Secret sweet tooth

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Summary

Doc had grown desperate. Ren hadn't started selling his pies and he had no plausible reason to ask the wolf to bake for him every other week. At least when they lived together he could have the excuse that they should have sweets in case they wanted visitors.

And then eat the sweets by himself under the excuse that there was no point in letting it go bad.

For Ren it had been a surprise when Doc asked him for some cooking lessons. It wasn't out of Doc's realm's to try and keep learning, innovating. It was however strange when he wanted to be taught something that included creation and not destruction. However, this was the perfect excuse to spend more time with each other, to invite his sidekick to his own base, to let the other invade his personal space for one evening. Ever since the season started they hadn't really shared that much time with each other. In a way Ren missed that.

Notes

Hiii, re uploading another of my fics! This is the less dark of the one shots in this universe, but feel free to enjoy!!

I love these two, and i need more of them. Notes might change when AO3 is back, just for the sake of consistency with my notes

There were multiple bakers among the hermits, it was no secret, non of them had really felt as if they should hide their hobbies from the world. Specially when everyone had their own way to make their own special recipes. Between elven kisses, gigapies, all sorts of cakes and the occasional cookies that Grian managed to smuggle in world out of BigB there was no shortage of different flavors and seasonings traveling through everyone's different hands, manifesting their different upbringings through food.

Food would never get boring because food would always taste different. Even to those hermits that still relied on cooking books, some sort of unique identifier in their hands would manifest in the taste of their cooking.

Xisuma's tea's tasted an specific way, even if they were just teas. Impulse's tacos had some sort of special sauce that made them addicting. Jevin's new adventuring into food made seafood taste better than it ever had, even if Jevin didn't consider himself a chef.

If you asked Doc, he would say he is not one for sweets. It would be a lie of course. He liked the evil man persona that he could keep from time to time. The evil scientist front that had been forged by outside forces. It made it so less people would mess with him, and leave only those bold enough to try suffering the consequences. Still, there was one hermit that wouldn't believe his lies. That could see right through that evil persona; not because they had spent multiple years together, it just seemed like *he knew*.

Said hermit was Ren. Said hermit was Doc's favorite baker, favorite person. Not that he'd admit it openly. He'd say they are married, he'd call Ren his wife, he'd let the other call him princess, he'd build the man a beautiful house just so he can have a place to stay when he visits. And yet. He'd still not admit he has a sweet tooth, specifically for Ren's cooking.

That he'd yearn for his special flavor. That sweetness that sometimes stayed impregnated in the wolf's clothing and would make him remember how much he wanted too taste said scent.

However, Doc had grown desperate. Ren hadn't started selling his pies and he had no plausible reason to ask the wolf to bake for him every other week. At least when they lived together he could have the excuse that they should have sweets in case they wanted visitors.

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For Ren it had been a surprise when Doc asked him for some cooking lessons. It wasn't out of Doc's realm's to try and keep learning, innovating. It was however strange when he wanted to be taught something that included creation and not destruction. However, this was the perfect excuse to spend more time with each other, to invite his sidekick to his own base, to let the other invade his personal space for one evening. Ever since the season started they hadn't really shared that much time with each other. In a way Ren missed that.

Now both of them were standing on Ren's kitchen, ingredients laid on the table as the wolf hadn't even started on the explanation about the components when he was already drifting to explaining what he was building, the architecture that inspired him and the very dense story

behind every single decision he had made so far in the season. Doc couldn't be mad at the level of enthusiasm displayed in the conversation.

And Doc couldn't muster anything else but admire the other. His mind going quiet, and for a second, it was only to hybrids, *two people*, sharing what for some would be too intimate to share. Since for some, a base was a personal matter. For Ren it seemed to be the chance of creating his own stage, a place only for himself and those willing to play along.

Ren's own stage it was. Even if the space he had hoarded as a home was a bit unconventional, a small room under the library with a bed and every utility in sight. Doc could still tell how the inspiration of the exterior had blended into the room. The space could fit as any interior of the buildings above, the blue's, woods and glass obviously pulled from spaces in the surface. And as always Doc felt at awe in his friends abilities.

"You know dude…" the wolf man seemed to stop rambling, not that the creeper would ever complain about the other one talking. For a second the wizard was simply looking at every ingredient they had in front of them both. Maybe trying to decide where to start first. "I'm happy I get to teach you this…"

"I'm glad you were down to that." Doc tired his best to play it cool, leaning a little in the counter, trying to see Ren's face.

"You know these aren't *actually* gigapies, right?"

Doc was confused for a moment, there were no other gigapies. At least not that he was aware of. Not that a human-mob hybrid, that is also a mob-mob hybrid, had a great variety of places that would accept him, more less allow him to explore. He guessed he just never got to see the real thing.

Now that Doc recall he never really explored hubs. He was lucky to have been able to hop from one group to another with ease. Now that Hermitcraft was his forever home and the variety of abilities and talents seemed endless, there was even less of a need to travel outside of the place they called home. There was no risk if they didn't go out. That was sadly how many hybrids operated nowadays.

"Yeah, my grandma figured how to make replicas" Ren seemed shy about it. Doc couldn't guess why. "To be honest, I think my family's recipe is better than the original one."

"The one's you make are fantastic, I don't see how anyone could beat them." Doc decided to place his hand on Ren's. From world 8 he had learned that touch helped with grounding. And that seemed to be what Ren needed right now.

"Maybe when you taste the real thing you'll realize these are a little bit lame." Ren let out an airy laugh, he was always putting himself down. Doc was to scared to answer anything that might feel appropriate. He was never sure on how to deal with his friends feelings.

If it wasn't building something that would make them feel at awe, he wasn't the man to talk to about how your day was going or why you felt a bit hurt.

Ren started explaining how much of each ingredient they should add to the pie. Doc was grateful they wouldn't dwell on feelings for too long. Usually tying it to an unusual family event that made him remember the proportions.

The crust needed to have a pinch of salt, once a cousin wanted to add more salt but ended up being sugar and that was a little bit too sweet.

Strawberries or sweet berries make great syrup if anyone wants to add a bit more sweetness, his aunt used to always shower her with those.

The recipe is actually easier than what people think it is. His grandma had shown him how to bake it since he was just a puppy. It was his birthday present.

How the bowel he was using for the pie was a present from his mom. How his cutlery had been a present from his dad. How the binder where he wrote down every single dish or dessert he decided to learn how to bake had been a present from his brothers.

How his core family had made it a point they would miss him but wished to stay next to him in their gifts.

Doc was taking in every mention of a family, every small memory that crossed Ren's mind as a reminder of what he could've had. Evil scientist aren't born, they are created after all. He had to have been in a lab for him to be the person he was today. Still he would still imagine how his life could've been if he had a fraction of the love Ren's family seemed to share with each other.

Now he wondered how Ren would talk about him in relation to the recipe. How Ren would explain this interaction to the next person willing to learn how to bake such a delicious pastry. Would the wolf mention his crankiness to mix materials, the suggestion of adding some sort of blender to his mechanic arm. Would the conversation steer to the silence and servitude the creeper seemed to find in following Ren's lead. Or would the other simply mention him in passing as a previous student of his? Would he be a story worth telling or just a secret to keep on a shelf only used in future references.

Still Docs mind couldn't help bit wonder from time to time. How had a world just turned what should have been just an innocuous hobby into an act of resistance on itself. How it seemed like being able to emulate popular dishes had become something that only some had the pain to always have to find the closest option. How such simple pleasures were denied to those that seemed unappealing for outsiders.

"Now we just have to set the oven to 350 degrees" Ren's voice was what took Doc out of his world domination plans.

If the world outside wasn't going to accept Ren, he might as well destroy it. Maybe rule it in a way that would force them to see the beautiful heart the wolf had.

Or maybe he could keep that beautiful heart for himself. Doc guessed that if he really wanted that, he could.

"You haven't been listening dude, have you?" Ren chuckled as he so easily noticed Doc's unfocused stare throughout all the processes. Not that the creeper hadn't been great company in the meantime. Ren doubted he'd ever complain about his friend's company.

Doc let out a sigh "I'm sorry" he looked around, feeling guilty over his own inner monologue. "You know, cooking isn't really my thing."

Ren let a hand rest on Doc's shoulder, maybe a little too strongly, maybe a little too long "Practice makes perfect my dude." The blue eyes seemed to look directly into Doc's soul, as he tried to understand how could the wolf not tell his lie. "If you have any doubts when trying at home you can always ask me, or I can come over and help."

Well at the very least Doc was better at acting unassuming. The goat could see how Ren's tail betrayed him and wiggled at the suggestion of spending more time with each other. At the end the wolf was just as easy to read as a book.

"I think you'll have a question at least twice a week, if not a burned oven."

Ren let out a laugh "I don't think you can burn an oven, more less one of yours!"

"You'll be surprised about that."

"Your ovens can melt the world!" Ren was pointing out. Doc loved the teasing. "That would be a hazard!"

"Then just pray to the gods I don't burn down the entire world." Doc joked in a way that felt too serious. Maybe something that could be too real.

"I think I could stop you…" Their eyes met in a way Doc didn't remember them meeting. It blurred the walls he had built for himself and the world. It was a way that showed him how easy it was for people to get close to him.

Silence. Only the electronics and cybernetic seemed to be bussing in the background. Noises that were feeling the room with something, at least.

"Excuse me…" Bewildered Doc let out the first words that crossed his mind. There hadn't been anyone that would so openly oppose him. Even less in such gentle way.

Grian and Scar would sometimes try, but there would always be some sort of retaliation that would get out of hand from either side of the argument, maybe roping some innocent hermits along the way and generating massive amounts of collateral damage. Maybe Cub or Zed would be the only people insane enough to fight him and competent enough to keep up with the mind games and machinery required to level with the goat. To be fair Doc would only fear such a small group of *his* hermits.

Ren wasn't in that list.

"I mean, I don't think you would realistically do anything to me right? You'd stop if I asked you, I'm part of the world." The wolf set the timer on top of the oven. Forty-five minutes to go.

Maybe Ren wad some sort of knowledge of Doc's mind that not even the creeper had dared to explore. As some dogs could smell illnesses or abnormalities in the body. The creeper thought that if Ren such as placed his hands on Doc's and did his best attempt at puppy eyes, he'd probably melt on the spot. It was kind of hard to tell Ren not to get his way.

Realistically he could guess that the only time he had gone against Ren's wishes had been in world 9, when he had become king. Doc did nothing to actually stopped him, just declared his perimeter independent, Ren doing very little to deter that. Otherwise Ren would continue getting his way, every whim and whine being enough to convince Doc to do whatever the other wanted. *That was enough.*

Being a sniffer butt had to be one of the lowest points in his life, and yet he had done it just because Ren had asked.

Anyone else would be convinced Doc was in love with Ren. Except them two. Maybe they were blind to it all. Maybe they just hadn't had any time to connect the dots and realize what was actually happening in their hearts.

Maybe he already knew and was just pretending not to know.

"Are you coming, dude?!" Ren shouted from the living room, there was no point in waiting for the oven to be done and just stand in front of it staring. A part of Doc would prefer that than the now forced proximity he had on Ren.

Now they were both on a sofa, the wolf sharing some of the books he had brought up so they could wait. Doc had decided to pick on a murder mystery while Ren read some science fiction tittle. The wizard putting his legs on top of Doc's. The creeper trying to remind himself that dogs are naturally clingy, there was no other intent behind Ren's proximity.

There never was.

Not when Ren was camping outside his base on world 7.

Not when they shared a bed in world 8.

Not when Ren had become his "ward dog" on world 9.

Not when they called each other spouses on world 10.

Not when Ren called him "his princess" and wiggled his tail when Doc mentioned building him a tower in his own base,

And definitely not now that they were sharing such a tiny couch.

It was obvious Ren only wanted to stretch his legs, nothing more. Sharing about his stories had to be just so Doc could remember better. After all meaningful learning is has been proven to be more effective for memory retention.

And before Doc realized it, he was just staring at the book. Not reading it. He hadn't turned the page in what could be a bit too long and Ren was likely getting suspicious. Doc could feel

the stare through his skull, he just wished not to acknowledge it.

Maybe Ren could also ignore the lingering feeling of discomfort.

"You are quiet."

"So are you."

"You are overthinking it."

"I think you are the one overthinking it." Ren points out, his legs moving out of the way. His face getting closer to the cyborg's. "Was it something I did?"

"It is nothing puppy, I'm just not good at baking."

"Not being good at baking wouldn't make you just stare at a book." Ren's expression softened. His ears tucking into his head. "Was it the family talk? I know the Labs don't allowed for that."

"It's not either of those things, Ren trust me I'm fine."

Doc returned to reading his book, trying to ignore the looming chance of a conversation he did not wished to have. Ren was still looking at him, this was one of the days in which he hope he wouldn't give in to the cute eyes the other would make.

Doc sighed "Stop looking."

"Not until you tell me."

"Ren, don't worry about it, the goat doesn't need to talk about such non issues."

"It is an issue if it bothers you this much."

"Not an issue for me." To be fair, Doc had likely dealt with worse discomfort before.

Silence once more, there was nothing they wished to stay in the comfort that seemed to come from the moments in which the coziness of sharing a home came back to his memories of what once was.

Maybe he should pretend it was just a simple house dispute, as if it was a simple misunderstanding over cutlery or misplaced clothes or preference over cleaning supplies' fragrance. Not a moment in which he had to confront the secrets and fears that come from a part of his brain that he wished to pretend that it didn't exist.

On his part of the conversation Ren wasn't sure about how he could approach the situation, he had hurt his friend in a way and he still wished to make things right, he had to. Maybe for Doc it was easy to pretend the hurt had never happened. It was easy to ignore that yearn for comfort. Ren wasn't raised that way. Call him sentimental, but he was convinced a good conversation, a good cry, could cure any hurt that followed from any tinge of sadness that could arise from the mind. Maybe he'd just have to change his approach to the conversation.

Ren stood up, deciding he'd go upstairs. Doc did very little to stop his friend from leaving. Ren walk through his library trying to figure out if there was a way he could get Doc talking without breaking any of the unspoken boundaries both of them had built over the years. There had to be a way to show Doc that he was safe. Not that Doc had any reason to doubt how transparent Ren was with him.

No spells, no magic and no tricks. If Doc were to confess what afflicted him, then it had to be because he truly felt like the wolf would keep it safe and not because he was forced by some sort of force to give it's heart away.

As both of their bodies and minds traveled to other worlds, ignoring the physical realm in front of them. The passage of time now seemed to have been forgotten and the only thing that seemed real was the pit in their stomachs as the shadow of all that went unsaid seemed to loom over them and invade their minds, no matter how much they tried to ignore it. The timer rang to no one to listen, it's soft noise falling into deaf ears. A burnt scent that took a while to make it's presence known. Not that a creeper could smell burning easily, it was practically one of the few scents that would be carried forever in their fur. But a dog could smell disasters before they happened.

Ren rushed downstairs as soon as the aroma made it's way to his nose.

Doc definitely noticed the rush in which the wolf had made his way downstairs and to the improvised space he'd so confidently call a kitchen. The creeper followed close behind only to find Ren opening the oven to smoke and a burnt pie. Doc's eyes quickly traveling to Ren's face, who had been clearly hoping for the best outcome, now distraught over what had been a petty accident.

"I'm sorry" Doc apologized. "If I hadn't made you mad, you would've probably heard it."

"It's not your fault, I was the one who left."

Silence.

Only now it was truly uncomfortable. Ren was doing his best to scrape the ashes out of his bowl, tying his best not to hurt his utensils, cursing as it seemed it had stuck to the container. And Doc stood there, simply watching. Watching while the other struggled, while the other cussed, while the other tried save those things he held dear to his heart. Ren needed someone to hold to in that moment, and Doc was clearly not that person. Not that Ren didn't wanted him to be.

If this had been the labs he'd be blamed, beaten and berated. And this moment Ren only seemed angry at himself. Maybe even at the things that led to the current predicament. But not at Doc.

"Don't stand there just looking." Ren sounded mad, not doubt about it, but he was quiet.

"I don't know how to help."

It was weird for Doc to express inexperience. Yet it was a thing to be expected to have emotions not be his strong suit. For the first time Ren wished it was other hermit instead of Doc. Joe, Keralis, even Cleo crossed his mind. They'd likely have an invitation to relax of sorts. Maybe they'd be cleaning dishes besides him and asking what they could do to make the rest of the day go down smoother.

Ren could see Doc out of the corner of his eye. How the creeper would inhale and exhale deeply, loudly. How he'd look around as if the room could give him the answers he needs. How the creeper would sometimes open his mouth, as if he had thought of what he could say to make the moment better, only to close it again and pretend it never happened.

To an extent it was better than having someone interrupting Ren's attempts of fixing what was left of his mother's bowl. Maybe some sort of magic could fix it. They had vexes, and Ren doubted Xisuma would say no to using some sort of admin command to salvage something that meant a lot to one of his people.

"I was ashamed to ask you to bake for me."

The confession came out of no where. Ren had just left everything on the sink and was now looking at Doc, expecting some sort of explanation, maybe a bit more of information, perhaps.

"You haven't been selling them, and I felt like I couldn't ask you for such cute things without other Hermits pointing out I'm cute or something, I—"

"Are you kidding me?" Doc wasn't sure if Ren was mad or incredulous. To be fair, Ren wasn't sure either. "You KNOW how RIDICULOUS you have to be to be JUDGED BY ANY, AND I MEAN ANY HERMIT."

"I— I mean I just—"

"Doc, believe me when I tell you, the hermits are a family and you won't be seen as less just because you like something that doesn't go well with your evil persona."

"You think?"

"I'm sure" Ren chuckled. "Look dude, the only problem people have with me is my hat blocking their view." Docs short laughter coming right after.

The stress seemed to have subsided. Both felt in their skin once more. Both of their fears being left behind as they once more got reminded of the burnt atrocity in the room. What a beautiful metaphor for the day.

Ren had to be right. There hadn't been a single moment where group hadn't acted in each other's best interest, and if they had any problems with Doc's sweet tooth, he could simply blow up their bases. Not that any of the damage would be permanent, and not that he'd actually go through with it, even if he could. He'd rather be a bit petty, that was the best sort of torture, the boredom that came with the mundane grindy tasks, world ten had shown just that.

At the end, two things could be true at once. Doc could protect those he loved the most with his reality bending machines, he could bring out the greatest minds on the universe together just to fake his and his friend's deaths. And he could also enjoy one of his friend's family recipe as part of his weekly sweets. There was no one trapping him in a cage, other than himself.

"Do you think we should try again?" Doc asked.

"I mean, third time is the charm."

"We can go to my base if the smell here is too bad."

"Hey, you said it, not me!"

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