grabs at Felix so often now makes Felix so giddy that he almost doesn’t even mind the Escape stage.

Almost.

When Felix finally watches an entire song, he finds himself so needlessly worked up, cock twitching in his pants as he eyes Chan body rolling, getting lifted by the many hands of their dancers. It makes Felix’s teeth ache with the urge to bite and mark and *claim* every bared inch of skin, a greedy need to possess that which he cannot possess.

He’s never rubbed one out so quickly in a backstage bathroom, eyes clenched and hand working himself over as he bites his own lip and recalls the way Chan’s hips had undulated, like he was fucking his cock into someone, or hell, riding someone. Felix spills over his own knuckles at the thought.

Chan finds him after the show, throwing an arm over his shoulders as they head to the waiting cars back to the hotel. “You tired?” Felix shrugs, and Chan takes it in stride. “Genshin in my room?”

They stay up way too late laughing and playing Genshin together, laying on their stomachs on Chan’s bed and eventually falling asleep atop the duvet. It’s the best night Felix has had in months.

A couple days later, they’re in Mexico. Chan’s been so cuddly and affectionate with Felix since their sleep over, so Felix lets himself think, lets himself dream. Maybe Chan might have

some feelings back. Felix is certainly his type, based on the fans he'd slept with, so at the very least Felix thinks they could hook up. He could pitch it to Chan as just a hook up, *yeah*.

A hand presses to his low back. "Hang tonight?" Chan's voice whispers in his ear. Felix nods, giggling as Chan passes him to talk to a production assistant.

Felix is in such a good mood for the whole show, and he dances around with the biggest smile on his face. At some point, Chan catches him, pulling Felix closer to do a quick four-count salsa dance to one of their songs towards the end of the show. Felix feels his heart swoop, committing the moment to memory—thankful for all of the cameras pointed at them to capture it. He knows he'll be able to find a fancam to download later.

By the time he's back at the hotel, he finds himself humming happily as he showers and washes his face, blow drying his hair before grabbing his phone charger and a bottle of water and slipping down the hall.

He's just about to knock on Chan's door when a noise from inside stops him. A high-pitched giggle, feminine. Then the lower pitch of Chan's voice, also giggling.

Felix spins around and returns to his room. He crawls into bed and ignores the way his chest aches.

Chan approaches him the next morning as they're heading to the airport to go back to Korea. "You never came over last night."

Felix swallows, nodding his head. "Yeah, I uh. I fell asleep, sorry hyung."

Chan frowns a little but nods, raising a hand to tuck some of Felix's hair behind his ear. "Okay. Wanna sit next to me on the plane?"

Felix does, he wants that very badly, but he's still hurting from last night, from hearing Chan with a fan. "I told Hyunjin I would sit with him," he lies instead, ignoring the way the light in Chan's eyes dims. Changbin doesn't even fight him when Felix bullies into the seat next to Hyunjin, instead moving up to sit beside Chan for the flight.

It's easy to avoid Chan for a couple of days after that. Felix has some meetings to go to, and Chan jumps right back into the studio. But eventually, it's time to start preparing for their album coming out later in the year. They have photoshoots booked, promotional content to prepare.

Everything starts fine, but Felix wakes up one day in worse pain. Seungmin manages to call his PT, and Felix is instructed to resume a frequent therapy schedule again now that they're back in town. Chan notices Felix's pain pretty quickly, and Felix decides it's not worth being upset about the fan in Mexico when he's hurting so bad. He lets Chan dote on him, enjoying the extra attention and affection again. Chan goes with him to a few PT sessions, learning how to help Felix with the stretches and some tips on how to mitigate pain while they're touring, since the Japan show is fast approaching.

The techniques come in handy, Felix admits, when they get to Japan. They spend a whole day filming content for their Japanese album, and afterward, Chan follows Felix back to his room. He digs his thumbs into the sore muscles of Felix's back and coaxes him to sleep like that, drained from a day of pain and excitement. Felix wakes up in the morning tucked into the sheets with Chan's previously discarded hoodie bundled up in his arms.

They perform two full weekends in Japan. Felix manages just fine, but his pain builds again. There's a traveling PT with their staff, and Felix tries to take advantage of it. Some days are just better and some are worse.

Today is worse. It's the first day of the second weekend in Japan. Felix wakes up with his back screaming at him, and he can't subdue it no matter what he does. He keeps himself together for the concert, but his mood off stage is abysmal. As soon as they wrap for the night, Felix is heading straight for the PT.

Chan catches up with him. "Hey, you okay?"

Felix grits his teeth, shakes his head as they make their way through the corridor. "Pain is really bad. Gonna find the PT."

"Okay, I'll come with you."

It's sweet, really, stereotypical Chan behavior at this point to join him. But Felix, cranky from the pain, spits out instead, "You don't have to pity me, hyung. You can go find your fan to fuck."

Chan stops short, his fingers wrapping around Felix's wrist to pull him to a stop as well. He looks absolutely flummoxed. "Lix, *what?"*

Felix scoffs. "Don't play stupid, Chris." He looks away. "I know you've been fucking fans for months. I'm not judging you."

"Really? That's why you're being such a nasty cunt right now?" Chan spits back before he freezes, taken by surprise when Felix's sneer drops and his eyes well up with tears instead. "Lix, wait, I'm sorry, I didn't mean-"

Felix just shoves him off, storms out of the corridor and skips PT entirely.

He doesn't go right back to the hotel. Instead, he finds one of the staff members he trusts the most, tells her what he needs. She sighs, gives him an oversized hoodie and a mask, then tells him to take one of the security guards just in case.

The security staff follows him from a safe distance as Felix storms out of the venue. They walk for a bit, and Felix pulls up the maps app on his phone to find a nearby park with some benches and a couple of swings, figuring it will be good for mental clarity. He doesn't let himself cry until he's seated on a park bench with his knees pulled to his chest and his phone on airplane mode.

When he finally trudges back to his own hotel room, he's surprised to see Chan sitting in the dark, on the floor at the foot of the bed. Felix flicks on the lights and lets out a startled noise as they lock eyes.

Neither of them speaks right away.

Eventually, Chan sighs. "Felix you can't just leave like that. It's not safe."

"I told the stylist noona, I wasn't completely stupid–"

"I know," Chan interrupts, scrubbing a hand down his face. "That's the only reason we didn't tear apart the city looking for you."

Felix scuffs his toe against the carpet, not sure what to say.

Chan rubs his face in both of his hands. "God, I was terrified, Lix. What if something happened to you?"

Felix just purses his lips. "I can handle myself, Chris. I'm not a little kid."

Chan lifts his head then, eyes boring up at Felix. "No, you're not." His chest hitches. "You're– *God,* Felix, you're an idol, you're my member, my responsibility–"

Felix snaps, a strangled noise of indignation exploding out of him. He storms over and shoves Chan's chest hard enough for his head to fall back, and then he drops to his knees around Chan, into his lap, and crashes their mouths together. Chan's words twist into a moan, his hands immediately fitting to Felix's hips as he pulls him closer. Felix shoves his fingers in Chan's hair,

using the grip to angle his head back for Felix to lick into his mouth. Chan opens for him beautifully, so pliant under Felix's lips and tongue that Felix himself moans.

Chan presses him closer, pulling him into his chest, and Felix is suddenly overcome with a wave of fury—they could have had this, they could have been doing this *months ago*. He snarls, kissing Chan so angrily that it cuts his lip. He tastes blood, unsure of whose it is, but he doesn't care.

Felix shoves Chan away, hitting his chest and his shoulders, crying and whining. "You should have told me," he whispers, and Chan wraps his arms tighter, pressing soft kisses to Felix's wet cheeks.

"'M sorry, I'm *so sorry,* Lix."

Chan squeezes Felix closer, buries his face in Felix's borrowed hoodie and confesses everything—how he doesn't feel good enough for Felix, how he feels too powerful over him, how he misses their casual intimacy, how it's never enough for him.

"I've wanted you for years, Lix," Chan says quietly, finally looking up at him.

Felix sniffles, wiping his nose. Then he finally speaks. "You *idiot."*

Chan balks, jaw dropping as his brows shoot up. "What?"

"You absolute buffoon," Felix continues, fisting his hands in Chan's shirt. "I've been in love with you for years, asshole!"

Chan chokes. "In *love?!"* His hands tighten on Felix's back. "I-I knew you had a little crush on me back– back when–"

"Yeah, and then the crush grew," Felix retorts, leaning forward to tilt Chan's head back, tipping it to the mattress. "D'you really think I could ever get over you? You're it for me, Chris. I'm your soulmate, remember?"

He watches as Chan's face softens, his eyes flickering between both of Felix's, dipping down to the curve of Felix's mouth. "Yeah," he agrees softly, warm and fond and inviting. Felix nods along with him. "You've always been mine, haven't you? I was just too dumb to see it."

The next kiss is different—intentional. A promise, short and fiery. Then Chan's mouth disappears, and Felix whines. Chan grips Felix's thighs and stands up, bringing Felix with him. Then Felix is on his back on the bed, bouncing a little as his hair splays out around his head. He watches as Chan peels off his shirt, shoves down his sweatpants.

"Can I make you feel good, baby?" Chan asks, left in just his boxer briefs as he climbs onto the bed. Felix nods emphatically, hands already reaching for his own waist to start shoving off his own pants. "Yeah, there we go."

Felix is naked faster than he's ever been. Chan settles between his thighs, mouth finding Felix's throat to suck at the skin there. "Chris, no marks, we've still got a show tomorrow."

Chan groans, jaw snapping in frustration as he pulls back. "Fine. But when we get home–"

"Yeah. *Yeah,* please."

Chan drags his mouth down instead, lavishing Felix with teeth and tongue. When Chan finally wraps his mouth around Felix's cock, Felix nearly explodes. "Fuck! Fuck, oh *shit, wait*–"

Chan doesn't hear him, and Felix cums before Chan even manages to swallow his entire length. Chan makes a surprised little noise, not quite gagging but close enough. He chuckles fondly when he pulls off, making a big show of wiping his mouth. "Someone's eager,"

"Fuck you," Felix replies bloodlessly, chest heaving. Chan presses soft kisses to his pelvis, his hip bones, the soft give of his tummy.

"I'm trying to," Chan murmurs, huffing a small laugh into Felix's skin. "Relax, baby."

Felix sighs when Chan lifts one of his thighs, propping it onto his shoulder. Then Chan dips down, pressing his nose to the underside of Felix's balls, and licks a hot stripe over Felix's hole.

"Chris, fuck," Felix moans, his hands fisting in the bedding. Chan's other hand reaches up to grip his hip, angling him better to get his mouth sealed over Felix's hole. Felix swears his eyes roll back, whimpering when he feels Chan's tongue breach him.

At some point, Chan pulls away, asks for lube. Felix doesn't have any, but he's got a bottle of lotion in the bathroom that Chan deems acceptable as a replacement. The first press of Chan's perfect fingers into Felix sends all of his blood rushing back to his dick.

"Do you know about the NDAs?" Chan asks, sometime between the second and third fingers. Felix barely knows his own name at this point, but he tries to follow Chan's train of thought.

"Hngh, jus'– somethin' about m'name," he slurs in pleasure, eyes rolling back as Chan's fingertips rub against his prostate.

Chan hums, a soft, delightful thing that makes Felix's toes curl. "Yeah, baby. Your name." He bites into Felix's thigh, drawing out a soft whimper before laving his tongue over the spot. "That's because, regardless of who I fucked, I always cry out your name when I cum."

Felix keens, his head snapping back against the bed. "Chris–"

"It's like you're a train in my mind that never stops. It's you and then I only see the world through the gaps in between, but it's always you, Felix, it has always *been* you and I—"

"*Daddy,*" Felix gasps, pleading. "Chris, *please*. Please, I need you inside–"

Chan doesn't hesitate to withdraw, shifting onto his knees to pull his cock out.

It's the most beautiful cock Felix has ever seen, and he can't wait to spend hours worshipping it. But right now, he needs–

Chan slides into him in one gentle motion. It punches the air out of Felix's chest, and Felix moans brokenly. "*Chris,*" he practically sobs, his arms coming up to wrap around Chan's back.

Chan's face is tucked into Felix's neck, and he's breathing heavily. He hasn't moved his hips since he entered Felix, since his pelvis came to rest flush against Felix's ass. Felix grips his hair, tugs at it to pull Chan up, to clumsily smash their mouths together. Chan moans into it.

"Love you, *god,* I *love* you. So much, Chris, I'm–"

Chan pushes up onto his elbows to stare down at Felix. "You– I love you Felix, *fuck,* of course I do." He withdraws his hips slowly before thrusting back in, setting a steady pace. "My perfect baby, beautiful."

Felix's cheeks are wet with tears he doesn't remember spilling. Chan kisses them away, fucking into him languidly, gasping and groaning.

"You feel so good, Lix," Chan murmurs, and Felix whimpers. Chan shifts his knees, tucking them closer, shifting the angle. It drives the head of his cock directly into Felix's prostate again.

"Oh my god, Chris, I'm– *Daddy,* 'm gonna cum, I–"

Felix spills between their bellies, clenching down around Chan so tightly that Chan swears, thrusting faster a few more times before he too is succumbing to his pleasure. "Fuck, *Felix."* And then he's collapsing against Felix, face burying into his neck as he pumps him full.

They stay like that, Chan's softening cock still buried deep in Felix, for several minutes, quietly basking in each other and catching their breath.

"Chris?" Felix finally breaks the silence. Chan makes a noise of acknowledgment, his lips puckering to kiss the skin of Felix's throat. "Does this mean we're together?"

Chan lifts his head to smile at Felix. "You're literally never getting rid of me again, Sunshine."

Felix grins up at him, face bright as he says, "Good."

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