

Jaehyun is (NOT!) a Common Name

- THE BOYZ - Bbangmil - Younghoon x Hyunjae -

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Kapitel 3: Chapter 3.1

After talking to Chanhee about how surprisingly much Hyunjae had helped him on Monday afternoon, he had also wondered if he had ever seen the other boy watching him practice for the past few weeks.

And apparently, he had.

He had just never thought about it further because he had been convinced that Hyunjae lived in that direction.

Besides, no one said he was specifically watching Younghoon, so maybe he was watching someone else. What if he usually waited outside to pick up someone else from the team? But then again, he thought, why break the habit and spend time in the library with Younghoon? Would he really ditch his friend just to study with Younghoon who he had only recently started talking to? On the other hand, he never saw anyone else from the team with Hyunjae during their breaks or anything. Most of them probably didn't even know him since only four other members were in the same grade as them.

The only possible options were Bang Chan, coach Bang's son, straight as an arrow and already taken. Lee Dongmin, admittedly straight as a circle, but also taken (or at least dating random guys from time to time) as far as Younghoon knew. Dong Sicheng, who knew about five Korean words and was always occupied by this Japanese senior anyway. And Jo Haseul, who was desperately trying to overcome her fear of water with the help of her younger friend Kim Jungeun.

Since Sicheng usually rode his bicycle to and back from school, Chan was in a relationship and judging from what he had learned about Hyunjae, he figured Hyunjae was neither straight nor bisexual, so it was probably either Younghoon... or Dongmin who he watched.

Both options seemed ridiculous, but he didn't know if Hyunjae and Dongmin had any classes together. What if they were friends and Younghoon just didn't know? There was a lot that he didn't know about Hyunjae yet. Hyunjae seemed nice, open-hearted, and sociable and Dongmin was a quite popular guy that everyone liked from the start.

Maybe they got along very well and what if Dongmin was currently single? Dongmin was definitely worth a look because he was tall, well built, handsome, a great swimmer and his grades were outstanding, yet he was humble and-

Anyway!

He shouldn't think about it too much as he was probably reading too much into this.

Maybe Hyunjae had just no sense of direction.

Aside from him walking along the pool every day, he had noticed even more details and characteristics about the other in the last few days when they had met up in the library every afternoon after practice and even during a few breaks. They even went home together on Wednesday. He felt like he was starting to get a better sense for the other boy's humor, and he felt a lot less annoyed with him. In fact, lately he even found most of his jokes funny.

Further he figured he felt kind of impressed by the handsome features of Hyunjae's face, but he would never admit that he liked the other's high cheekbones, the outlines of his jaw or the little mole right on the bridge of his nose. Not to mention that cute smile and his eyes with that sometimes dreamy, sometimes almost hyper focused look that watched Younghoon's face and movements while he worked on a new exercise. Even though he could feel him staring once in a while, he didn't mind it. With each passing day that they met, he even caught himself looking at the other more and more often as well.

They had agreed to meet again later in the library, but for now Younghoon was trying to get rid of the image in his mind of Hyunjae's face being closer to his than he had ever imagined and the two of them huddled together over their textbook.

He tried to focus on Jaehyun, who he was about to meet right now.

Younghoon really hoped it would work this time. He eagerly awaited the other to arrive. The chances of Eric making the same mistake twice were pretty slim. He even felt more confident than the last time he sat here.

But apparently Eric hadn't 'exactly known' who Younghoon meant.

Maybe Younghoon should never play the lottery.

Luck was definitely not on his side.

"Hey, Younghoon hyung! Sorry I'm late! Eric told Sunwoo to text his friend Haknyeon to tell me that you wanted to talk to me about something important, because I got sick on Monday during class when he wanted to tell me in the break as he had said and I had to stay at home for a few days so I couldn't attend practice and now Eric's class was on a field trip yesterday and today and practice was canceled on Wednesday, so I haven't see him all week."

Eric had told Sunwoo to tell Haknyeon that- what?

"I find it a little bit strange, because you could have told Haknyeon directly since I know you are friends too, and Sunwoo is a student at Hanlim- Anyway, I told him to give you my number, but Eric had already told Sunwoo to tell Haknyeon that your phone keeps crashing, so texting you would be risky and now I hurried to come here because Hyunjae hyung said something about meeting you in the library later and then I couldn't have talked to you privately-"

"Oh, for fuck's sake!" yelled Younghoon once he found the right words after a moment of complete bewilderment.

"Er- I beg your pardon?"

The boy in front of him looked much younger than Jaehyun. He wore his dyed blond hair cropped short, concealer painted on his cheeks to cover the tiny bit of acne spreading across his face.

This was the boy who had been standing next to the other two Jaehyuns, when he had pointed out Eric's mistake a few days ago. He had also stood with them in the gym the day he had met Kim Jaehyun.

The "small" blond boy who had looked so pale and tired.

Eric couldn't be that stupid, could he? Was he making fun of him now too?

It was already enough for him that he had overheard some of his classmates talking about him and Kim Jaehyun. Some others had gossiped about Younghoon trying to confess to him and a few others had figured out that he was looking for another guy called Jaehyun. One girl even had had the audacity to ask him yesterday, if she should introduce him to her cousin named Jaehyun.

He really tried to ignore the gossip, but if Eric was mocking him now, too, the younger one had better prepared for the worst.

But then again, he doubted his youngest friend was that evil. Eric was too cute and caring to pull a prank like that. So he figured it had been a mistake again.

"How old are you even?"

"F-Fourteen, hyung."

'Is this even allowed?!

Wasn't that what Eric had said?

He should have known.

"Ah... wow. Does your name happen to be Jaehyun, too, or are you kidding me?"

"Oh, I'm sorry, it was rude not to introduce myself earlier. I'm Bong Jaehyun, nice to meet you in person. I've heard a lot about you from Haknyeon and Eric. You're a great swimmer, I've watched some of your competitions."

Younghoon shook his head in disbelief.

'I didn't know his real name was Jaehyun!' Eric had said.

He.

Should.

Have.

Known.

"Yeah, well, yes, thank you. It's nice to meet you too, but- I'm sorry Jaehyun, but you're not- You're not the person I expected to meet here."

Jaehyun blinked. Younghoon thought he saw a bit of sadness and disappointment in his eyes. It almost felt as if Jaehyun had confessed to him and now he was the one turning him down.

"Oh... Hak said-

"I know, I know. I'm really sorry, Jaehyun. It's probably Eric's fault or I guess I didn't make myself clear, when-

"Did you want to meet Hyunjae hyung? So, it's true that you are dating?"

Younghoon felt his brain short circuited. Eyebrows raised and mouth hanging open he stared at the blond boy. Then he narrowed his eyes and felt his own yell to his bones.

"WHAT?!"

Jaehyun flinched.

"No! What the fuck, who said that?!"

The blond took a quick step back.

"Oh, sorry, some classmates were talking about it earlier. They said you guys spend a lot of time in the library and you go home together, and they probably thought so because he always picks you up after-

"We've spent the last four days in the library, yes, but that doesn't make us a couple, what the fuck, we're just- friends."

At first it sounded weird to call Hyunjae his friend. But when he thought about it, it

felt good to call him that.

"And what makes you think that he picks me up after practice?"

"I just thought it would only make sense because he's always passing by the pool, and my classmates said you seem to be good friends and you watch our practice- Oh. I thought I put two and two together when my classmates told me about it, but I guess I made a mistake because I was convinced that he picks you up! Hyung, I'm so sorry! I've overheard some other people talk about you dating someone and some others said they saw you with Hyunjae hyung recently, so I- sorry..."

"Did that come from your mouth?"

"What exactly?"

"Me dating Hyunjae."

"N-No, I've never said that out loud. My classmates did."

Younghoon sighed. He ran a hand over his face and shook his head. Jaehyun bit his lip, probably preparing to be scolded.

"Listen. You can tell your classmates that I'm not dating him. I am not dating anyone, okay? And that's none of their business anyway."

"Yes. I'm sorry."

"I know. Jaehyun- I- I'm trying to date someone, yes, but neither you nor Hyunjae."

"Oh! Did you want to meet Haknyeon?"

Out of reflex he slapped his hand flat on the table attached to the bank. Jaehyun grimaced as if Younghoon had hit him.

"No, what the fuck! What's wrong with you, Jaehyun?! Stop spreading your dangerous superficial knowledge and think for once! No! No, I-... No..."

The rest of the basketball team exiting the gym caught Younghoon's eye. He looked over Jaehyun's shoulder and clicked his tongue. In the distance he saw the Jaehyun in question leaving through the gate with their senior Johnny and their other friend.

He had missed his chance once again.

"That... that guy was the Jaehyun I was talking about. The one over there, Johnny hyung's friend, the blondish one."

Jaehyun's face lit up again as he turned around and Younghoon felt a little bit better.

"Huh?" Jaehyun almost yelled, "Oh! Jay hyung? Jung- ah, Jung Jaehyun? He was my neighbor when I was a kid! But I thought his name wasn't Jaehyun anymore!"

Younghoon blinked.

Did he get that right?

"His... what?"

"Oh no, Eric must have confused us. His new name is... uh... Yoo... Hyun- Hyeo... no... uh shit, I don't know. He once told me, but I forgot because he told me I can keep calling him Jaehyun and I was too embarrassed to ask again anyway and also I usually call him Jay when I see him. I guess you should stick with Jay or maybe Jaehyun for now too. I'm sorry, I don't really know, because I only see him during practice and the last time that I had a full conversation with him was when his name was still Jaehyun before we moved away, and I was like... seven years old? I'm sorry."

The blond looked at him pityingly.

"So, he legally changed his name?"

Who changed their name mid-semester and why?!

"Yeah. Jaehyun's his birth name, but apart from me, only Johnny hyung and their close friends still use it regularly. They have known each other for at least ten years or so. He changed it some time ago, in May I think, or at the end of April, but I don't remember why. Some private issues, I guess... Among the team members we usually have to call him Jay, anyway, just like they call me by my English name 'Kevin' to avoid any confusion because we kind of all have the same name. And besides, he doesn't mind that I still call him Jaehyun, too, so you should be safe. It's not like he doesn't listen to that name anymore-"

Younghoon raised his eyebrows.

"You 'all'?" Younghoon interrupted his monologue.

Jaehyun stopped babbling and nodded. The expression on his face reflected his confusion. He started counting on his fingers.

"There's four of us. At least that's what I think. Wait, I guess there's probably at least six of us now that there's more people, uh... wait, the juniors' team now has two, me and, well Jaehyun, but he kind of never shows up, and the seniors... no, they only have three because I'm the fourth because I'm like a rookie in their team on Wednesdays because I'll join them when I'm... whatever. Everyone is confused and nothing makes sense anymore since so many people had to switch courses! Well, I think there's at least four Jaehyun's, yeah."

"Could have called the whole course Jaehyun," Younghoon huffed angrily.

The younger one laughed at that and leaned against the table.

"Yeah... Johnny hyung is such a bastard, because since all this gym dilemma he thinks it's fun to call all the seniors Jaehyun occasionally to confuse everyone when they play practice matches with us juniors, even so often that no one responds anymore when they hear it. They only sometimes respond when he adds their surnames, maybe except for Jung Jaehyun hyung and coach Kim Jaehyun hyung, since he's Jaehyun on the court as well, but fortunately the old coach usually quickly shuts him up."

Jaehyun smiled and nodded. Until Younghoon shook his head once again.

"Are you kidding me?"

"I wish I was!" he tried to defend himself, "A lot of students had to switch to basketball and other sports and some left, because of the renovation of the other gym and the tennis court that had started with the summer break, and some new clubs were formed. That's why we currently share the gym with the seniors every day, too. Usually, we would be separated from them. I started playing basketball in March so I'm fairly new to both teams, too and as I said, I don't see the others from the usual lineup during class, except for like Mark and Kunhang? And... a few guys that were in other courses before. We also quite often split into smaller teams for practice. So maybe you should ask an older member for the names. Maybe you could ask Hyunjae hyung for help? After all, he's closer to the seniors than I am. You shouldn't ask the coach though, because I think he only knows his favorites and the nicknames anyway."

At least... four Jaehyuns?

At least?

Maybe even six?

All of them on the basketball team?

All those names in Korea and everyone decided to name their child Jaehyun?

Well, he had to admit that it was a very nice name but fewer boys to share it wouldn't have hurt anyone.

Also, who came up with that stupid name policy and why on earth was fifty percent of the basketball team named Jaehyun? Did these guys even know anything about each other? This was either a joke or part of the tryouts. More of a joke, he guessed.

Younghoon nodded. Now he realized how much of a mistake it had been to ask Eric. If Bong Jaehyun, who was all fluent in Korean and Jaehyun's ex-neighbor, had no idea about the team, then how was Eric supposed to know? A sudden urge to apologize to Eric crawled up his spine for blaming him all along. He really should have asked Juyeon, Jacob or Hyunjae or he should have just gone and asked Jaehyun himself.

"Ah... oh. Oh wow. Hey, uh, was it 'Jae' or the English name 'Jay'?"

"English. He chose 'Jay' when he lived in the US for a while."

So they didn't call him Jae, as a nickname for Jaehyun, but Jay. Younghoon thought he would have to temporarily drop the name Jaehyun from his vocabulary once this was over. He had heard it ridiculously often lately.

"I understand. Kind of. Well... Thank you for your help. I guess. Uhm... would you mind keeping this incident to yourself?"

The younger smiled understandingly.

"My lips are sealed, hyung. I'm so sorry that this is so confusing. If I overhear anyone talking about you again, I'll make them stop."

"Thank you, Jaehyun."

"Anytime. I've probably made it worse before, so I'm the one who needs to apologize. Do you want me to talk to him in private?"

"No, it's fine, thank you. I guess I'll do it on my own. But first I need some time to process the whole... names chaos."

"Thank God because I can't talk to him! I freeze immediately, it's a miracle that I can play on the same team with him once in a while."

"Yeah, same... Why can't you talk to him? I mean, that's bad for your training, isn't it?"

At least he wasn't the only one intimidated by Jung Jaehyun, or Jung Yoo-Whatever.

Jay.

Whatever.

He should stick with Jaehyun for now so as not to confuse himself even more.

"Uhm... because he's super cool? And I totally understand why you have a crush on him. He's so handsome, he's like a twelve while I'm a solid five. I always feel super ugly next to him and so- I don't know, like a little kid!"

"You're not ugly, Jaehyun."

The younger one puffed up his cheeks. Younghoon had to bite his lips to keep himself from grinning. Even though he seemed angry, he really looked adorable like that.

"Of course! I'm fourteen and yet I'm still ugly. All my fourteen-year-old classmates already look so good compared to me and all of them grew during the summer break!"

Younghoon shook his head. First, he doubted that all the fourteen-year-olds were handsome. But second, why did he say such a thing? He wasn't ugly, he was a cute boy. Who had told him he looked ugly? Probably the same people who made up rumors

about Younghoon dating someone or confessing to seniors.

"You're cute, Jaehyun. I'm serious, you have handsome features that you'll grow into. Don't worry. Some need more time and that's okay."

"You're one to talk, hyung. You're already tall and you're incredibly handsome and you're only two years older than me. Jay hyung too, Hyunjae hyung and Juyeon hyung as well and Mark Lee too. The whole senior team's tall and handsome except for me. And Eric is a cute tiny tot, but that's okay, he's just thirteen."

"That's nonsense. Give yourself a chance to grow. It'll be fine soon. I mean it, you're really cute. And if you don't grow, I'll carry you on my shoulders."

Younghoon winked and the younger laughed at that.

"Thank you, hyung. You're very nice."

"Younghoonie! Good to see you!"

They both turned to the distant voice. Younghoon recognized it immediately.

Lee Sangyeon ran across the school yard and waved with a big smile on his face.

"Hey hyung," Younghoon greeted him, hugging the older boy as he arrived, "What are you doing here?"

"Hey. Hey, I'm Lee Sangyeon, who are you?"

"Bong Jaehyun."

"Ah, nice to meet you! I'm here to pick up Jacob. We wanted to grab some ice cream before we go to the party, Hoon. He said you wanted to come too and when I saw you here, I thought you could join us. My treat of course. Do you want some too, Jaehyun?" he asked the blond.

The younger boy quickly shook his head.

"No, uh- thank you very much, m-my mom is probably already waiting for me. Good luck, Younghoon hyung."

"Thanks again for your help, even though I'm more confused than before."

"Understandable. Anytime, hyung, bye-bye!"

"Bye", he smiled after the younger one.

Sangyeon sat down on the bench across from Younghoon. He looked into his eyes, a soft smile on his lips and Younghoon knew immediately what was going to happen next.

"Hey, what's wrong?"

If there was something about Sangyeon that Younghoon loved and cursed at the same time, it was the elder's sixth sense for a friend in trouble. Perhaps emotional intelligence was a criterion for early enrollment and skipping a grade in middle school.

"I- I wanted to go to the party with a guy I have a crush on, but I was too scared to ask him out so I asked Eric for help but there were some misunderstandings and now I've met two other guys with the same name but not the one I wanted."

"Oh ouch. So, a guy named Jaehyun I assume?"

"Yup. From the basketball team. Tall, blond, handsome, you name it. That friend of Johnny hyung, you know?"

"Ah... Ah! I think I remember this guy. Cob said all members your age and older will also be at the party later. Well at least they're invited and as far as I can remember, Johnny hyung would never miss a party. I bet he'll drag him there. So... there's no need to invite him when he's already there, right?"

Younghoon thought about it for a second. Maybe he would have a chance to talk to Jaehyun properly.

"Yeah, you're right, I guess. But there'll also be a lot of people there and ugh..."

"And what about these people? Come on, tell me what's going on."

"When I met the first guy people started talking about it immediately as soon as the conversation was over. One girl even told me about her cousin called Jaehyun and, gosh, they piss me off so much. If I hear some bullshit like this one more time, I'll probably rip my ears off."

As he stood up, Sangyeon ran his fingers through Younghoon's hair.

"Cob's coming. Hey, don't worry, we'll take care of you. Maybe it works out tonight, then they won't have anything to gossip about anymore."