

# **One More Night (Could Turn into Forever)**

**by**

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**Klaine || AU || Eventually M**

*Kurt Hummel is hopelessly in love with Blaine Anderson. The problem? Blaine is taken. And popular. And so very straight...or maybe not.*

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## **Part One**

Kurt Hummel would never admit this to another living soul, but sometimes, when he's at home alone and no one's around to hear, he sings 'Hopelessly Devoted to You' to Blaine Anderson's yearbook picture. Sure, he feels like a lovesick, thirteen year old girl experiencing her first junior high crush, but he can't *help* it. Blaine is perfect in every way possible – he's absolutely gorgeous, super smart, incredibly talented, unfailingly kind and sweet to pretty much everyone at school, and extremely popular. He looks so adorable in the occasional sweater vest and his collection of bowties and scarves. His smile makes Kurt's heart lurch in a way he didn't even know was physically possible. Blaine is just – he's wonderful. *Wonderful.*

And straight.

So very, very straight. And dating the most popular girl in school: pretty Rachel Berry with the voice of an angel and the soft curve of breasts and round, slim hips and legs for miles and she's everything Kurt can't ever be.

Kurt gazes, unable to keep himself from swooning, at Blaine's yearbook picture.

And then he groans and drops his head on his desk.

Because Blaine Anderson is straight and Kurt Hummel is cursed.

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"Have you ever kissed anyone?"

Mercedes' voice catches him completely off guard, and he almost smacks himself in the face with his locker door. He follows her line of sight, feeling his heart clench painfully in his chest when he sees Blaine plant a too-long kiss to Rachel's lips at the end of the hall. They're surrounded by the rest of their friends, all of them popular and all of them beautiful. When the lip lock ends and Blaine's eyes can potentially catch Kurt staring, Kurt ducks his head.

"No," he says. "But I want to."

"Yeah," Mercedes sighs. "Me, too."

"Our day will come," Kurt says with confidence.

Even if he never gets the chance to kiss Blaine, he knows he'll eventually get to experience his first kiss at some point or another. And if that doesn't happen until college or something, well, then that's just the way of the world. Being the only gay kid out of the closet at McKinley High certainly has its drawbacks and this is one of them.

"Maybe we should just kiss each other and get it over with," Mercedes suggests, though Kurt can hear the bitterness in her tone.

"Honey, you know I love you," Kurt says with a roll of his eyes, "but no."

"Yeah, I know," she says a bit sheepishly. "Besides, I know exactly who *you're* waiting to kiss."

"Don't you dare," Kurt warns.

"Maybe you should stop looking at him like he's a particularly delicious piece of meat. That you're in love with."

"Easier said than done."

"You know what I'll never understand?" Mercedes begins. "How Rachel can be as loud and abrasive as she is and still get that fine piece of man. I mean, she's been in Glee with us since freshman year and I know you remember how she was back then."

"Even more of a headache than she is now," Kurt recalls. "I think it has to do with the fact that she stopped wearing tights under her skirts and switched from animal sweaters to fitted tank tops."

"Maybe," Mercedes says. "But it wasn't even until Blaine transferred at the beginning of sophomore year two years ago that she even started *trying*."

"He made singing sexy," Kurt says with a shrug as he closes his locker. "They became the lead soloists. Of course they got together, that's the way of high school. It's like when the quarterback dates the head cheerleader."

Kurt nods to Finn Hudson and Quinn Fabray to prove his point.

“I just think that Blaine deserves an award for having to put up with her nattering in his ear all the time,” Kurt continues.

“It’s not fair,” Mercedes states. “They’re in Glee with us, but we’re still stuck on the ground floor with the losers. Same goes for Quinn and Finn – I mean, Finn’s your brother now and you still don’t get invited to any of their parties. How does that even make sense?”

“I stopped trying to figure that out a long time ago,” Kurt lies.

Truth be told, he asks himself that same question every single night before he goes to sleep.

“Yeah,” Mercedes mumbles. “I guess it doesn’t matter now. We’ll graduate at the end of the year and that’ll be that. We’ll probably never see them again.”

That thought almost makes Kurt cry, because he doesn’t know what he’ll do without being able to see Blaine’s perfect face every day. Sure, he’ll probably be saner once he’s done with this whole unrequited love mess, but it still hurts to think that he really has *zero* chance with Blaine at all.

“Come on,” he says, looping his arm with Mercedes. “You know we see plenty of them together during Glee. I don’t think my stomach can handle seeing anything extra. Or my heart.”

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Later during the day, when Dave Karofsky gives him a particularly forceful shove against a row of lockers that sends him spiraling to the floor, Kurt internally curses every student that walks past him without a single word. He sits there, clutching his knees to his chest until the hall empties out and he can stand and retain a bit of his dignity in peace.

He really hates this school.

“Hey, Kurt.”

Kurt's breath catches in his throat. There's Blaine, striding down the hall, looking perfectly at ease even though he's clearly late to his next class, and he's still just as sexy as Kurt remembers him being the first day he had transferred.

"H-Hi, Blaine," he stammers, mentally slapping himself as he does.

Blaine smiles on of those cocky, yet attractive half smiles and Kurt can't help but smile back. Blaine's grins are infectious.

"Are you skipping too?" Blaine asks.

"What? No! I've never – wait, are *you* skipping class?"

"Thinking about it," Blaine says with a careless shrug. "We've got a substitute in government today and I really don't feel like reading a chapter or doing busy work that probably won't even be graded. What're you doing out here if you're not skipping?"

"I was – uh-"

Blaine eyes him seriously, taking in Kurt's rumpled appearance and the way he's cradling his elbow that had collided a little too roughly with a locker.

"Are you okay? You look...I don't know."

"I'm fine," Kurt says, ducking his head and hardening his gaze.

"You don't look fine."

"It doesn't matter," Kurt says, tugging his bag a bit higher on his shoulder. "I'll see you in Glee."

Just as he makes to walk away, Blaine grabs his shoulder, effectively stopping his escape. Kurt can feel the way his pulse begins to race just because Blaine is *touching* him and oh, *god*, he really does have it bad.

"Wait," Blaine says. "Come skip with me. I was going to hide out in the auditorium and rehearse for West Side Story auditions."

"I – I don't know-"

"Come on," Blaine urges, gracing Kurt with another grin. Damnit. Kurt can't refuse that grin. "Skipping with someone else is always better than skipping alone."

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"That was *amazing*," Kurt says, genuinely blown away by Blaine's rendition of 'Something's Coming'. "You're a shoe in for Tony."

Blaine shrugs, joining Kurt on the floor of the stage.

"If I get Tony, that'll be great," he says. "But really I think I'd be happy with anything."

"You're too humble, you know that?"

"What about you?" Blaine asks, brushing off Kurt's praise. "What part do you want?"

"Oh, I'm not – I'm not auditioning," Kurt says.

"What? Why not? You love acting," Blaine says.

"Just because you love something doesn't mean you're good at it," Kurt states. "And I'm not exactly the right type for Tony or...anyone else in this play, really."

"Bullshit," Blaine argues. "You can have anything you want if you want it bad enough."

"Now that sounds like Rachel talking."

Blaine goes a shade paler than normal, rubbing at the back of his head with his hand.

"I guess it did," he mumbles. "Sorry."

"It's okay," Kurt says, taking a chance and giving Blaine's knee a friendly nudge with his own. "I mean, you guys have been dating for a while now. She was bound to rub off on you at some point."

"Yeah, I guess you're right," Blaine acknowledges.

Kurt notes the distant look in Blaine's eyes and the slight, almost imperceptible furrow of his brow. He wants to inquire further and ask why Blaine looks so uncomfortable all of the sudden, but he doesn't want to overstep his bounds. They're not exactly friends, Kurt reminds himself. They're really just teammates that are exposed to each other on an almost-daily basis. Kurt has never had the opportunity to talk to Blaine outside of Glee club and he's not going to screw this up. If this is his one chance to gain even the slightest glimpse into the truth of Blaine Anderson, he's not going to do anything to push Blaine away.

"I guess I could go out for Officer Krupke," Kurt voices. "There's no chance in hell I'll get a shot at Tony, not with you around. But I – I guess I can audition for something."

*So I can be around you a little more*, Kurt doesn't say.

Blaine brightens visibly, giving Kurt a broad smile in return.

"That's the spirit!" he exclaims loudly, almost causing Kurt to jump at the noise. "So, are you coming to Rachel's party this Saturday?"

Kurt stares back blankly.

"What?"

"Rachel's having a party," Blaine explains. "Her dads are out of town on a cruise and she's having a few people over."

"Few people meaning...?"

"Not sure. I think Finn and Quinn are coming. Oh and Santana and Brittany and maybe a few other Cheerios. I think maybe some of the guys from the football team like Puck and Mike might show up, too. And probably Sam."

Kurt doesn't point out the fact Finn, Quinn, Santana, Brittany, Puck, Mike, and Sam are all part of Glee as well, and why couldn't he just say some other kids from Glee were coming, because that would be counter-productive. And Blaine just asked if *Kurt* was going.



"I'm not, um, exactly into parties," Kurt admits, unable to hide his blush.

"Well it's not going to be some full blown house party or anything," Blaine says. "Just a group of us in her basement, probably doing karaoke and playing something stupid like spin the bottle or god knows what else Rachel can think of. You should come. I've never seen you at any of her other parties."

"I've never been *invited* to any of her other parties," Kurt reminds.

"Well I'm inviting you to this one."

"Would – I mean, do you think Karofsky or Azimio will be there?" Kurt asks hesitantly. "Because we don't exactly...get along."

"No, because they're dicks," Blaine says plainly. "And they're dicks to everyone. So no, they're not invited."

Biting his tongue, Kurt refuses to elaborate on the fact that Karofsky happens to be a particularly huge to dick to Kurt for a myriad of reasons, most of them still a mystery to Kurt himself. Blaine doesn't need to know about his problems.

"Do you think it'd be okay if I brought Mercedes?" Kurt asks, not exactly willing to attend his first party without his best friend.

"Sure," Blaine says easily. "It'll be fun."

"Yeah," Kurt says, a smile threatening to break through.

"Good," Blaine says as he stands. "So I'll see you in Glee. And I'll see you on Saturday?"

"I'll be there."

"Awesome."

Blaine offers him a small wave in parting, darting out of the auditorium in order to head to his next class. The bell rings, but Kurt can only barely hear it over the sound of the blood rushing in his ears.

Blaine Anderson, the most popular boy in school, just skipped class with him and invited him to a party. A *real* party.

Kurt fishes his phone out of his pocket, sending off a quick text to Mercedes. They have to go shopping as soon as possible. He has to find the perfect outfit.

Because this might just be the best night of his *life*.

## **Part Two**

Little does Kurt know, by the time the party rolls around on Saturday night, the best night of his life has the potential to turn into the most *disastrous* night of his life.

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Mercedes wakes him with a phone call early that morning, imparting awful news: she officially has the flu and will, in fact, not be able to attend the party that night. His stomach clenches nervously, already worried about showing up without a friend at his side. She apologizes through a coughing fit, and Kurt reluctantly hangs up the phone.

How is he supposed to do this without his best friend?

Kurt sits on the edge of his bed for the better part of half an hour, debating on whether to just bite the bullet and go or to stay at home and watch Ice Road Truckers with his dad. His choices make him sound – and feel – too pathetic. He doesn't want to be pathetic. He just wants one night out with the popular kids, one night of listening to crappy music and dancing drunkenly with people his own age so that he can say he's had the experience.

And maybe he'll get a few extra minutes with Blaine.

He sighs, internally cringing and berating himself for falling for a straight guy, wondering how his life has come to this.

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By the time eight o'clock rolls around, Kurt still has his ass plastered to the sofa, where he's been all day, content to feel sorry for himself for just a little while.

"Aren't you gonna get ready?" his dad asks, sinking into the opposite end of the couch.

"I don't think I'm gonna go," Kurt says, hanging his head.

“Why not?” his dad wonders. “Finn’s going, right? Even if Mercedes can’t be there, you can still pal around with him.”

Kurt wishes he could tell his dad exactly how much time he does *not* spend with his brother outside of their house, but he doesn’t want to break his dad’s heart. Brothers are supposed to look out for each other. Brothers are supposed to be that kind of silent support, even if they don’t always show it at first. Finn just isn’t that. Sure, Kurt loves him for being such a big dope all the time and they’ve come a long way since freshman year, but they’re still not at ‘pal’ level.

“I don’t know,” Kurt mumbles. “It’s just going to be a bunch of people acting like idiots. Not really my crowd.”

“But you were so excited to go. You bought that new top and those boots, right? This is your chance to wear ‘em.”

Kurt just shrugs in return.

“Would you stop looking like that?” his dad begs. “You’re staring into that bowl of ice cream like it was your best friend and you just ate it and now you’re feeling sorry for the both of you. Go get ready. Go out. Have some fun.”

“Nobody wants me there, dad.”

“Blaine does, doesn’t he? He’s the one that invited you, right?”

“I think he just did it to be nice.”

“Maybe he wants you to get out more.”

“Gee, thanks.”

“Listen, kid,” his dad sighs, “I love you to death. But you’ve been more mopey than usual this week and I hate seeing you like this. I know parties aren’t really your thing, but you never know. You could have fun. Just – you know, don’t drink and drive.”

“Oh, so it’s okay for me to drink now?” Kurt drawls.

"I think you might feel a little more grown up and a little more included if you rebel with a beer or two for one night," Burt clarifies. "I'm not saying you should go get falling down drunk, but I'm not an idiot. Teenagers got their ways of getting booze. Just don't leave the house if you decide to drink or have someone drive you home. Parties are a rite of passage. I'll let you have this one if your promise not be stupid about it."

And so, because his dad is being so damn cool about this, he finally unglues himself from the sofa and heads upstairs to shower and get ready.

When he glances at his phone half an hour later to see that Blaine has sent him a text message, inquiring whether or not he was still planning on showing up, Kurt texts back that yes, he is, and feels a little better about himself as he dons his new shirt.

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This is a monumentally stupid idea, Kurt decides a few hours later. He never thought he'd feel out of place in a room filled with people that he sees every single day, most of them in Glee, but he does. He really, truly does. The music is too loud, everyone seems to be screaming for some reason, and Blaine has only acknowledged his presence exactly once – when he walked inside and Blaine led him down to the basement. He feels overdressed in his new red shirt and ass-kicking boots. The beer tastes awful. And everyone is having a great time except for him.

Currently, he's sitting on a piano bench watching Blaine and Rachel drunkenly stumble their way through 'Don't You Want Me' on the conveniently placed stage, all the while making heart eyes at each other and groping at whatever limb they can reach. He stares openly at them, wondering how people could possibly cheer them on.

"You need a shot."

Kurt's state of confusion is cut short by Santana Lopez looming over him with something that looks suspiciously dangerous in a shot glass.

"Why do you think that?"

"Because you're sitting there like some sad, lost puppy, and frankly, it's exhausting to watch. So please, do us bother a favor and drink this. I even snagged the fruity kind. Just for you."

"I don't know whether to be touched by the sentiment or offended by your obvious dig at my sexuality."

"It can be both, for all I care. Just take the damn shot."

"I really don't feel like getting sloshed tonight."

"You won't get sloshed off of *one* shot, Hummel."

"...You're sure?" he asks timidly, eyeing the drink and Santana before looking around to make sure that no one is paying him any mind.

Santana's gaze softens, but only for a split second.

"I promise," she says, and Kurt thinks it's probably the nicest thing she's ever done for him.

He takes the drink, turning his nose up when he takes a sniff. It's straight liquor, he notes, but there is a vague hint of strawberry or watermelon laced into it.

"Do I just-"

"Down the hatch," she says with a nod.

Kurt takes a deep breath, opens his mouth, and tosses the shot back with as much grace as he can muster – which turns out not to be much at all. Some of it dribbles down his chin and he wipes it away quickly before finally taking a breath. The taste is too heavy and strong on his tongue, making him want to gag, but the hint of fruit – watermelon, he decides – helps him more than he had expected.

"Now get your bony ass off of that bench and dance with us," she demands, taking the shot glass from one of his hands and twisting the beer he'd been nursing from the other.

"But I can't dance like that!" he squeaks when she tugs him to his feet.

"Au contraire, my little gay. I've seen you move your hips plenty of times in Glee so you can't pull that card with me."

“But I don’t-”

“Do you *want* to sit in the corner all night and have absolutely no fun?” she asks. “Or do you want to man up and look like an idiot with the rest of us?”

Kurt allows himself the opportunity to glance around at the throng of people currently dancing in the middle of the floor. She’s right; they do look like idiots. But they look like idiots together and it doesn’t seem like anyone really cares about form when all they’re doing is grinding on someone or jumping up and down.

Except for Puck, who’s walking around and squawking like a chicken.

Kurt snorts loudly at the sight.

“I guess I’ll take my dose of idiocy,” he relents.

“Good,” Santana says. “Dance with me.”

So he does. Kurt dances as best as he can, letting the warmth of the scant bit of alcohol he’s imbibed warm him and loosen his limbs. He’s not drunk, not really. He barely even feels a buzz, but he has to admit that the shot Santana had forced upon him has helped a great deal. It’s not even dancing, he realizes; it’s just moving to a beat and occasionally holding his arms over his head. He seems to be doing well, because Santana laughs with him and takes him for a twirl.

But then Blaine is there.

“Kurt!” he shouts over the music. “I’m glad you came!”

Repressing the urge to roll his eyes and biting his tongue because he wants to say, “It’s been an hour and you’ve barely said five words to me,” Kurt just smiles in return.

“Where’s Rachel?” Kurt asks.

“Finding an empty bottle and something flat,” Blaine explains. “It’s almost time for spin the bottle!”

"Oh," Kurt says, his excitement immediately deflating. "I should probably go sit down. Or maybe I should leave."

"What? No! Why?"

"Because I – I can't play spin the bottle with everyone," Kurt states.

"And why the hell not?" Santana asks at his side, already looking like she's ready to handcuff him to a chair in order to keep him from leaving.

"Because no one is going to want to play spin the bottle with a queer."

"Don't say that," Blaine says at once, taking Kurt by the wrist and dragging him away from the dancing group. "Nobody here cares that you're gay."

"Some just might," Kurt says with a pointed look to the couch where a few football players in letterman jackets and a couple of boyfriend-lacking Cheerios are making out. They're the only people that Kurt doesn't really know here, and he doesn't have the safety net of Glee beneath his feet when it comes to interacting with them. Blaine's right about his teammates not caring, but those people – the ones whose names he doesn't even remember – they will care. And Kurt doesn't want to set himself up for that kind of pain.

"Well they sure as shit won't say anything about it," Santana declares. "Because if they do, I'll have them on their asses in about ten seconds flat."

"I won't let them say anything to you," Blaine adds. "*I* invited you here and this is *my* girlfriend's party. And considering my girlfriend has two gay dads, I doubt she'll put up with any homophobic crap they might decide to spew. You know Rachel. She'll kick them out if they even try it."

Kurt looks from Blaine's hopeful face to Santana's bitch glare and, quite quickly, he realizes that he has absolutely no choice in this.

"Okay," he finally says. "I'll play."

Blaine thumps him on the back and grins broadly.



“Yes!” he exclaims, just as Rachel shouts that she’s found a suitable surface on which to spin the bottle.

“Spin the bottle!” she hollers. “Who wants to play spin the bottle?”

Literally everyone gathers around the tiny chessboard she’s found and settles in for the game. Blaine pushes Kurt down at his feet and Santana is sure to seat herself at Kurt’s side.

“Doesn’t matter who spins who,” Blaine says to the crowd. “Boys, girls, it’s up to fate. No cheating and no copping out.”

“We’re equal opportunity kissers here,” Rachel agrees with a nod to Kurt before she turns her stern gaze onto everyone else. “And if you don’t like it, feel free to get out of my *gay dads’* house.”

There are a few rumbles from the football players that Kurt doesn’t know, and he’s not surprised to see them stand up and leave the basement entirely. They appear to drag the Cheerios out as well, but only the ones whose names slip Kurt’s mind, though the girls are sure to shoot Rachel a pitifully desperate look.

“Just as well,” she decides before taking a sip of her drink.

“Dude, if I’d known you wanted to get your man mack on, you could’ve just said,” Puck jeers at Blaine. “I’m totally equal opportunity when it comes to mouths.”

“Oh, fuck off, Puckerman,” Blaine tosses back, though he does laugh and joins them all on the floor.

It’s just members of the Glee club now, for which Kurt is eternally grateful. He feels kind of bad that some of Rachel’s guests left just because they were too scared the bottle might land on *him*, but he senses a bit of solidarity and remembers that they are all part of the same team, even if they’re not all exactly friends. It makes him feel warm inside the way the alcohol doesn’t.

Plus, Blaine’s knee is nestled right against Kurt’s where he has apparently decided to sit – in between Kurt and Rachel.

“I’m so starting us off,” Puck announces as he reaches into the center and spins.

Kurt watches anxiously as the bottle slows. For one, horrifying second, he thinks it might very well land on him. And while Puck seems to be up for making out with absolutely anybody, Kurt kind of hopes that some higher power won't let his first kiss be Noah Puckerman, of all people.

It lands on Santana. Kurt releases a soft breath he hadn't known he'd been holding.

"Get over here, girl!" Puck calls happily, waving Santana over with his hand.

She rolls her eyes – that seems to be Santana's natural reaction to everything – and leans over the circle to lock lips with Puck. Her dress is super short, Kurt notices, and he quickly averts his eyes to avoid catching a glimpse of her panties.

Or, god forbid, *worse*.

When Santana crawls back to her place, Puck raises his hands over his head and begins to nod along with the music, like he just scored a touchdown on the football field.

Santana spins next and –

No.

Oh, *no*, Kurt thinks miserably to himself.

It hands directly on him.

"Only a matter of time," Santana sighs, though she does give him a slight wink before leaning in and pressing her lips to his.

It's not entirely uncomfortable, Kurt realizes at first. She, thankfully, didn't give him too much time to over-think the situation. Her lips are soft and when she darts her tongue into Kurt's mouth, she tastes like some kind of fruity lip gloss. Kurt, being the inexperienced kisser that he so woefully is, can do nothing but mirror her actions. It feels very clinical, like maybe she's give him some weird, too-wet dental exam, and the whole experience sparks literally nothing inside of him.

When she pulls away, Kurt feels a little underwhelmed.

Is that what kissing is supposed to feel like? Sure, she's a girl – that fact hasn't escaped Kurt's notice. But he figured he might feel *something* from it all considering he's never had another person's tongue in his mouth.

All in all, though, it just seems a bit anticlimactic. Also, the fact that his first kiss hadn't been with a guy is disheartening. Maybe he can just...not count it. Can he do that? Can he not count a kiss with a girl as his first one because he's gay? Well, he'll just have to, Kurt decides.

Santana grins devilishly at him, and Kurt attempts to smile back. He's knows it must look forced.

"Your turn," she says, the words coming out a bit too sing-song for his liking.

He spins the bottle with the least amount of hesitation he can conjure, and watches nervously as the bottle spins and slows.

And lands on *Finn*.

"Do-over!" Finn shouts at once.

"Whoa," Puck cuts in, "what happened to equal opportunity kissing?"

"Dude, he's my brother!" Finn squawks.

"Yeah, but he's not your *real* brother," Puck says with a twisted smile. "So technically-"

"Kurt can spin again," Blaine declares. "Family kills the spin."

Silently sending Blaine a huge thank you with his eyes, Kurt spins the bottle once more, glad to have avoided that particular train wreck. He watches the bottle with even more apprehension this time around, knowing that there is obviously no higher power at play tonight and he's pretty much resigned to an evening of kissing a bunch of girls he has no interest in.

The bottle stops.

Everyone in the circle proceeds to whoop and holler as loudly as possible, thought Rachel is probably the loudest of the bunch.

Holy. Hell.

There is no possible way this is happening to him.

The bottle points directly at Blaine. There's no room for misinterpretation during this round.

Kurt's breathing increases in speed, as does his pulse, and he does his very best not to blush and he hopes that, if he does, he can just blame it on the alcohol in his system.

Blaine *smiles*.

"Come here, you," Blaine says softly, his voice almost drowned out by everyone else's cheering.

He slips one hand around the back of Kurt's neck, his thumb brushing against Kurt's jaw as he goes. Kurt sucks in a sharp breath as Blaine leans in and then – oh, and *then*:

Blaine's lips are on his, all soft and warm and pliant and perfect. Kurt can't breathe. All he can do is unfreeze after the shock passes and kiss back, Blaine's breath so hot on his mouth that Kurt feels like he might be on fire. Lips drag against lips with just enough pressure to drive Kurt absolutely mad with desire, and when Blaine's slides his tongue along the seam of Kurt's mouth, as if asking for entrance, Kurt is one hundred and ten percent positive he can die a happy boy. He parts his lips in kind, allowing Blaine's tongue to slip and slide against his own and dear *god* he tastes like pure heaven.

Kurt had been wrong, so very wrong: kissing isn't boring at all.

Kissing is amazing when it's with *Blaine*. Damn, this boy knows how to kiss, he realizes, the thought barely passing through the mush that is now apparently Kurt's brain.

He hears a soft whimper and immediately knows that it comes from him, unbidden, because that's when Blaine pulls away.

Kurt remains adrift in a sea of heat and taste and the scent of Blaine's cologne. The hand at the back of his neck slides away slowly, dragging over his jaw and down his shoulder until it's gone entirely.

And that's when Kurt wants to cry because he knows that's all he'll ever get from Blaine Anderson – a single kiss surrounded by a bunch of drunk teenagers who don't care that he's just had his first real kiss

with a boy he *really* likes; a single kiss with a boy who sees him as nothing more than a distant friend; a single kiss with a boy who is as straight as they come, who won't ever give him the time of day ever again.

Kurt feels crushed.

He bites the inside of his cheeks to keep himself from sobbing at the hopelessness of it all, and that's when he realizes that Blaine has been staring at him ever since he pulled away.

Kurt thinks he can see pity in Blaine's eyes. And it cuts through both his heart and soul like a finely sharpened ice pick.

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The game continues with nary a thought to Kurt and Blaine's kiss. When Blaine spins the bottle, it lands on Rachel, and things seem to return to normal. For whatever reason, there are no more boy on boy kisses and Kurt thinks that the universe either pities him or adores him, he just can't decide which. Eventually, the board and the bottle are pushed away and they all return to dancing. Kurt returns to his vigil on the piano bench, content to watch the festivities from afar while nursing his same beer until midnight.

The party winds down sometime around two in the morning. Finn, who had apparently declared himself the designated driver earlier in the evening, drives almost everyone home – except for Puck, who is passed out on the basement floor with his legs duct-taped together.

Kurt doesn't know if Finn forgot about him or if he purposefully left without Kurt in tow. He stares out the front window, feeling properly abandoned.

"Where's Finn?" Blaine asks after he bounds back down the stairs.

"I guess he thought I was okay to drive," Kurt tells him. "I stopped drinking hours ago."

"Ah," Blaine says shortly. "Well, you're totally welcome to stay here. The couch is nice and cozy."

"I should probably just go home," Kurt sighs.

"You don't drink much, right?" Blaine wonders, and Kurt shakes his head in answer. "Then just stay here. Better to be safe than sorry."

“Yeah,” Kurt says, dropping onto the edge of the sofa. “Thanks.”

Blaine nods, falling silent as Kurt stares at the floor. He doesn’t really know what to say.

“Rachel passed out the moment she fell into her bed,” Blaine supplies, seating himself next to Kurt. “She probably won’t wake up until like, noon or something.”

“You don’t seem too trashed,” Kurt notices.

“I pace myself,” Blaine says with a shrug. “And I know when to stop. Unlike some people on the basement floor right now.”

“Yeah,” Kurt replies with a soft bit of laughter. “Puck’s going to regret that tequila.”

“Puck tries not to regret anything,” Blaine reminds.

They fall quiet again, and this time Kurt takes the chance to slide off his boots that absolutely *no one* even noticed despite the amount of money he dropped on them. When he sits back up, Blaine’s still there, hands fidgeting in his lap, and Kurt just wants to slap him for being so damn adorable because it isn’t fair anymore. Now he knows what Blaine tastes like. Now he knows what it feels like to kiss such perfect, pouty lips. And Blaine’s presence has the ability to torture even more than it did a few hours ago.

“So,” Blaine says, turning to Kurt with a smile on his lips and a glimmer in his eyes. “First kiss tonight, huh?”

“Oh, *god*,” Kurt groans in misery, dropping his head in his hands. “Was it really that obvious? I’m so sorry you had to endure that.”

“No, no!” Blaine exclaims. “No, it wasn’t obvious, actually. The only way I could even tell was by how you, um, just sort of froze up there in the beginning, like you didn’t know what to do after the whole lip touching thing.”

“I’d just kissed Santana like, two minutes before,” Kurt reminds. “I should’ve been able to pick up something from that.”

"But she's a girl," Blaine points out. "And you don't like girls. I think, you know, if I was in your place, I'd have tried to erase the kiss with her from my memory as quickly as I could."

"I guess," Kurt mumbles in reply. "I'm still sorry, though. I know it's not ideal for someone like you to have to kiss someone like me. I hope it wasn't too traumatizing."

"Would you stop being so self deprecating? You're not a bad kisser, okay? Don't even think that. I was just – look, I was just trying to say that I'm sorry your first kiss had to be like that. It should've – it should've been something special, you know? Something you had for yourself and not something you had to share with like, a dozen other people."

On one hand, Kurt is extremely touched that Blaine seems to care about him in regards to that, but on the other hand, he doesn't know *why* Blaine seems to care about him in regards to that.

"I guess I'll just have to pretend that I didn't share it with them," Kurt says softly. "I'll pretend I shared it with you."

It sounds pretty pitiful, even to his own ears. But when Kurt hears Blaine swallow audibly in the otherwise silent room, he can't help but look up into Blaine's face.

Oh, wow, his cheeks are so *red*.

*That was not the right thing to say*, Kurt's conscience berates him. *You are the biggest idiot to ever exist*.

"I – I'm sorry," Kurt stutters, backpedaling as fast as his tongue will allow. "I didn't mean – well I did, but I was just-"

"You can share it with me," Blaine interrupts, speaking so quickly that Kurt can barely make out the words. "I mean, technically that was my first kiss, too. With a guy, you know? So it can – you can share it with me. You don't have to pretend."

Kurt stares at Blaine in shock. He's being so nice about this, and niceness is not something Kurt Hummel is used to being around, so it's really throwing him for a loop right now.

“That’s – thank you,” Kurt finally says. “But I don’t want you to have to pretend that it was anything other than what it actually was to you. You don’t have to play gay for the night just to make me feel better.”

“I’m not *playing* gay,” Blaine insists, but then his eyes widen and he realizes what he said. “I mean, I’m *not* gay. But just because I’m not gay doesn’t mean I’m going to deny you one of the better experiences of being a teenager. You’re my friend, Kurt. I’m not going to be *that* asshole.”

“It’s just weird to hear you say that, you have to understand,” Kurt explains. “It’s not like you ever actively made me feel like crap, but we’ve never been *friends* before. So it’s hard for me to – you know what, it doesn’t matter. Don’t worry about it. It was a nice kiss and now I’ll thank you for not running away in terror the moment it happened.”

“Maybe you’ll believe that I actually do want to be your friend when I offer to give you a do-over.”

It takes a moment for Blaine’s words to sink in. When they finally do, Kurt blinks back in surprise.

Wait.

What?

“I’m – I’m sorry?” Kurt squeaks.

“You heard me,” Blaine says, and now he’s got this satisfied grin on his beautiful lips and Kurt can’t help but remember exactly how those lips felt when they were pressed so firmly against his own. “I’m offering you a do-over. A new first kiss.”

“You – you want to kiss me again?” Kurt babbles. “But-”

“I want you to have a first kiss that you can keep for yourself,” Blaine says. “And I’m offering to share it with you.”

“But you’re not gay,” Kurt blurts on cue.

“So?” Blaine responds with a small shrug. “Kissing is kissing, except for you, because you’ve never done it. And you seemed to enjoy our kiss a *lot* more than you enjoyed the one with Santana.”



There's a coy, knowing glint in Blaine's golden eyes, and Kurt has to wonder exactly what he'd done that was so amazing in his past life, because he can't think of any reason why he's being gifted this opportunity. He also wonders if he's been too obvious with his crush around Blaine.

"That's, uh, wow," Kurt stammers. "That's really nice, but I don't want you to do anything that you're not comfortable with."

"If I was uncomfortable with it, would I have made the offer in the first place?"

"Your *girlfriend* is passed out upstairs and you're offering to kiss a *gay guy* just so he can have a first kiss that didn't happen around a bunch of drunk people at a party," Kurt states. "You do realize this, right?"

"If anything, Rachel will approve of my generosity and open-minded thinking," Blaine says. "But I don't plan on telling her. This is for you."

"And this – this isn't some kind of joke?" Kurt asks nervously. "There's no hidden cameras or – or people waiting around a corner to jump out and laugh at me?"

At that suggestion, Blaine's face falls, appearing genuinely saddened at the fact that Kurt's mind immediately jumped to such awful conclusions. He reaches out, as if to place his hand on Kurt's knee, but seems to think better and retracts it at the last minute.

"No, Kurt," Blaine says, just above a whisper, and he's got this tragic, melancholy smile on his face that makes Kurt want to hug and hold him until he *dies*. "That's – no. I would never do that to you. And I'm really sorry that people have been so damn *mean* to you, because you shouldn't ever have to worry about something so cruel. But that's not what this is. I swear to you."

"So you – you really want to kiss me?" Kurt asks, knowing that he sounds entirely too small and timid. "Just because you want me to have a nice first kiss?"

"I think it's something you deserve after all the crap you've been put through at school," Blaine confirms. "And besides, I think you have *great* potential in the kissing department."

Kurt huffs out a light laugh, feeling giddy and terrified all at once. A few hours ago, he had been mourning the loss of Blaine's lips the moment they were no longer glued to his, and now he has the chance to feel it all over again.

Just the two of them.

"Do you want to?" Blaine asks. "Because you don't have to if-"

"No, I do!" Kurt squeaks shyly, feeling all of about fourteen years old.

A bright grin stretches across Blaine's face.

"Awesome," he says, voice pitched slightly lower than it had been five seconds ago. "Come here, then."

That phrase, those two simple words are going to haunt Kurt's dreams forever. Who would've thought that '*come here*' would cause such a fire in his belly? But Kurt goes, of course he does, scooting over until his thigh is pressed right up against Blaine's on the couch.

"Relax," Blaine whispers against his lips, sliding his hand over Kurt's cheek until he splays his fingers there, caressing Kurt's smooth skin with callous-roughened fingertips. "I won't hurt you."

"I know," Kurt breathes. "I just-"

"Shh," Blaine urges. "Just let me - let me-"

And there is no slow-motion lean in after that, not this time. Blaine captures his lips in a kiss that literally causes Kurt's toes to curl inside of his socks. Shivers travel up his spine, lightning fast and just as electric. Blaine's free hand finds its way to the base of Kurt's neck, fingers tangling in hair and pulling Kurt even closer and Kurt can do absolutely *nothing* but open himself to Blaine's mouth. When he does, he hears a deep moan between them, vibrating against his teeth until Blaine's tongue dips inside, slipping and swirling, licking against Kurt's like he can't get enough of the taste.

Blaine pulls away.

"What-"

“Lie down,” Blaine instructs, his voice completely wrecked, pitched deep and low in a way that has Kurt almost moaning aloud.

Kurt wastes no time stretching out on the couch. Blaine crawls up over him, looking determined and predatory as he adjusts himself between Kurt’s legs.

“Yeah,” he breathes, planting a kiss to Kurt’s jaw, “god, like this.”

For someone who claims to be straight, Blaine is pretty damn eager to have his tongue in Kurt’s mouth. He kisses Kurt hard, groaning into it and pressing into Kurt’s body until Kurt feels their hip bones align. That, in itself, is almost erotic enough to turn Kurt into a whimpering puddle of boy, but Blaine’s fingers dragging through his hair anchors him in a way his lips simply can’t. Because Blaine Anderson’s lips are sweet as sin and soft as silk, and sweet hell, he knows how to use them. He kisses Kurt with so much behind it, and it’s so hard to remember that Blaine is only doing this to be a good friend.

And so, Kurt allows himself a few moments to drift off into a world where Blaine is kissing him because he wants Kurt in the same way that Kurt wants him, falling head over heels with every passing second and enjoying it for what it *could* be.

He feels himself harden in his jeans.

“Fuck,” Blaine hisses, clambering off of Kurt as if he’s just been stung.

Reality slaps Kurt in the face. When Blaine pulls away and darts around the corner, reality feels like a slushie: cold and cruel.

Kurt sucks in a deep breath, attempting to calm his hormones. He’s panting so loudly that he’s sure the entire neighborhood can hear him, and he tries to will away his erection. It doesn’t work, of course, so he pulls his knees up to his chest and holds them there, hoping Blaine won’t notice anything when he returns.

If he returns.

*Oh god, no*, Kurt thinks. Please say Blaine didn’t feel that. Please. If there is any grace left on this earth to spare, please say that Blaine didn’t feel that.

Blaine does return after a minute or two, lips flushed and swollen in a way that only kissing can cause.

“Shit, I’m sorry,” Blaine says. “I thought I heard Puck coming up the basement stairs.”

Kurt offers a shaky nod in return, though he doesn’t know why Blaine would seek Puck out if that had been the case. There’s nothing for it now, though. The moment is over. Actually, it’s been completely obliterated and if Blaine – god, Kurt is going to be *mortified*.

“Is he still passed out?” Kurt asks, doing his very best to pretend that everything is normal.

“Yeah,” Blaine says. “I guess I – never mind. So was that – I mean, was it okay?”

“It was great,” Kurt says. His voice comes out a bit weak, but he can’t do much about that at the moment. “Better than great, really.”

“Great,” Blaine echoes. “Good. I’m glad it was great for you. Because that was – that was the point, right?”

“Right,” Kurt answers.

“Cool. So...I guess I should go to bed or whatever.”

“Probably.”

“Yeah,” Blaine says, raking his hands through his mussed hair. “Well, I’ll say goodnight, then. And if I don’t see you in the morning, like, if you leave before we get up, I’ll see you at school.”

*We.*

The word hits Kurt harder than reality had.

“Goodnight,” Kurt responds, and Blaine heads straight for the stairs. “Wait.”

“Yeah?”

“Just – you know, thanks,” Kurt says. “Thanks for doing that for me. And for...being a friend.”

With a goofy grin, Blaine gives him a nod.

“Sure thing, Kurt.”

He bolts up the stairs without another word. Kurt’s head collides with his knees. That was probably the *weirdest* post-make-out conversation in the history of make-out conversations. They just had their tongues in each other’s mouths, and now Blaine will probably crawl into bed and snuggle up to his girlfriend, and he’ll probably kiss her, long and hard in the morning just to prove a point.

And Kurt will curl up, cold and alone on the couch.

Because Blaine Anderson is straight and Kurt Hummel is so, completely *fucked*.

## **Part Three**

Being Blaine Anderson's shiny new friend feels remarkably like not being his friend at all, save for the fact that Blaine sits next to him during Glee rehearsals more often than not. It's weird, though, because he doesn't say much more than 'hey' or 'what's up' before he has a lap-full of Rachel Berry. Kurt does receive a few texts from him outside of school, but they're about as lame and pointless as text messages can be.

**What's up, Kurt?**

*Not much.*

**How was your day?**

*It was alright. Yours?*

**Pretty good. Excited about the new number in Glee?**

*I guess so. Wish we did more Broadway, though.*

**Yeah, that'd be cool.**

*Yeah.*

**Gotta meet Rachel now. Talk to you later!**

*Okay, have fun.*

**Will do.**

Actually, their text message conversations border on pathetic, and Kurt wonders if Blaine's just doing it out of the kindness of his heart rather than any actual interest in Kurt's life. Either way, something nice and warm settles in his chest whenever he sees Blaine's name pop up on the screen of his phone. For a while, that's enough to keep him sane after their steamy make-out session on Rachel's couch.

Until it's not.

Blaine's kisses greet him in his dreams nearly every night, accurately reconstructed to include sound and the heavy feeling of Blaine's hand on his cheek. First there's the kiss itself, but then there's the moans and groans and the sounds of their lips sliding wetly, followed by the comforting weight of Blaine's hips pressing him down into the sofa. Kurt always jolts awake just as soon as he remembers the taste of Blaine's tongue – and then he finds that he has to change his underwear because they're too sticky-cool to sleep in. The whole process is maddening.

On top of all of that, there's the most peculiar thing:

About once or twice a week, Kurt will look up from his locker or he'll glance over Mercedes' shoulder in the middle of a conversation to find Blaine staring at him from the other end of the hall. As soon as their eyes meet, Blaine offers him this fleeting half-smile before looking back to Rachel and tugging her closer to his side.

Kurt has no idea what the hell is going on. Blaine is straight. He *gets* that. He knew it the moment their lips first touched during spin the bottle. So why does Blaine feel the need to make that point over and over when they occasionally make eye contact? He understands why Blaine did what he did for him, but the aftermath of it just doesn't make sense in Kurt's head. Some days, he wishes he had someone he could talk to about all of this. He still hasn't told Mercedes about kissing Blaine at the party, and it's a blessing that the other kids were apparently too drunk to remember most of the night, so they don't bring it up either. Finn remembers, of course, but Kurt thinks he's probably a little too weirded out to mention it at all. Plus, Kurt doesn't think he can convince Finn to have a chat just so Kurt can discuss his crush on one of his brother's very straight friends.

Yeah, that's never going to happen.

He's not exactly sure why he doesn't feel comfortable telling Mercedes, though. She's his best friend. She knows every last detail in regards to his crush on Blaine. She'd probably be excited about the fact that he had his first kiss. But she also might be a little bitter, considering she was supposed to attend the party, too. If she'd been able to, she would have gotten the chance to play spin the bottle and maybe she would've had a lip lock with Sam, who she thinks is super-white-boy-cute, if Kurt remembers her exact words. But that didn't happen. So maybe Kurt just doesn't want to rub it in her face.

It's probably better to keep the kiss to himself anyway, Kurt decides. God only knows how fast gossip travels in this school and Kurt will not risk Blaine becoming upset with him over some sort of slip up. Sure,

Blaine had seemed okay with kissing Kurt in front of their Glee friends, but that doesn't mean he wants the entire school to know that he locked lips with a fa-

Kurt cuts off his own train of thought.

He won't be self deprecating today.

-

A month and a half later, Kurt is still reeling from finally knowing what it feels like to kiss Blaine, and he's even more confused than he had been a couple of weeks ago. And he hates it. He hates their pseudo-friendship. He hates the looks and the stupid, meaningless texts that never lead to *actual* friend things, like hanging out or discussing their lives. He hates that Blaine sits next to him in Glee but never talks to him, and he hates that Blaine winked – actually winked – at him during rehearsal yesterday for no reason at all. What's more is that he hates the fact that he can't get Blaine out of his head, that he can't forget the feel of his lips or his hips, and he hates that this entire venture is pointless because Blaine is straight and he's dating Rachel and Kurt has no chance whatsoever.

But it isn't until he's at the Lima Bean with Mercedes one day when he really snaps. It's almost Thanksgiving, and it's too cold to walk around the outdoor mall like they'd planned, so they're sitting at a table and gossiping over mochas with Rachel, Finn, Quinn, and Santana seated at a table a few feet behind them. It's pretty stupid that Kurt and Mercedes never receive an invitation to join considering they all just got out of Glee rehearsal half an hour ago, but that's the way it is.

Blaine walks in the door and heads straight for the line, not even noticing his own girlfriend because he's too preoccupied with what looks to be the last slice of pumpkin bread. He's dressed to a tee, Kurt notes, dashing in his dark coat and cozy scarf, and his hair doesn't have quite as much gel in it today after they all sweated so much during rehearsal.

"There he is," Kurt sighs softly, barely loud enough for Mercedes to hear. "Dreamy as ever."

"You just *keep on* dreaming," Mercedes says under her breath, sure to give a smile as she does.

Yeah. Kurt has absolutely no problem in that department.



It's hard to tear his eyes away, though. Blaine just looks so *good*. The loud scratching sound of chair legs sliding across the floor causes him to cringe, and then Rachel's rushing past their table in a hurry to greet her boyfriend.

"Hey, Rachel, what's going on – mmf," Blaine attempts to say, but his words are cut short because his annoying, attention-seeking girlfriend decides to plant a huge, wet kiss on his lips rather than offering a sweet little hello or a quick peck like most girls would do in public.

Kurt almost gags at the sight. Blaine squeezes his eyes shut momentarily, but when he opens them again, he appears to catch sight of Kurt and his eyebrows nearly shoot up into his hairline. After a second or two of looking like he's just been caught doing something illegal, Blaine shuts his eyes tight once again and cradles Rachel's entire face in his palms. When their lips part, there's that gross, smacking sound that sets Kurt's teeth on edge when it's not happening to *him*, and Blaine offers Rachel a broad, infectious smile.

"I missed you," Rachel says, latching onto Blaine's lapel.

"Babe, you just saw me thirty minutes ago."

"I know," Rachel replies with a happy shrug. "But I never get enough chances to do that."

"I guess we'll...have to make more?" Blaine says, clearly hazarding a guess.

"Correct. Come sit with us."

"I'll be there in a second. I just – here, take my bag. I gotta run to the restroom."

Rachel takes his bag willingly, and just before Blaine turns around to head to the bathroom, his eyes cut to Kurt once more.

That's it. Kurt is done. He is so tired of being on the end of those glances when Blaine is around Rachel and he is tired of not understanding why it's happening. He's not sure why today is suddenly the day for answers, but he's been driving himself crazy with questions and confusion for over a month now and he's not going to let it happen anymore. Something wild and angry burns hot in his chest, and there's only one way it's going to cease.

"I'll be right back," he says to Mercedes.

"Where are you-"

"Just – my hands are sticky from the danish and I need to wash them. I'll be back in a minute, okay?"

"O...kay?"

Kurt shuffles quickly to the restroom, hoping none of their other teammates notice him leaving the table, and pushes open the door just behind Blaine.

"What was that?" Kurt asks bluntly, glad that this isn't a single occupant bathroom.

"Wha – oh, hey, Kurt," Blaine greets. "I didn't even know you were here."

"Bullshit," Kurt says, crossing his arms, prepared for a fight. "You saw me. I know you did because you looked right at me when you were kissing her, the same way you do all the time now."

"I don't – what are you talking about?" Blaine asks, eyes darting around the small space as if looking for another escape route.

"Don't pretend like you don't know. Every time you see me, you – you kiss her or you pull her closer. I get it, okay? You're straight. I'm not an idiot."

"But I don't-"

"I don't know if you're doing it to prove that point to me or to everybody else, but no one is questioning your sexuality. No one at that party even remembers that we kissed. So you can just stop using her as your straight-affirming *tool* or whatever is you're doing. I knew you were straight from the start so you don't have to worry about me having some – some stupid *crush*!"

Blaine blanches, face going paler than Kurt has ever seen, and he look properly horrified.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Blaine replies quickly. "Please stop yelling at me."

"Why did you even say you wanted to be my friend if you're not going to *be* my friend?" Kurt continues, because now that he's started, he's finding it too hard to stop. Every little thing that's been scratching away, everything that's been bothering him about Blaine has suddenly decided to make itself

known right now. “You sit next to me but you don’t talk to me, you smile at me in the hall but you don’t ever come up to me, and you text me for no reason at all and it’s like you don’t even care! I mean, after you were so nice to me I really thought that things might change but it just got weird and I don’t understand because I – it’s not like the *kissing* made it weird, at least not to me, it’s *you* that’s making it weird and I don’t understand why-”

“Would you – can you just stop?” Blaine practically begs, sounding angrier than Kurt’s ever seen. “Would you stop yelling and acting like I’m committing some crime when I have no *idea* what you’re talking about?”

“I find it really hard to believe that you don’t know what I’m talking about when it’s been happening for over a month!”

“Whatever, just stop *yelling*,” Blaine hisses through his teeth, looking pointedly to the door behind Kurt.

“Oh, right,” Kurt drawls, “because your precious friends were too drunk to remember that you kissed me, so you’re off the hook if no one brings it up ever again. Your reputation is completely safe, so long as no one talks about how you kissed the school *fag*.”

Blaine’s face darkens, something sinister falling about him as he relaxes his stance, crossing his arms in front of him.

“You know what, if *this* is how you’re going to act about, then yeah, that’s *exactly* why,” he states, glaring at Kurt through narrowed eyes.

Feeling as if he’s just been shot, Kurt’s jaw snaps shut and he takes a timid, terrified step backwards.

“You – you don’t mean that,” Kurt whispers because he hadn’t meant to say what he did and he’ll be crushed if Blaine really thinks that about him.

“Of course I don’t *mean* that,” Blaine snaps. “Christ, do you think I’d volunteer to kiss you a second time if I did? But this is not the place to be having this conversation.”

“I just – I want to understand why-”

“Kurt,” Blaine sighs, combing his hand through his hair in frustration, “have you ever considered the fact that it’s not about *you*?”

With that, Blaine shoves right past Kurt, who feels rooted to the spot, and exits the bathroom without so much as a ‘see you later’. Kurt stares at his reflection in the mirror across the small space, taking in his pallid skin and wide, soulful eyes. For all he’s learned about the world, he has no idea what to do or say to make any of this better. He does know that he can’t go back out there and sit next to Mercedes while pretending that nothing is wrong, not with Blaine ten feet away with his arm around Rachel’s shoulders, but it’ll look weird if he just grabs his bag and tells Mercedes that he wants to leave. That might spawn all sorts of questions that he can’t answer.

He straightens his coat, attempting to appear somewhat normal when really he’s a mess inside, and texts Mercedes to meet him outside with his bag. He leaves the bathroom and heads straight for the door, not allowing himself to spare a glance in Blaine’s direction. It only takes a few seconds for Mercedes to meet him by car, his bag in hand, demanding an explanation.

“I just want to go home,” he says tiredly. “I’ve had a shitty day and all I want to do is change into my pajamas and make myself sick on chocolate ice cream.”

“But we always tell each other about our shitty days,” Mercedes says, handing Kurt his bag. “That’s what friends are for.”

“I know,” Kurt says, offering what he hopes is kind smile. “But I don’t feel like talking today.”

-

When Kurt is finally alone in his bedroom, the house is empty and just quiet enough to give him the opportunity to think. He kicks off his shoes, tugs off his coat, and falls onto his bed. Everything in his life feels hopeless right now, and he feels like he’s been running in circles with no clear direction ever since Blaine transferred during sophomore year. He’s been chasing after a boy who can’t love him back – not because he doesn’t want to, but because he *can’t*. Kurt understands that Blaine is straight and that he’s obviously dealing with...whatever he’s dealing with right now. But he has to admit to himself that he has been clinging to some possibility, some fantasy, in hopes that Blaine might just tip toe over to his team and then maybe they could kiss and become boyfriends and move out of Ohio and live happily ever after.

Now, though, the more he lingers on the issue, he realizes exactly how stupid he's been to even dream.

Blaine is straight. He has a girlfriend. They probably have very straight sex every chance they get and Blaine doesn't spare Kurt a second thought during their teenage trysts. And while it hurts to admit it to himself, that's the way things are and Kurt can't change that, not even by being Blaine's friend or going to parties or hanging around him during West Side Story rehearsals.

Fantasies are for children, Kurt decides, and he's not a little boy anymore. Having a crush doesn't automatically mean he'll get a boyfriend, and chasing after a straight guy won't get him one either. It's time to grow up. It's time to end the pity party and put himself out there. He's never going to find a boyfriend if he sits at home all the time or by hiding behind Mercedes or a gallon of chocolate ice cream. He could wait until college to actively seek out a partner, but now that he's had a kiss and now that he knows what it can feel like, he doesn't want to wait. He's *lonely*. He loves Mercedes to death, and she'll always be his best friend, but she can't fill the boyfriend-shaped hole in his heart. And he wants that experience. He wants to hold hands and go on dates and make out in the back row of the movie theater. He wants the shy looks and the nervous giggles and even though he wants it all with Blaine, he can't *have* Blaine.

So maybe it's time to start looking elsewhere. And maybe Blaine will get over whatever's going on in his head and they can share some type of platonic friendship, even if Kurt will always remember that Blaine holds his first kiss.

-

Scandals is nothing like Kurt had imagined.

For one, there's far less glitter than he'd expected, and two, everyone just seems kind of...old.

He has no idea how his fake ID had gotten him through the door, considering he'd only paid Puck fifty dollars to find him one, plus an extra twenty to keep the transaction a secret. Kurt doesn't think he looks like a Chaz and he certainly doesn't look like he's from Hawaii, but the thing had served its purpose and now he's standing here, completely out of his element, in a gay bar. An outsider probably wouldn't even be able to tell that it was a gay bar if it wasn't for the massive rainbow flag on the wall and the two guys practically dry humping in the corner.

Kurt feels his cheeks warm at the sight, and he quickly averts his gaze, keeping his head down as he makes a beeline for the bar. He's kind of disappointed to find that there's no menu or anything to pick a drink from because he has no clue what to order. Just as well, he probably shouldn't drink at all. But like the shot Santana had given him at the party, he thinks he might be able to relax a bit if he has something alcoholic flowing through his bloodstream.

"What can I get you?" the bartender, a fifty something woman with bright red hair asks him.

"Uh..."

The woman chuckles at what must be Kurt's lost expression before tossing him a wink and a nod.

"First timer?" she asks.

"That easy to tell?"

"I get kids like you in here all the time," she explains. "Barely legal and totally clueless. They usually only come back once or twice before they realize this isn't exactly their demographic."

"There's not much of a choice in Lima," Kurt says.

"Sadly, very fucking true," she says and Kurt can't help but laugh. If nothing else, he can just spend an hour talking to the bartender. "You ever had a shirley temple? You look like a shirley temple kinda guy. I'll give you one with a kick."

"Thank you," Kurt says, feeling very grateful for the fact that she seems to be able to read him so well.

While the bartender turns away to make his drink, Kurt looks over his shoulder to take in his surroundings. There's not exactly a crowd, but there are quite a few people on the dance floor. He thinks the jukebox is playing disco, and even though it wouldn't be his first choice of music, it seems to appease the clientele. And while he's slightly disappointed that he doesn't see anyone even close to his age, it's still nice to be in a place where he's less of an outcast.

"Lookin' for the man of your dreams to take home tonight?" the bartender asks, pushing a drink in front of him.

"Just looking in general, I guess," Kurt says with a sigh. "I don't really want someone for just the night."

"Ah," the woman replies. "You're lookin' for a forever fellow."

"Is that stupid?" Kurt asks, biting his lip.

"Not stupid," she says. "I just don't think you're gonna find what you're lookin' for here. You'd probably have more luck in a big city bar – they've got more people your age. We get a few, though. Some are like you, but we've got a couple of regulars from around the area that are more your type."

"Not sure if that sounds promising," Kurt mutters before taking a sip of his drink. It's sweet on his tongue, but there is definitely a *kick* to it.

"Don't get down on yourself just yet," the bartender says, giving his elbow a nudge. "You're here, I just gave you a free drink, and there's music to dance to. And you've got *plenty* of admirers, babydoll."

"I – what?"

"Didn't do much lookin' when you were lookin', did ya?" she teases. "End of the bar on your right – he's been staring at you since you sat down. End of the bar on the left – *he's* been staring since you walked in. And over there by the jukebox – that guy's been practically drooling since he saw your ass in those pants."

Blushing fiercely, Kurt's eyes dart around to glance at the men in question.

Holy shit.

They're checking him out. A man – more than one man – is checking him out and giving him the once over. The guy to his left offers a smile before calling the bartender over to him. He's...not unattractive, Kurt thinks. He's wearing a dark pair of jeans and a white t-shirt, but he's blonde and *extremely* tall. Kurt's not really into tall, blonde, and handsome.

He's more of a...small, dark, and adorable type.

“From Luke,” the bartender says, shoving another shirley temple in front of him as she gestures her head toward the blonde man Kurt had been looking at. “Don’t worry, though. I told him you were a virgin.”

“What?!” Kurt sputters, almost choking on the last bit of his first drink. “Why would you – how do you know I-”

“I didn’t until now,” she says with a grin. “But now he knows that you’re not lookin’ for a hook up. So if he asks you to dance, you should dance. Luke’s a nice guy, though, and he won’t push you into anything you don’t want.”

“Oh. Well, um, thanks for that.”

“Anytime, honey. I gotta get back to work. Let me know if you need anything else.”

The bartender flits away to tend to other customers and Kurt stares down into his second drink. He’s a little scared to look up because he doesn’t know how long he can hold eye contact with someone before they get the wrong idea, and because he’s not sure if he wants to dance with Luke-Nice-Guy before he’s had more liquid courage.

But this is *why* he came here. Sure, he’s not going to find a boyfriend when the majority of the guys here are at least thirty, but there’s no harm in dancing with someone who *isn’t* a girl and who *might* find him attractive.

“Nice vest, blue eyes.”

Kurt jerks his head up to find Luke now sitting in the seat right next to him, angling himself toward Kurt so that there’s no confusion as to who he’s talking to.

“Um, thank you,” Kurt says, glancing down at the vest he’s wearing. “I – I just got it the other day.”

“It looks good on you,” Luke says before tilting his head and looking up at Kurt with hooded eyes. “Or maybe *you* just make it look good.”

Kurt blushes, cheeks staining with so much red that he can feel in when the warmth spreads below his shirt collar.



"Thanks for the drink," Kurt says softly because he really doesn't know how to respond to such a compliment. Kurt doesn't ever *get* compliments.

"Sure thing," Like says with an easy smile. "You looked like you needed it, honestly. Gina says it's your first time here."

"Yeah, I – um, I don't go to bars much."

"Or ever?" Luke guesses.

"Or ever. Am I really that easy to read?"

"You are," Luke says, though he laughs as he does and already Kurt feels more accepted here than he does at school. "But it's cute, so don't worry about it."

"I hope you don't mind me asking but I was just – I mean, can I ask how old you are?"

At that, Luke tosses his head back, his laughter bright and loud over the music in the bar.

"Oh, I'm too old for you," he says after he composes himself. "But that doesn't mean we can't have a dance or two. "

"I'm...not sure if I really know how to dance to this kind of music," Kurt says, nodding to the speakers as if to demonstrate the fact that hello, they're playing *disco*, and that's not exactly Kurt's style.

"This music's for everyone," Luke argues kindly, "but I think I can find something you might like."

He stands, sure to give Kurt a wink as he does, and walks over to the jukebox to scan the selection. As he bends over, Kurt can't help but stare at the man's ass because damn. Just – damn. Luke-Nice-Guy has a nice ass, even if he is over a decade older than Kurt. Of course, Blaine has him beat by a mile, but it's still a very nice ass.

A new song begins to play overhead, and the majority of the patrons cheer when they recognize it.

"Oh my god," Kurt mumbles, shaking his head to himself.

"Shut up, you know you love it!" Luke shouts at him from the dance floor. "Now get your cute little ass over here and shake it!"

Kurt squeaks in surprise when a hand shoves him off of his barstool, only to turn around and find that it was Gina, the bartender. He downs the rest of his drink in one go, hoping she didn't put too much liquor in what he knows isn't normally an alcoholic drink, and shuffles out to meet Luke on the dance floor.

"Really?" Kurt asks, trying not to let his smile spread too wide. "I'm Coming Out?"

"Diana Ross is tried and true," Luke says, taking Kurt's hands and giving him a twirl. "Damn, you are *so* cute."

"You know," Kurt says as they begin to step and shimmy together, "you're a pretty good flirt, I'll give you that. But you haven't even asked me my name."

Luke gives a mock gasp, as if he's made some horrible, embarrassing blunder.

"How remiss of me! My apologies, sweetheart. My name is Luke. What might yours be?"

"It's Kurt," he replies as they swing around the dance floor amongst the crowd. "And thank you."

"What for?"

"For being so nice when I thought this entire night might make me feel even more pathetic," Kurt says plainly. "I wasn't really sure what to expect."

"You're just lucky I saw you first," Luke says, giving Kurt another twirl before pulling him closer, but not quite snug against him. "You never know what kinds of guys are lurking around here. Tonight's pretty tame, so I think you're safe. Watch out next time, though; if you keep wearing jeans that tight, you have no idea what kind of trouble you'll cause."

"What? Why would I cause trouble?"

"Because you're clearly a boy who thinks he looks boring when, in reality, you're the hottest guy in this bar right now," Luke says. "Now quit your worrying and dance with me!"

After that, Kurt allows himself to relax just a fraction and realizes, just like at Rachel's party, no one seems to be paying attention to how he dances. It's really just about giving a little shake of his hips and small shimmy of his shoulders and out of nowhere, three other guys are dancing alongside them. Luke keeps him close, though, sure to keep his hands above the waist. Kurt is touched at his consideration and offers a grateful smile. They dance through three songs like that, just close and friendly, until they both decide they're thirsty and head back to the bar.

"So, do you think you'll come back here?" Luke asks when they seat themselves on their stools and Gina hands them two more drinks.

"Undetermined," Kurt says. "It's nice dancing with you because I know you won't – well, you know. But then if I can't find someone my age, what's the point? On the other hand, I've never been to a place with so many gay guys in one room – except for show choir competitions – and it's nice to feel like I belong somewhere, even if I'm too young to date anyone in here. But then again-"

"Whoa, sweetheart," Luke says, placing his hand on Kurt's shoulder. "Hold those horses. I think you're over-thinking things here."

"Yeah," Kurt sighs, sipping listlessly on his drink. "I do that a lot."

"The majority of guys that flock here are older, I'll give you that. But it's not *just* older guys. I've seen a fair amount of boys your age walk through those doors in the past few weeks. Don't give up hope. If anything, you can come here to dance and unwind. There's nothing wrong with that."

"I guess."

"Don't look so sad," Luke says. "You'll find someone."

Kurt gives a nod, though he's not too sure if he believes any of it. They fall into silence for a few minutes, both of them nursing their drinks as Kurt continues to weigh his options. Well, he only has two, really: come to scandals again and hope or don't come at all and wait until college.

"Look at that," Luke says, nudging Kurt as he grins. "Guess you're not out of luck tonight."

"What?"

“Behind you,” Luke adds. “Sexy little thing. Tight black button up and dark blue jeans. I’ve seen him in here a couple of times, he’s almost a regular.”

Kurt quirks an eyebrow in confusion, but he does chance a glance over his shoulder to see exactly who Luke is talking about. The first time he scans the crowd, he doesn’t see any black-button-up-hotties, but when he looks again, he catches sight of small guy with a head of dark, gelled hair. He stares in shock.

That ass in those jeans looks *far* too familiar.

“Oh my god,” Kurt breathes.

“Guessing he’s definitely your type, then?”

“I – I think he’s – I’ll be right back,” Kurt says, already clambering off of his stool.

“Take your time,” Luke says, offering a small wave and a smile in parting.

Kurt moves slowly through the crowd, sure to keep himself hidden behind a few larger men until he’s able to get a better view.

Holy shit, it *is* him.

Blaine is right in front of him with his back to Kurt, dancing in between two tall guys who have absolutely *no* fashion sense. An [Adam Lambert song](#) plays loudly overhead and, while Blaine is one hundred percent fine-as-fuck in that shirt with his collar popped, Kurt is about two thousand percent turned on because apparently Blaine can *dance*. He’s not jumping around like an idiot at a teenage kegger dancing, but really dancing. He’s grinding his hips against one guy while looping his arms around someone else’s neck, baring his throat as sweat clings to his skin and how did Kurt not see him walk in? How long has he been here? What is he *doing* here?

Well, he’s clearly enjoying himself.

With a bit of alcoholic courage in his blood and his heart pounding in time to the music, Kurt slides up behind Blaine, effectively shoving the other guy out of the way and replacing the stranger’s hands with his own. Blaine tilts his head back on Kurt’s shoulder, eyes shut tight in a way that keeps Kurt’s identity a secret for just a few more seconds. Kurt allows himself that moment to drag his hands down Blaine’s sides,

feeling the way Blaine's muscles jerk and glide beneath his skin. When his hands reach Blaine's hips, he gives a tight squeeze, tilts his head until his lips are brushing against Blaine's ear, and says:

"Now what would your girlfriend say about this, Blaine?"

## **Part Four**

*If I had you, life would be a party, it'd be ecstasy.*

The song continues to blare and beat around them, but Blaine's body becomes rigid in Kurt's arms. He snatches Kurt's hands away from his hips and whirls around, his eyes already wide with fear, but they grow even wider when he sees exactly who had discovered him here. Everyone else continues dancing while Kurt and Blaine remain immobile in the center of the crowd, staring each other down without speaking. Blaine doesn't even look like he's breathing at this point, so Kurt gives his shoulder a solid shake.

"Wha – Kurt?" Blaine stutters after his shock has passed. "What – what're you doing here?"

"Well, in case you didn't notice-"

Kurt points to the rainbow flag on the wall. Blaine stares at the thing for a second before his eyes focus once again on Kurt's face. They don't stay there long, though; in fact, Blaine appears to give him the same kind of once over that Luke had, and it stirs equal parts arousal and surprise in Kurt's body.

"I know Rachel's probably really great when it comes to open-mindedness and experimentation in the sexuality quarter, but I don't know how pleased she'd be to find out that her boyfriend of two years is grinding up against a bunch of strange men in a *gay bar*," Kurt says flatly.

"I – I just-" Blaine tries to say, biting his lower lip hard enough to leave an indentation behind when he releases it.

Kurt tries not to stare at it for too long.

"Fuck," Blaine swears.

"That's exactly what you'll get if you keep dancing like that with all of these guys," Kurt states.

"I just – I don't-"

For some reason, Blaine is struggling immensely with an explanation. Kurt can only think of two possible routes this could take: one, Blaine is just here for the music, booze, and dancing and doesn't care that it's a gay bar, or two, he's here precisely *because* it is a gay bar and he's questioning. Either way, he looks scared to death and exceptionally embarrassed and even if they're not the closest of friends, Blaine is still a friend to some degree and Kurt doesn't want the poor boy to suffer.

"Do you want a drink?" Kurt asks, interrupting Blaine's spluttering.

"I – what?"

"A drink," Kurt says again. "You look like you're about to faint. Come on."

He reaches for Blaine's hand, sure to entwine their fingers to reduce the possibility that they might get split up in the small crowd, and drags him away from the dance floor to the bar. Luke is still there, but when he sees Kurt approaching with Blaine in tow, he nods to Gina, winks at Kurt, and slips away to continue dancing.

"Well damn," Gina says before letting out a low whistle. "Lady Luck was on your side tonight, honey."

"He's just a friend," Kurt says, attempting to spare Blaine any further embarrassment.

"Of the tonight variety or the forever variety?" she asks.

He can feel Blaine's palm becoming sweaty in his own.

"Neither," Kurt clarifies. "Just a friend."

Gina's eyes cut to Blaine, but she smirks when she nods in understanding.

"Ah. Well, Luke bought you boys a round of drinks," she says, sliding two more shirley temples in front of them. "I left out the kick, though."

"Thanks, Gina," Kurt says. He'll have to remember to shove a few dollars into her tip jar before he leaves.

“Enjoy,” she calls as she makes her way to the other end of the bar.

When they’re finally alone, Kurt releases Blaine’s hand and climbs onto a barstool, gesturing for Blaine to do the same. It takes a moment for Blaine to catch on, but by the time Come On Eileen begins to play on the jukebox, he’s seated next to Kurt and sipping his drink. Kurt’s not quite sure how to begin this conversation, so he just fishes his cherry out of his drink and pops it into his mouth. With a glance to Blaine, he finds that Blaine has been watching his every movement.

“You look – I mean, you’re – just - thanks,” Blaine eventually says.

“It’s the least I could do,” Kurt returns. “You looked like you were enjoying yourself so I’m sorry I had to drag you away.”

“Right, yeah,” Blaine mumbles, lowering his eyes to stare into his drink.

“...*Were* you enjoying yourself?”

“I was just – damnit, I don’t know what you want me to say.”

“Well,” Kurt says, “there’s obviously a story behind all of this, but you seem pretty nervous so I’m not going to make you talk about it if you don’t want to. Plus, I was kind of a dick to you at the Lima Bean the other day. I’m sorry, by the way. I didn’t mean to corner you like that. Well, okay, I did. But I didn’t know it was about – I mean, unless it’s not about this. Either way, I’m sorry.”

“It’s okay,” Blaine says in a somber tone. “I kind of deserved a good bitching out.”

“No, you didn’t.”

“It’s just been...a rough few weeks,” Blaine admits. “And yeah, it’s about all of this – why I’m here, I guess.”

“Do you want to talk about it?” Kurt asks slowly.

“Not really.”

“Oh,” Kurt says.



Well that was short lived, he thinks. For one minute, he almost thought that Blaine might open up to him.

“Dance with me,” Blaine blurts.

“What?”

“I want to dance,” Blaine says again. “It’s – it’s why I’m here. I like to – to come here and dance and feel, I don’t know, normal I guess.”

“...You feel normal dancing with random guys at a gay bar?”

“I don’t know, maybe,” Blaine says, waving away Kurt’s question. “But I don’t want to dance with them. I want to dance with you. Please?”

Blaine looks desperate to forget himself for a little while, and Kurt can’t turn down a chance to dance with Blaine without physically slapping himself for such stupidity. Because of that, Kurt downs his drink in one go and gestures for Blaine to do the same. Kurt slides off of his stool and holds out his hand. He’s pretty sure the smile that appears on Blaine’s lips means he’s eternally grateful for Kurt accepting his offer, because Blaine finishes his drink and slips his hand into Kurt’s.

They slink onto the dance floor just as [a new song](#) begins to play and Kurt has to wonder exactly how many genres and eras that damn jukebox has hidden up its sleeves.

“Oh my god,” Blaine groans, his forehead colliding with Kurt’s shoulder.

“Appropriate, don’t you think?” Kurt asks as he slides his arms around Blaine’s shoulders.

“A bit too on point, I’d say,” Blaine replies. “But it’s definitely something I can dance to.”

As if to prove his point, Blaine drags his fingers down Kurt’s chest, twisting his hips all the while in time with the song.

*My first kiss went a little like this – and twist - - and twist.*

Blaine’s fingers curl around Kurt’s hips, digging his thumbs into that soft, sweet dip of flesh on the inside of hipbones. Kurt’s head lolls back of its own accord and he can’t even control his movements; he just

allows Blaine to guide them together in time to the beat, thrusting and grinding in a dance he's sure the devil designed. They're so close, it's so fucking hot, and Kurt can feel the gyration of other men's bodies against his back.

*In the back of a car, on the way to a bar, I got you on my lips, I got you on my lips.*

And fuck, this *song*. Of all the damn songs to play right now, it has to be about first kisses and lips and hands in hair and everything Kurt has been dreaming about for over a month now. He feels completely drunk in a way that has nothing to do with the kick in his previous drinks, and he'll never be able to forget the way Blaine feels against him like this – all hot and rhythmic and sweaty, with heavy, talented hands and his breath against Kurt's bared neck.

"Look at me," Blaine demands, voice a little raw.

Dear god, Kurt's mind shouts as his body screams at him to give Blaine what he wants. He tilts his head down and stares directly into Blaine's eyes to find them darker than he's ever seen, pupil blown, long lashes almost shimmering in the flash of lights from over their heads. As he stares, the other men in the bar seem to fall away and all that remains is the music and Blaine's hands, Blaine's arms, Blaine's hips, lips, and eyes.

All of that comes to an abrupt halt the moment Blaine spins him around, twisting Kurt until his ass is pressed firmly against Blaine's crotch. It almost knocks the breath out of him. But then Blaine's hands are back, roaming his chest as he grinds into Kurt's ass and nuzzles his nose against Kurt's ear, his lips dragging across Kurt's now-sweaty skin.

And Blaine is *hard*.

Jesus fucking Christ, Kurt is pretty sure he died and drifted off into some sort of gay heaven because there's no way any of this is *actually* happening to him.

The song ends. Kurt's stomach drops to his feet. It's over, he knows. The spell is broken and Blaine is going to step away and walk right out of those doors and forget that this ever happened.

Except...he doesn't.

He clings to Kurt, chest heaving against Kurt's back and says:

“Please don’t stop.”

So they don’t. They dance through the next song and even though Kurt has never heard it before, Blaine’s capable hips lead Kurt straight to the depths of hell because he feels like he’s on *fire*. He thinks he sees starbursts behind his eyes when Blaine decides to claw his fingers up Kurt’s thigh. Since when can Blaine even move like this? Kurt has seen him dance in Glee and at a party, but he never imagined Blaine had such raw power on the dance floor.

They dance through another song, and another, and another, until Kurt’s mouth feels too dry and he can’t catch his breath.

But he never wants to stop. He never wants Blaine to leave, doesn’t want him to take his hands with him when he goes. Kurt is positive that those hands have a secret ability to make him sing in a way that has nothing to do with show choir. His breath comes in sharp, stuttering gasps when Blaine spins him around and his hard-on presses against Kurt’s own through their too-tight jeans, and he thinks he might pass out when Blaine burrows his sweaty head into the crook of Kurt’s neck. They’re both panting and desperate for a full breath, but it doesn’t matter because *this* matters – movement and skin and loud, pulsing beats that Kurt can feel in his bones.

After what feels like an eternity, but is really ten or so songs, Kurt feels like he’s going to die, but not from lack of air.

“I – I need-”

“One more drink,” Blaine says.

Well, that’s not what Kurt was going to say, but it’ll definitely give him a chance to cool down. He nods and Blaine drags him back to the bar, not nearly as timid as he had been less than an hour ago. Gina’s there, looking pleased as fucking punch, drinks already on the bar for them. Kurt slides her forty dollars.

They’re still trying to catch their breath as they drink. The liquid feels like heaven as it glides down Kurt’s throat, and he feels Blaine’s knee bumping against his.

“You two put on quite a show.”

Kurt turns to see Luke at his side, looking slightly more rumpled than he did when he left them alone earlier. His white shirt is soaked with sweat, his hair is mussed, and he certainly doesn't smell like the cologne he was wearing earlier.

"Seems like you had some fun yourself," Kurt points out.

"Watching you boys move is enough to get anyone going, gay or straight," Luke says, clearly unashamed. "Guess your night's turning out better than you planned?"

"You could...say that," Kurt says, eyes cutting to Blaine.

Who looks utterly *debauched*.

Christ, and Kurt thought he could cool down for a few minutes.

"Good," Luke says with a kind smile before thumping Kurt lightly on the back. "Well, I'm off for the night. I have a feeling I'll see you two around some other time."

He offers a wave and then he's gone, leaving Kurt alone to admire Blaine in peace. They continue to drink in silence, and Kurt knows they're going to have to talk about all of this soon. Really, he just wants to dance with Blaine until he physically can't anymore, but that's not exactly practical. He also knows that he can't be the one to start this conversation.

"Let's get some air," Blaine says simply, already sliding off of his stool.

"Okay."

-

It's stupidly cold outside, but they walk around to the side of the bar where the wind is less harsh and the cool air on Kurt's cheeks is a blessing after so much heat on the dance floor. Blaine sinks to the ground with his back against the wall, knees coming up to his chest. He looks far more relaxed than Kurt had been expecting, so Kurt joins him, mentally preparing himself for whatever Blaine might say.

"This is the fifth time I've been here in the past three weeks," Blaine says, eyes focused on the ground. He gives a soft, strange laugh. "I'd never even heard of it. I had to search for gay bars in Lima, Ohio on the internet."

"So you *did* know it was a gay bar?"

"Well, yeah," Blaine says. "Kinda what I was aiming for."

"I just – I don't understand," Kurt says. "You're – you're dating Rachel. You're *straight*."

"I thought I was," Blaine says with a shrug. "I guess I was wrong."

"But you've been dating her for two *years*."

"And during those two years, I never once felt for her what I felt for you when we kissed."

Kurt stares back in stunned silence. Is Blaine talking about him, specifically, or is he talking about kissing a boy in general? Either way, this bodes well for him, but he's going to have to let Blaine explain before he jumps to any conclusions. He's been hoping and dreaming too much lately; he won't let himself get caught in that trap again.

"Maybe I should just start from the beginning," Blaine says.

"Probably," Kurt replies weakly.

Blaine heaves a sigh and gives a quick comb through his hair with unsteady hands.

"I never had a girlfriend before Rachel," Blaine begins. "So when I transferred here and she, well, threw herself at me, it was a little weird at first. But then we started hanging out, you know? We went to lunch on the weekends and sometimes dinner, and she took me to some revival theater thing and we dressed up as the characters. It was...fun. It was really fun and I had a great time with her. We had a lot in common with singing and theater and just performing in general. And we got along well. So when she asked me to be her boyfriend, I thought it was the next, logical step, I guess. Like, I thought that's how it happened. You find someone, you have fun with them, and you have things in common, so why not date? I thought the...other stuff would come later."

“So you weren’t attracted to her in the beginning?” Kurt asks.

“I thought I was,” Blaine says. “I mean, I thought she was pretty the first time I saw her. She’s beautiful, there’s no mistaking that. But I’ve never been a fan of the short skirts and the tight tops that she wears. I asked her once why she never wore jeans and she said they didn’t make her feel feminine enough, which I thought was silly. We got into a fight about it, actually. But I apologize because I didn’t want to be one of those creepy, controlling boyfriends and that was that. We were okay. And then you bent over during warm ups at dance rehearsal one day and I think I almost lost my mind.”

“*W-What?*” Kurt splutters, unable to believe what he’s hearing.

“It’s like this,” Blaine attempts to explain. “For the longest time after I started dating her, I didn’t let myself look at anybody else. Because that’s not exactly polite, you know? She’s my girlfriend and I thought I should only want to look at her. So I kind of ignored everyone else and didn’t let myself think along those lines. I was happy with Rachel; we had fun and I liked spending so much time with her. But then – Christ, then you had to wear those damn yoga pants and bend over when you were stretching and – god, this is embarrassing to admit. I – I got really hard, right there in the middle of dance rehearsal. Because I was staring at *your ass*. But that was a while ago, probably during the first couple weeks of school this year.”

“Well, I do have a pretty nice ass,” Kurt says, preening just a bit and hoping he’s able to ease some of the embarrassment Blaine might be feeling right now.

“You do, and that’s exactly it. I just...kind of wrote it off. Even though I was turned on, I just figured that an ass was an ass and from where I was, with you bent over, I couldn’t tell you weren’t girl. But then I started noticing...other things about you.”

“Oh god, do I even want to know?”

“You have really *great* legs,” Blaine states. “Did you know? I always thought you knew because you wear those tight pants all the time, so I thought you were just...”

“What, strutting my stuff?” Kurt scoffs. “Hardly.”

“Well, that’s how it worked in my mind. And you have – this is probably weird – you have really nice hands. And – and lips and eyes and Christ, even you hair is amazing. Like, you were very aesthetically pleasing to me. In a serious way.”

“So you started checking me out after you realized you weren’t attracted to her?” Kurt asks, a little confused.

“No, that’s the thing. I didn’t realize that it had anything to do with attraction. Look, my dad’s not exactly fond of ‘alternative lifestyles’, as he puts it, but my mom raised to be kind and understanding and open and all of that. So I didn’t put that much thought into it. I just thought, you know, that you were nice to look at, same as Rachel was nice to look at. Or Santana or Quinn or, hell, even Puck has his qualities. People are pretty. And I realized that there wasn’t any harm in looking. So I...looked at you.”

“I can’t decide if that’s creepy or not.”

“I never meant it to be,” Blaine says, slightly apologetic. “But I couldn’t help it. Still, I never thought that anything was wrong with that. I figured I was one of those straight guys who had the ability to look at another man and think that they were nice-looking without wanting to screw their brains out. Maybe it was envy, I don’t know.”

“Wait, but what about when you and Rachel have sex?” Kurt wonders. “Doesn’t it make it, and no pun intended, harder to be intimate with her if you’re not into her as much as you thought?”

“Rachel and I have never had sex,” Blaine reveals.

“...Oh.”

“We’ve never gone past like, heavy make-out sessions and a little bit of groping. But that’s the thing: she always touched me. It wasn’t anything life-altering, just her hand rubbing me through my jeans, but I’ve never once had my hand between her legs. Or under her shirt. I thought I was being a gentleman. And then Artie told us during West Side Story rehearsals a few weeks ago that we lacked passion, and concluded it was because we never did the deed or whatever. But that comes later in the story.”

“Sorry,” Kurt says. “I was just confused. Carry on.”

“It’s okay. So anyway, I started looking at you and...well, having some pretty graphic thoughts when I fell asleep and they were far from clean. It confused me, I guess, because I never had those dreams about Rachel and it was just – it was weird. But I couldn’t stop it and I couldn’t stop looking at you either. So when I saw you in the hallway that one day and I asked you to skip with me, my motives weren’t

exactly...pure. Well, I mean, I didn't plan on jumping your bones or anything. I just wanted to...sit with you. So I could look at you without it being weird and so I could listen to your voice."

"Oh," Kurt says flatly. "That's – that's kind of nice, actually."

He thinks he sees Blaine's cheek flush, just a touch, and he's pretty sure it has nothing to do with the chilly wind.

"Yeah," Blaine says, a hint of a smile on his lips. "And then you actually *came* to the damn party."

"Wait, I thought – did you not want me to come?"

"Oh, I definitely did. I was ready to drag you there, kicking and screaming. I just didn't know you – fuck, where did you find those *pants*? Who wears pants with safety pins all up the side? Like, it should be illegal to look like that, okay? I couldn't even be around you without wanting to – to touch you or – god, everything. And then you were dancing with Santana and you looked so cute and I looked at Rachel and, well, she just looked drunk."

"So you were avoiding me for a while," Kurt deduces. "I was kind of pissed that you invited me and barely talked to me."

"I'm really sorry," Blaine says, hunching his shoulders a bit. "I wanted to spend the whole night with you. But I was pretty drunk there in the beginning – I was drinking before you got there – and I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to keep my hands to myself. So I like, stayed on the other side of the room. Until spin the bottle."

"Ah, right."

"The kiss that definitely did *not* miss," Blaine adds. "You have to understand, I didn't even know kissing someone could feel like that, you know? I've kissed Rachel plenty of times and it's nice, it really is, and kissing in general is pretty awesome. But kissing you was *phenomenal*. Kissing you was like – like some unspoken prayer answered by God."

"That's pretty profound," Kurt says softly, feeling all warm and tingly inside. He's never heard so many nice things said about him in one sitting.



"It was profound. It was like the fog lifted and you were standing right there, looking like you were made for me – just for me. So when the party was over and we were alone, I couldn't help myself. I *did* want you to have a better first kiss and all that, but mostly I just wanted to taste you again and see if I could get that feeling back."

"And did you?"

"Tenfold," Blaine whispers. "It was even better than the first time."

"Wow, that's-" *fucking awesome*, Kurt's mind supplies, "that definitely had to be confusing for you."

"It was," Blaine admits. "But it didn't *scare* me, not in the way it might scare some guys. I became resigned to the way I felt, but it's...not that easy."

"Because of Rachel," Kurt speculates.

"Because of her, because of my dad, because of the way some of the people at school look up to me like I'm some sort of hero when I'm *not*. I'm just a guy who never understood what he wanted. "

"But you know that your friends wouldn't care," Kurt says. "Sam and Quinn and Finn and all of those guys, they're in Glee with us and they don't care that I'm gay."

"Yeah, but you're you," Blaine tries to say. "You've always been you and they accept that. I don't think they'd be the same when it comes to me."

"But – but they're your *friends*," Kurt insists.

"And they know me as their very straight friend who kisses Rachel and pretends to love her. I don't know if you've noticed, but Rachel's kind of the queen bee."

"She wasn't before, though," Kurt says. "Before you, she was different. She was at the bottom of the heap with people like me and Mercedes. Dating you is what made her popular, Blaine, not the other way around. And Rachel would understand. I'm sure having two gay dads would make it easier for her."

“Not when I’ve been dating her for two years,” Blaine says, sounding slightly frustrated. “She would think I was using her, like a beard or whatever. I can’t do that to her. I can’t break up with her and start dating a guy – I’d get so much hell and I just can’t *deal* with that, okay?”

“Okay,” Kurt says easily, placing his hand on Blaine’s knee. “I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to push. I wasn’t saying you should come out or anything, especially not when you’re just now figuring this all out for yourself.”

“Yeah,” Blaine says in a level tone. “Thanks.”

“Forget about that, though. You don’t have to explain that to me. But you still haven’t told me about *why* you’ve been coming to Scandals.”

Sighing, Blaine tilts his head back, resting it against the wall.

“Right,” he mumbles. “Can we sit in your car or something? It’s fucking freezing out here.”

“Sure, yeah,” Kurt says, ready to be out of the cold. “Come on.”

They both stand and push themselves away from the wall, but as they walk toward Kurt’s car, Blaine’s hand somehow finds its way into Kurt’s. It’s an unexpected gesture, and at first Kurt’s fingers lock up, but Blaine’s palm is so warm and smooth against his own and it feels really good, so he curls his fingers around Blaine’s and they continue walking like that in silence. When Kurt makes to let go and climb into the driver’s seat of his car, Blaine tugs him away and motions for them to climb in the back seat instead.

Oh.

Okay.

Yes, the back seat is much nicer than the front.

After they’re settled inside the relative warmth of the car with the doors shut, Blaine scoots closer to Kurt on the seat and begins tracing nonsensical patterns on the top of Kurt’s denim-clad thigh. But then he pauses and snatches his hand away.

“Sorry,” he says quickly. “I don’t – it’s just that I-”

"It's okay," Kurt says kindly. "I don't mind."

"Are you sure?"

"I'm positive," Kurt says, covering Blaine's hand with his own and guiding it back to his thigh. "You're okay."

It's nice here, Kurt thinks, with just the two of them sitting so close in the back seat of his car. It's nice with Blaine touching him because people don't like to touch him much, and it's nice that Blaine is opening up to him in a way that Kurt is sure he's never opened up to anyone.

It makes Kurt feel special.

"I started coming here after Artie said that thing to us about sex during West Side Story rehearsal."

"...I don't follow," Kurt says.

"Well, after he said that, Rachel and I decided to try."

"What, to have sex?"

"Yeah," Blaine says with a nod. "She cooked me dinner one night when her dads were out. She had candles and everything and it was – it was very sweet. After dinner, she lit a fire and put a bunch of blankets and pillows on the floor and said she wanted to change, so she went upstairs and I sat down and waited. It was...a *long* wait."

"Were you nervous?"

"I was terrified," Blaine admits. "Our relationship was definitely not shaped around the physical stuff and I'd never so much as touched her in any kind of, um, intimate way. I researched some stuff online so I'd have some clue how to at least start, and the mechanics of it were pretty basic, but I was still scared. And then she came down in this – this nighty thing, all pink and frilly. Like, I think it would've gone over better if she came down in a t-shirt and her underwear but, you know, that wasn't the case. So she got on top of me and we started kissing and everything and she, uh, touched me, but I could feel her breasts against my chest and her perfume was all wrong and she was – she was too *soft* in places, so I – god. I panicked, is what I did. I freaked out and I kept telling her that I just wasn't ready and that I couldn't do it

yet. So she started crying and asking me if it was something she did, and of course I said no because it's not *her* fault. And I said that I wasn't comfortable with moving so fast when all we'd ever done was kiss, and I asked if we could wait a little bit longer. She understood, I guess. Or maybe she wasn't ready either, I don't know. But we ended up watching her copy of *Into the Woods* all night and that was that."

"Uh...wow."

"I know. It was a complete disaster."

"I'm sorry."

Blaine shrugs.

"Nothing to be sorry about. After that, though, I really started considering the fact that I might be gay. I mean, after kissing you, I sort of suspected, but I wasn't sure if it was just...you."

"What do you mean?"

"To be honest, I wasn't sure if I was homosexual or *you*-sexual. You're the only guy I've ever kissed, you know? So I didn't know if I was so attracted to you because you're the one that made me realize that I didn't like girls, or because I was attracted to just *you*. And I needed to find out so I, um--"

"Started looking around for gay bars," Kurt concludes, the pieces of the puzzle finally coming together. "And you found *Scandals*."

"I came here for the first time three weeks ago," Blaine says. "It was...definitely different. I had guys hitting on me left and right and it didn't make me feel weird at all. Mostly I just come to dance with people and feel, well, *normal*."

Kurt finds it funny that they seem to think along similar lines when it comes to hanging out here. He's pretty sure he thought that exact same thing earlier when he'd been talking to Luke.

"But you didn't let any of them...you know," Kurt says. "You didn't let them, um, take you into the bathroom and – uh--"

"Oh, *god* no," Blaine says at once, sounding horrified at the idea. "No, that never happened. I did let a guy kiss me, but nothing more than that."

"And he was *how old*?"

At that, Blaine laughs, turning his face into Kurt's shoulder as if to muffle the sound. When he calms, he doesn't pull away entirely; he simply turns his head until his cheek is resting there instead, his sweaty curls brushing against Kurt's jaw.

"He was our age," Blaine informs. "He goes to a school nearby, but not in Lima. I think he was a more, ah, seasoned professional when it comes to prowling the gay bar scene. We danced for most of the night and when he kissed me, I let him. Because I needed to know."

"And what was the verdict?" Kurt wonders, praying that he doesn't sound too hopeful despite the butterflies in his belly.

"Way better than kissing Rachel, but not even in the same ballpark as kissing you."

Kurt can't help the smile that curls his lips, and he can't help hiding it in Blaine's hair that kind of smells like autumn and leaves and *boy*. He inhales deeply, knowing that it's dangerous to be this happy because there's a chance that all of this is a dream.

"I'm sorry if that freaks you out," Blaine whispers.

"*Oh my god*," Kurt says, laughing against the top of Blaine's head before he rubs his cheek there instead. "You have no idea how much that *does not* freak me out."

"Really?"

"Blaine," Kurt says steadily. "I've had a crush on you ever since I first saw you. Like, a monumentally, stupidly *huge* crush. Hearing you say that you like kissing me more than you like kissing anyone else does the complete opposite of freak me out."

Blaine pulls away just enough to look directly into Kurt's eyes. His own appear bright and glistening, wide and filled to the brim with more optimism than Kurt has ever seen in one person.

“Are you serious?”

“No, I just like screwing with you,” Kurt says with a roll of his eyes. “Yes, I’m serious. Jesus, I must have been really great at hiding it or you’re absolutely blind.”

“But – but you – fuck,” Blaine groans.

And just like that, he swoops in for a kiss, his lips pressing so roughly against Kurt’s and with so much persistence that Kurt almost can’t keep up. He learns quickly, though, kissing back with a bruising force until he thinks he can feel the hard press of Blaine’s teeth through his lips. Blaine’s hands find their way to his face, cradling his cheeks as he pulls Kurt impossibly closer and dips his tongue into Kurt’s mouth, only to be rewarded with a gasp.

There’s no way this is real, Kurt’s conscience says to him through the hazy bit of lust clouding his brain. Because Kurt Hummel does not get his hopes and dreams handed to him on a silver platter. He never gets the gold star – ha, take *that*, Rachel Berry – and he never gets the boy. It all seems too good to be true, but he can’t focus on that right now because Blaine has Kurt’s lower lip caught between his teeth and he’s sucking with just enough pressure to make it *obscene*.

“I wanted to do this earlier,” Blaine breathes against Kurt’s open mouth. “When we were dancing. Wanted to kiss you until I couldn’t see straight.”

He slams his lips against Kurt’s again, kissing with what seems like everything he has, and Kurt can do nothing but hold on. He clings to Blaine’s shoulders, Blaine’s neck, Blaine’s back, until Blaine pushes him backwards, urging him to lie down on the seat.

“Is this – is this okay?” Blaine asks.

“Yes, god, this is so okay,” Kurt gasps, fingers getting lost in Blaine’s hair.

“Fuck, you’re so hot,” Blaine mumbles against Kurt’s jaw where he begins pressing wet, open-mouthed kisses to his skin.

Kurt whines in reply, hips jerking up to meet Blaine’s of their own free will. He can’t even control his own body right now; he’s trembling and panting into the sticky-warm air of the car like he just ran five miles, and he can’t seem to stop his wandering hands from exploring Blaine’s strong back. He’s harder than he

was on the dance floor, and apparently Blaine can feel it because he groans against Kurt's neck and thrusts, their erections grinding together through their jeans.

"I've never – I never knew it could feel so *good*," Blaine admits as he continues to roll his hips.

"Please don't stop," Kurt begs, already on the verge of coming undone beneath Blaine's eager body. "*Please*, Blaine."

"Never, babe, oh *god*," Blaine returns, hips working some kind of dark magic, and Kurt thinks he can feel the bass thumping here in the car even though the music can only be coming from the bar.

Or maybe that's his pulse.

And Blaine doesn't stop; he keeps moving, writhing, thrusting, and swiping his tongue into Kurt's mouth as if he's chasing the taste from his own fantasies. Kurt wrenches his leg up from where it's caught in between Blaine's body and the back of the seat, winding it around Blaine's back instead and digging the heel of his boot into Blaine's ass. He knows the windows are fogged, knows the car is probably rocking and he's sure that every outsider knows exactly what they're doing. For whatever reason, the thought makes him harder and groans, long and low against Blaine's lips.

"Holy – the sounds you make, Kurt, I can't-"

"Come," Kurt pants. "Wanna see you. Come with me."

"Fuck, I – fuck," Blaine breathes before he latches his lips onto Kurt's like they're magnetic, increasing the speed of hips.

Kurt teeters for a moment on the edge of orgasm, attempting to hold onto this feeling forever because it actually feels like Blaine is ripping him apart at the seams and it's so – damn – good.

Blaine comes first, moaning into their kiss as his hips stutter and start, but it's the way his fingers claw at Kurt's skin where his shirt has risen up near his jeans that finally pushes Kurt over the edge. He comes, barely ten seconds after Blaine, and he rides out the wild, fleeting zing of pleasure while rocking steadily against Blaine's rigid body. Kurt feels like he's floating for a moment, but Blaine slumps on top of him, clearly spent and exhausted. He pulls his lips away in order to rest his head near Kurt's shoulder, his breath quick and hot on Kurt's ear.

“Fuck,” Blaine swears. “I am *so* gay.”



## **Part Five**

Kurt remains still, content to feel Blaine draped over him until he can't breathe anymore. The cold from outside begins to seep into the car, chilling the sweat beading on his brow, and he knows they should talk but he can't bring himself to ruin the moment. Blaine presses a soft kiss to Kurt's neck, followed by a deep, tired sigh.

"We should do this more often," Blaine says softly. "And I don't just mean the mutual orgasm thing."

A bubble of laughter rises in Kurt's throat, escaping through his lips.

"If you want to, I mean," Blaine adds quickly, leaning up just enough to be able to look into Kurt's eyes. "We could – we could hang out. Maybe have coffee. Or we could do a movie or something."

"That sounds great," Kurt says sincerely, but even he can hear the hesitation in his voice.

"...You don't sound very enthusiastic."

"It's just – what about Rachel?" Kurt wonders. "She's your girlfriend."

"I know," Blaine says, lifting up until he's seated properly on the other end of the back seat. Kurt does the same. "But she's – you know how I feel. I can't break up with her out of the blue like that. Because she'll ask why and I won't be able to tell her the truth."

"I'm not saying you should tell her the truth right away, but we just – what we did was–"

"Amazing?" Blaine offers as a guess, a smile returning to his lips.

"Cheating," Kurt says frankly.

Blaine's smile falls.

"Right," Blaine mutters.

"You know she would understand if you said that you were, um, questioning your...preferences."

"Yeah, and then she'd tell the entire school," Blaine says. "I just realized all of this myself. I can't handle everyone else knowing, too. Not right now. I can't – I can't do it, Kurt."

"I understand," Kurt replies, nodding solemnly.

"But I don't want to stop seeing you. We don't – we don't even have to – we can just be friends. Real friends. We can hang out and – and we can do whatever you're comfortable with. If you – we don't even have to kiss if you don't want to. But I really do want to spend more time with you."

Kurt contemplates the idea of spending more time with Blaine. He thinks about being able to talk to him about things, and laughing with him, and seeing him smile, and sitting next to him in the movie theater and maybe sharing an armrest. And he thinks about all of that, minus the possibility of a kiss. Or more.

Can he do that, especially after tonight?

"I don't want this to have meant nothing," Kurt states. "Because it meant something to me."

Blaine's face softens instantly, and he shifts closer to Kurt on the seat in order to place his hand on Kurt's thigh.

"It meant something to me, too," he says. "I just need some time to figure things out, you know? And it'd mean a lot to me if you were my friend in the mean time."

"And after that?" Kurt asks.

"I'll take you out on a proper date," Blaine says. "With – with hand-holding and flirting and maybe even another make-out session in the back of your car. Actually, that part's not a maybe. That's a definitely."

Ducking his head, Kurt smiles shyly.

"But we should still come here," Blaine adds. "We can come here and dance. Nobody will ever know about that and dancing is just dancing. It'll be something else we can do together, something that's just ours."

*Ours.*

Kurt's never had anything like this to share with someone else.

So, of course, he says:

"Okay."

-

Kurt has never text-flirted with anyone in his life, but Blaine seems to be an expert and that's how they spend their time 'together' on Sunday in the midst of catching up on weekend homework.

**Figure out what you're gonna wear tomorrow?**

*Not yet. Suggestions?*

**Something tight. For sure.**

Kurt blushes.

*Oh really? Why should I?*

**Even if I can't touch, I can still look. And it's always such a nice view when you wear tight pants. ;)**

*I guess I'll consider it.*

**Please do. Pretty please.**

Later that night, when Kurt is choosing his outfit for school the next day, he's sure to pull out the tightest pair of pants he owns.

-

The moment Kurt catches sight of Blaine in the hallway the next morning, his heart leaps up into his throat. He doesn't know what to expect. They never discussed how they were going to act around each other at school. Are they proper friends now? Do they talk at their lockers in between classes? Are they casual acquaintances? Do they sit beside each other in Glee like they did last week? What *are* they?

Shit. He's walking toward Kurt now, presumably heading for his own locker which is on the next row. He looks so cute. Oh god, he looks *so* cute in his tight, white polo and his little bowtie and he walks down the hall like he owns the place – well, the crowd *does* part for him – with this adorable smirk and when he winks at –

He winked.

Oh my god, he winked.

*At Kurt.*

Blaine continues walking as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened, but Kurt just whips around to stare at the inside of his locker, too shocked to move.

And then he melts inside.

He receives a text a few moments later.

**Where do you even BUY pants that tight?**

Kurt almost squeaks out loud, his phone nearly toppling right out of his hands before he regains the use of his limbs and finds the ability to text back.

*It's a secret.*

**Secrets, secrets are no fun unless they are for everyone.**

*Your girlfriend's walking up behind you.*

-

"You're being a little too obvious today," Mercedes says at lunch. "He's going to notice you staring."

"Sorry," Kurt mumbles quickly, breaking out of his trance. He's pretty sure he's been staring at Blaine across the lunch room for the last five minutes. He doesn't even remember blinking. "What were you saying?"

“Nothing important,” she replies, though she’s got that look on her face that says ‘I know *exactly* what you were thinking about’.

Kurt drops his fork in frustration.

“I can’t help it,” Kurt hisses under his breath. “*Look* at him.”

“I see him,” Mercedes says. “And I’m only gonna say this once, baby: it’s been two years. I think it might be time to move on.”

“It’s not that easy,” Kurt sighs.

“It never is,” Mercedes says, sounding a bit too sympathetic for Kurt’s liking.

Oh, if she only knew.

-

In Glee, Kurt is almost to the point of being annoyed. Blaine hasn’t talked to him all day. He hasn’t texted him since this morning. Sure, maybe he doesn’t have the right to be annoyed considering they never actually talked about how they were going to act around each other at school, but after seven hours, he kind of expected something more. A smile. A nod. Anything.

Instead, Blaine does the same thing he’s been doing every day since they first kissed. He sits in the empty chair next to Kurt and, almost immediately, Rachel’s in his lap and pressing a kiss to Blaine’s lips.

The sight makes Kurt’s stomach roll.

“Babe, you know I love you,” Blaine says out of the blue, “but it’d be really nice if you could sit *next* to me instead of *on* me.”

Rachel’s face darkens. Kurt freezes – as does everyone else in the room. Kurt has never heard Blaine refuse Rachel *anything*, and it seems like no one else has either.

“Fine,” Rachel snaps, promptly standing and abandoning the chair Blaine had reserved for her in order to sit on the opposite side of the room.

Blaine sighs in agitation.

“You know I didn’t mean-”

“I understand that you need your space,” Rachel says, keeping her eyes focused on the whiteboard. “So I’m giving it to you. I mean, it’s not like we didn’t see each other *all* weekend. I’m so sorry for wanting to be close to you.”

“I never said I didn’t want to be close to you,” Blaine argues. “I wasn’t trying to be mean. I promise. I just meant-”

“Oh, for crying out loud. Anderson, you really need to grow up,” Santana sneers from her spot in the front row. “Or maybe you just need to grow a pair of b-”

“Fuck off, Santana,” Blaine says.

Santana pauses. The room falls silent in the wake of the whispers that had erupted over their argument. She turns around in order to face Blaine, but rather than looking furious, she appears particularly impressed.

“Better,” she says simply.

Blaine rolls his eyes, looking to Rachel once more.

“Please sit next to me,” he says plainly.

“Maybe tomorrow,” Rachel replies, peering down at her nails.

Groaning and muttering something that sounds suspiciously like, “Don’t know how much longer I can do this”, just loud enough for Kurt to hear, Blaine throws a quick glance in Kurt’s direction before standing and taking a seat next to Rachel across the room.

Somehow, Blaine’s argument for not breaking up with Rachel makes much more sense than it did two days ago.

-

The rest of the week continues in a similar vein, save for the fact that Blaine will text him after rehearsal to ask if Kurt wants to go get coffee, only to turn around and text him five minutes later to apologize, saying that Rachel already has something planned for them that evening. On one hand, it's infuriating that Rachel seems to keep Blaine on such a short leash. On the other, Kurt can almost understand because if he was dating Blaine, he'd want to spend every night with him, too. Of course, he'd be sure to *ask* Blaine if they could do something rather than *tell* him they were doing something.

Because of this, when Kurt receives a phone call from Blaine on Friday night just after dinner, he's more confused than anything.

"Do you want to have dinner with me tonight?" Blaine blurts the moment Kurt answers the phone.

"I – I just ate," Kurt says sadly.

"Dessert, then. Coffee. We can go for a walk. Anything you want," Blaine babbles. "Please."

"What's–"

"Please," Blaine says again. "I really want to see you."

"O-Okay," Kurt stutters, worried by the amount of desperation in Blaine's voice. "It's too cold for a walk, but we can go get coffee."

"Can we meet at Starbucks?" Blaine asks. "I really don't feel like dealing with anyone who's probably going to be at the Lima Bean."

"Yeah, we can do that."

"I'll see you in fifteen minutes," Blaine says quickly before the line goes dead.

What the hell?

-

The moment Kurt climbs out of his car, Blaine is there, rushing into his arms at full speed. Kurt is too stunned to do anything but hug him tightly in return. He hears Blaine breathe a sigh of what sounds like sheer relief the moment Kurt has his arms around his back.

“Is everything okay?” Kurt asks in concern. “You sounded...I don’t know. You just didn’t sound like you when you called.”

“I’m better now,” Blaine says into Kurt’s shoulder.

Kurt is pretty sure that’s not entirely true, so he keeps one warm hand at the small of Blaine’s back and begins to walk toward the entrance to Starbucks.

“C’mon,” Kurt says softly, just as snow begins to fall. “Let’s go inside.”

No one bats an eye when they walk inside. Even though the place is in Lima proper, their classmates never come here because the Lima Bean is cheaper and in a more convenient location. He never thought he’d be grateful for a Starbucks *not* being on every corner of their town. The inside is filled with an older crowd; most of them look like university students cramming for their last exams before finals. Everyone seems to be keeping to themselves, headphones in, and completely focused on their laptops. Blaine doesn’t say anything more until they’re nestled in two, cozy chairs in the corner by the window.

“I never realized how much time I spent with her,” Blaine states. “Like, I have *no* time to myself.”

“Why aren’t you with her tonight?”

“She’s out doing some dinner theater thing with her dads,” Blaine explains. “I almost cried out of pure joy when she told me.”

“You should’ve stayed at home,” Kurt says. “You don’t need to spend time with me when you haven’t had any time for yourself.”

“I wanted to see you, though.”

“We see each other every day.”



“You know what I mean,” Blaine says, shifting slightly in his chair so that his knee bumps against Kurt’s thigh. “I wanted to be able to look at you without someone calling me out on staring.”

“You could’ve just asked for a picture,” Kurt says, attempting to lighten Blaine’s dour mood. “I have tons of headshots.”

A smile brightens Blaine’s face, and all at once Kurt’s realizes that *this* is Blaine’s genuine smile. He doesn’t smile at Rachel this way. He doesn’t smile like this when they’re around other people they know. At school, his smile always looks a bit too tight and it doesn’t quite reach his eyes. Here, though, Blaine just looks happy.

He looks happy to be with Kurt.

“I missed you,” Blaine says. And he says it so simply, like it’s the most natural thing in the world.

But it makes Kurt’s heart stutter.

“I missed you, too,” Kurt replies.

His fingers itch to reach out and hold Blaine’s hand, but he keeps them safely wrapped around his coffee cup, because Blaine looking at him the way he is now – like Kurt’s the happy ending of every fairy tale he’s ever cherished – that’s enough for tonight.

“So,” Blaine says cheerfully, “tell me about your week. I saw you staring at me at lunch, so don’t even try to pretend like you weren’t.”

-

After that, Kurt tries not to become so easily annoyed when Blaine passes him in the hallway without a word. They have their Starbucks dates about once a week, and they occasionally chat on the phone at night after Blaine gets home from whatever activity Rachel forces him to do. He always sounds so tired on those nights, and Kurt worries that Blaine might be stretching himself too thin. He’s clearly not happy in his relationship with Rachel, but he’d probably bring about the apocalypse if he tried to end it. Kurt knows that Rachel is a fierce little thing. She’d never go down without a fight, no matter what happened or who she hurt in the process. Before Blaine, she had been just as abrasive. Now, though, the popularity she

seems to have gained by way of dating Blaine has clearly ignited some sort of ever-burning lust for power, and Kurt knows that she won't give up that popularity so easily.

When Thanksgiving break finally rolls around, Kurt finds out that Rachel will be visiting family out of state for the week.

"A whole week," Blaine sighs as they collapse into their usual chairs at Starbucks. "I can't believe I have a *whole week*."

"You could just say no to her once in a while," Kurt offers.

"Yeah, if I wanted to risk bodily harm," Blaine scoffs. "I'd never hear the end of it. And I'd get some lecture from Quinn about how I'm not paying enough attention to her, blah, blah. Those two are thick as thieves. It just – ugh, it drives me crazy because she hasn't done anything wrong. I mean yeah, she's a little controlling. But I've been dealing with that for two years and it's never made me want to rip my hair out. And she's – it's not like I've stopped caring about her."

"Do you love her?" Kurt asks, attempting to be nonchalant even though he's been wondering ever since that day in the choir room a few weeks ago.

Blaine falls silent, peering down at the lid of his coffee cup as if it holds the answer to Kurt's question.

"I thought I did," Blaine says slowly. "I mean, I don't know if it's that kind of grow-old-together type of love, but I thought it was love. But if – if I'm gay, doesn't that mean that I can't? Because she's a girl?"

"I don't think it's as simple as that," Kurt tries to reason. "You've been together for a long time. She probably knows you better than anyone."

"She doesn't know me better than you," Blaine returns.

"But she knows things about you that I can't," Kurt says. "I'm talking about those things that you can only learn after being in a relationship with someone for such a long time. Like, she probably knows what kind of dressing you like on your salads, she knows the difference between you being tired versus you being angry, and she probably knows how to piss you off better than your own parents."

"I guess," Blaine says with a lazy shrug. "It's ranch by the way. I like ranch dressing on my salad."

“Typical,” Kurt says, shaking his head. “So many options and you turn to the most basic one of all.”

“Ranch is delicious! And you can put it on like, anything and it’s *still* good.”

“My point,” Kurt continues, though he has to stop and grin, “is that it’s probably hard to stop loving someone when they know so many things about you, whether you’re attracted to them or not. She’s been there for two years. Wasn’t she the person you always turned to whenever things got rough?”

“Well yeah,” Blaine admits. “Because she was my girlfriend. I tried to do the same thing for her.”

“Exactly. So maybe it’s...a different kind of love. Just because you don’t want to have sex with her doesn’t mean you don’t love her. I love Mercedes as much as I possibly can.”

“But she’s your best friend,” Blaine says. “Of course you love her.”

“Isn’t Rachel yours?”

“She was. Before you.”

Completely ignoring the multiple implications that statement could have, Kurt leans closer to Blaine, fingers brushing against his elbow.

“It’s okay to not know,” Kurt says softly. “That’s all I’m trying to say. Even if she annoys you to death, that doesn’t mean you stop caring.”

“I feel...trapped,” Blaine reveals. “I feel stuck.”

“I’m sorry,” Kurt says, bypassing their no-boyfriend-behavior rule by sliding his hand into Blaine’s. “I’m trying to be supportive and unbiased, but sometimes – sometimes I look at you and you look miserable. And I want to tell you to break up with her and damn the consequences. But that’s not practical – not with her, anyway – and I know it’s not as easy as it sounds when I say it in my head.”

“You are being supportive,” Blaine assures as he squeezes Kurt’s hand.

This isn't bad, Kurt thinks. Hand-holding doesn't have to have any kind of couples-only connotation. They're just hands. Sometimes a simple touch can provide comfort and that's what Kurt's doing. It doesn't have to mean anything more than friendship.

Even if he wishes they could get lost in each other.

"I've waited for you for two years," Kurt says. "I think I can wait a little longer, just so you're sure that this is what you want."

-

"Thanks for listening to me whine," Blaine says later that night after too much coffee and not nearly enough time together.

"I'm sure you'll do the same for me one of these days."

"I know it's not...easy listening to me talk about her," Blaine says, lowering his head and kicking at a bit of snow that's piled between their cars in the parking lot. "I wish I had someone else to talk to about all of this. I'm sorry."

"Don't you dare," Kurt says. "Friends listen. It's not like I don't understand why you feel so stuck, because I do. Plus, you have to understand that I fully expected us to graduate without you ever really acknowledging my presence. So the fact that we're here and that we're talking? That's good enough for me right now."

Nodding, Blaine takes a step forward and slides his arms around Kurt's shoulders, pulling him into a warm hug. Blaine's hugs are addictive.

"It's still early," Blaine says softly before pulling away. "We could...do something else. We could go see a movie or something."

"Don't you want some time for yourself tonight?"

"No, I want more than an hour with you."

"O-Oh," Kurt stutters. "Well...my dad and Carole are out doing a date night thing. And Finn's supposed to be going to Quinn's tonight for some pre-Thanksgiving dinner thing with her family since they'll be in Columbus visiting family on Thursday and Finn won't be able to go. So my, um, my house should be empty. Or we could just do a movie like you-"

"Your house sounds perfect," Blaine interrupts. "You know, I've never seen your room."

-

Just as Kurt is about to unlock the front door in order to lead Blaine into the warmth of his house, the door wrenches open to reveal Finn, who is apparently just on his way out.

"Oh, hey, Kurt. I'm leaving for Quinn's now, so the house is all yours tonight," Finn greets easily – until he notices Blaine lingering on the front steps. "Oh. Uh...hey, Blaine. Were you – I mean, did I miss the memo about dude night or something?"

"No," Blaine answers, coming up to stand next to Kurt. "No guy night tonight. I'm, uh, actually here to hang out with Kurt."

Finn appears quite baffled, and his eyes dart between Blaine and Kurt with too much speed, as if the gears in his head are working twice as hard as they normally do. Sometimes Kurt forgets that Finn is the only one that remembers their spin the bottle kiss.

"With *Kurt*?" Finn asks, as if he didn't catch it the first time.

"Yeah," Blaine says, shrugging in response. "We're, you know, friends."

"Friends?" Finn echoes. "But...you never talk to each other."

"We text," Blaine argues, though his voice is slowly growing weaker.

"You *text*?"

"Oh, for god's sake," Kurt cuts in. "Blaine's having trouble deciding what to get Rachel for Christmas so he asked me for my help."

“R-Right,” Blaine says, catching on after a beat. “She’s hard to shop for.”

“But...why Kurt?” Finn asks, and he sounds confused rather than suspicious, thank god.

“Why do you *think*?” Kurt asks, sure to give an appropriate eye roll to demonstrate his agitation.

Finn stares for a moment, like his brain is actually empty of reason. Eventually, though, understanding dawns on his face.

“Oh, right, because Kurt’s an honorary girl.”

Cringing at the turn of phrase, even though he’s the one that coined it in the first place a few years ago, Kurt gives a tight nod.

“That makes sense, then,” Finn says. “Though the easiest thing would probably be a necklace or something.”

“Probably,” Blaine says. “I got her jewelry last year, though.”

“Oh, gotcha. Well, I gotta get to Quinn’s. Her dad will like, kill me if I’m late. Later!”

He bounds down the steps and across the street to his car, which Kurt hadn’t noticed before. Kurt’s sure to wait until Finn’s pulling away from the curb before inviting Blaine into the house and leading him up the stairs. They drape their coats on the banister, and for some reason it becomes weird. Blaine has been to their house plenty of times, but usually it’s so he can join the other guys from Glee in the basement, where Finn sets up his Xbox and they play video games and eat junk food all night.

Kurt has always been sure to make himself scarce during those nights. It was hard enough having a crush on Blaine; having him in their house *overnight* almost made it unbearable.

“Thanks,” Blaine mutters when they reach the top of the stairs.

“For what?”

“Lying,” Blaine says. “For me.”

“Finn pokes and prods at things until they squeal,” Kurt says, waving away Blaine’s apology. “It’s one of his less endearing habits. And I know it’s hard to explain why we suddenly became friends, so I had to come up with something.”

“I know, but we both know he’s going to tell Quinn about seeing us together outside of school.”

“He’ll end up telling her that his very heterosexual friend asked his very homosexual brother for advice on girl-gift-giving. That’s not so weird. Finn’s asked me for the same kind of help before. Don’t worry about it.”

“I just – I don’t want you to feel like I’m ashamed of being your friend. Or...of the other stuff.”

“Blaine,” Kurt says just as he’s about to open his bedroom door, “I know you’re not ashamed of me. Please trust me when I say that I understand, okay?”

There’s a second of quiet, during which Kurt can see Blaine worrying his bottom lip between his teeth, before he finally releases a soft sigh and his unease falls to the wayside.

“Okay,” Blaine says simply.

“Good.”

“Can I see your room now?”

“Eager, are we?” Kurt teases.

“I just can’t believe I’ve been here so many times and never seen your room. I can already imagine the Wicked posters on your wall.”

“Not quite,” Kurt says, finally pushing the door open and flicking the light switch, revealing his pristine room.

Not to mention, Kurt thinks it’s quite tastefully decorated and warm in a way most people don’t expect when they see it. Blaine slips inside, eyes flitting everywhere as he takes in Kurt’s most private space. Since they moved from their old house and Kurt completely redesigned his room, very few people have actually seen it. In fact, the longer Blaine stares, the more nervous Kurt becomes. Blaine stuffs his hands in

his pockets, like he's stopping himself from sliding his curious fingers over Kurt's possessions. When he reaches Kurt's vanity, Kurt holds his breath, afraid that Blaine will think he's too much of a girl or too preoccupied with stupid things like skin care. However, he catches sight of a fond smile on Blaine's lips through the reflection in his mirror. Blaine doesn't say anything until he takes a seat on the edge of Kurt's bed.

"You're beautiful," he states, staring directly into Kurt's eyes.

"W-What?"

"You're beautiful," Blaine says again. "You can tell a lot about a person from their room. And you – I don't know. I just get the feeling that you're just as beautiful inside as you are on the outside."

"You – you think I'm beautiful?" Kurt asks in a whisper.

Blaine's expression grows sad, and Kurt doesn't understand why. When Blaine pats the edge of Kurt's bed, Kurt settles next to him until their thighs are pressed together.

"Why do you look so sad?" Kurt wonders.

"Because I can't believe that no one's ever told you that you're beautiful. You're gorgeous, Kurt. And I wish I would've realized that I'm – that I'm the way I am sooner, because I could've been telling you every day for the past two years."

"None of that's your fault," Kurt says.

"Maybe not," Blaine says. "Either way, when we get together for real, I'll be sure to tell you as often as I can."

When.

Not 'if'.

*When.*

"Blaine-"



“Let’s lay down,” Blaine interrupts. “We can watch reality shows on your TV and trash talk the actors until your parents head home. Sound good?”

Kurt can’t find his voice at the moment, so he simply nods and kicks off his shoes as Blaine snatches the remote from the shelf near his television. He scoots up further on his bed while Blaine slides off his own shoes before crawling back onto the bed as well, settling in against the headboard while Kurt relaxes into one of his pillows. Blaine turns on the TV, but Kurt is unable to focus on the screen when Blaine’s hip is so close to his face.

After a few minutes of blaring television and no conversation, one of Blaine’s hands finds its way into Kurt’s hair. At first, Kurt’s body seizes up because they’re not supposed to do things like this, but Blaine’s fingers rubbing against his scalp feels far too heavenly to ignore.

“Relax,” Blaine whispers, his voice so calm and sweet that peace immediately floods through Kurt’s limbs, causing him to sink further into Blaine’s side. “I won’t bite.”

Kurt grins against Blaine’s hip, hiding his face because he’s never done this. He’s never had a boy run his fingers through his hair just because he can. He’s never had another boy in his *bed*, actually.

“Unless you want me to.”

That sense of peace all but vanishes the moment Blaine says those words, and a slow, churning heat settles in the pit of Kurt’s stomach. He recognizes it easily – he’d felt it on the dance floor and in the back seat of his car. He’d felt it on Rachel Berry’s couch and god, *why* did Blaine have to say that?

“We’re – we’re not supposed to,” Kurt reminds feebly, though his body is screaming at his mouth to just *shut up*.

“I know, shit, I’m sorry,” Blaine says frantically, withdrawing his fingers from Kurt’s hair.

Kurt can’t help it; he whimpers. He whimpers because he shouldn’t want this, not when Blaine has a girlfriend and plenty of issues to work out. He whimpers because he’s at a loss. He whimpers because they should’ve just gone to see some dumb movie because then there wouldn’t be an empty house and a soft bed and Blaine wouldn’t be looking at him like he *hurts*. He whimpers because that hand felt so good and he doesn’t want Blaine to move away like he’s doing right now and –

“Wait,” he hears himself saying.

Blaine pauses in the act of putting more space between their bodies, his torso leaning toward the edge while his legs are still pressed against Kurt’s side. Kurt places a tentative hand on Blaine’s thigh.

“We said we’d – but I-”

“But you?” Blaine prompts, and Kurt can see his Adam’s apple bob in his throat as he swallows in apprehension.

Kurt tries to make his vocal chords function properly, but words fail him. Instead, he gives Blaine’s thigh a tight squeeze, sure to brush his finger just a touch too high along the seam of Blaine’s jeans. He hears the sharp intake of breathe on Blaine’s end, and then Kurt has to withdraw his hand because Blaine slides down on the bed until his head is sharing Kurt’s pillow.

“It could – just one more time,” Blaine breathes against Kurt’s lips, his eyes as dark as Kurt remembers them being on the dance floor. “I mean, we’ve already done it once. So, you know, one more time won’t really make that much of a difference.”

One more time, Kurt thinks to himself. He can have one more chance to feel Blaine against him, to feel the press of his lips, to feel his tongue on his damp skin. And even though his conscience is screaming at him, begging him to say no, he knows he was lost the moment they first kissed.

They can have one more night together.

But as he says it to himself, he feels himself falling into something particularly dangerous and maybe even immoral. Of course, even God knows that he’d been a fool to think he could give this up entirely.

“One more time,” Kurt finally agrees, and he can feel the smile stretch across his lips when he catches sight of the fire that blazes in Blaine’s eyes.

One more time.

## **Part Six**

One more night quickly becomes multiple times a week (only because Rachel locks herself in her room after rehearsals to practice her solos for West Side Story), and even though Kurt feels a little sad when he sees Blaine's arm slung around Rachel's shoulders in the hallway, he finds he doesn't really care when Blaine's hand is down his pants.

"I've never – not to another guy," Blaine says into the sticky warm air of his car.

"Just – twist your hand – oh, god, like that," Kurt moans against Blaine's shoulder.

"Like this?" Blaine breathes, twisting his hand with every upstroke.

They only have a few minutes, and Blaine's grip is a bit too dry, a bit too rough, but the novelty of actually having another boy's hand wrapped around his dick is enough to allow Kurt to overlook such innocuous things. He thrusts up into Blaine's palm as much as he can with his jeans tight around his thighs. Blaine ruts up against his side, panting in his exertion, and Kurt curls his fingers around Blaine's bicep.

He can feel the muscles clenching beneath Blaine's skin. He can feel the hard press of Blaine's dick through his jeans. He can feel Blaine's heavy breath against the shell of his ear.

And he can feel the way Blaine's thumb drags over the head of his dick, causing him to gasp and writhe.

Kurt is just there on the edge of release, and he knows he's babbling nonsense at this point but he can't help it. He needs to come. He's supposed to be inside his house in a few minutes and he needs to or he thinks he'll go fucking crazy.

"B-Blaine," he stammers, "I – please, I need to-"

"Come," Blaine demands.

"I can't – god, I can't walk inside with come all over my-"

"Come on my hand," Blaine says, pressing a kiss to Kurt's temple. "Do it, come on my hand."

"But you'll-"

“Want you to,” Blaine continues, still grinding against Kurt’s naked hip. “Want to feel it. Want it all over my fingers.”

Dear god. Kurt gasps as Blaine continues to jerk him with his eager hand, as if prepared to forcibly drag Kurt’s orgasm from his body.

“*Blaine*,” Kurt groans, burying his face in the crook of Blaine’s neck.

“Want you to come on my fingers and I – I want to lick them clean and – and taste you,” Blaine whispers, his voice raw and ragged. “Fuck, I wanna taste you so bad, Kurt.”

And that image, one of Blaine swirling his tongue around come-covered fingers, is enough to tip Kurt over the edge. He comes with a shout, spilling himself all over Blaine’s fist. Only a few drops splash against the edge of his abdomen, but he can’t be bothered with those as he rides out the fleeting pleasure of orgasm in Blaine’s warm, come-slick grip.

When that hand abandons him, Kurt finally lifts his head from Blaine’s shoulder to see Blaine’s tentative tongue sneak out between his lips to lick at his palm.

Blaine’s eyes fall shut. He *moans*.

Kurt can only watch in fascination as Blaine laps at the rapidly drying come covering his hand. Even though he knows he’s staring with too-wide eyes, he can’t look away because holy shit.

Holy shit.

He never knew something so dirty could be so damn *hot*.

And he is never going to get that image out of his head. They don’t get enough time together like this, at least not for Kurt. They rarely have time for orgasms, let alone dirty, vivid descriptions in the middle of it all.

“Jesus,” Blaine says after his fingers are mostly clean. “I...have no idea where that came from.”

“Neither do I,” Kurt says with a breathless laugh. “But I think I’m into it.”

“You – really?”

“Maybe not all the time. But it’s definitely something I’m interested in hearing again.”

“Duly noted,” Blaine says, his grin threatening to take over his face. “For the record, I can’t believe that I ever thought I was straight.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Because I will *never* get tired of the taste of your come.”

-

Even when they’re not rolling around on a bed or sneaking in some alone time in the back of a car, Kurt feels giddy inside. Sure, he feels slightly guilty about sneaking behind everyone’s backs, especially Rachel Berry’s, but he can’t help the happiness that bubbles in his stomach every time he sees Blaine at school. There is jealousy there, too, but for the weeks following Thanksgiving, Kurt feels like he’s on cloud nine.

He has a boyfriend.

Well, okay, maybe not a *real* boyfriend. Blaine might not be his exclusively, but he has someone to laugh with, someone to kiss, and someone to hold. He has a beautiful boy who likes drinking coffee and listening to Broadway soundtracks on vinyl. He has Blaine, gorgeous, silly Blaine who admits his secret love for comic books. Some nights, when they’re too exhausted from Glee or West Side Story rehearsals to fool around, they’ll sit at Starbucks together for an hour while Blaine reads his comics and Kurt flips through Vogue. They do it with warm cups of coffee, their ankles barely brushing, and shy smiles on their faces.

When time is on their side, though, they pass it by learning each other’s bodies using their lips, tongues, and hands. Kurt discovers the birthmark along Blaine’s spine, and he thinks he could spend hours placing kisses there. Blaine notices the barely-there freckles dotting Kurt’s pale shoulders, and he traces them with his fingertips like he’s creating some kind of constellation that matches the stars in his eyes. It’s a bit crazy how they can go from quick, dirty hand jobs in the back seat of a car to lazing nakedly like they have all the time in the world.

"I like this spot right here," Kurt says one night when they're curled around each other in Blaine's bed thanks to his empty house. He presses his thumb gently into the dip inside one of Blaine's hip bones. The skin there is soft and smooth, and it calls to Kurt's fingers like a siren in a storm.

"Why's that?" Blaine asks softly, kissing the top of Kurt's head where it rests on his shoulder.

"I think it's because I'm the only one who gets to touch you here. That's my guess, anyway."

"There are plenty of other places you get to touch that no one else does, though."

"I know," Kurt says. "But I like this one."

"I think you like them all," Blaine teases, nuzzling his nose into Kurt's hair.

"Hmm," Kurt hums in return, sliding his hand closer to Blaine's growing erection. "I guess I do."

He hears Blaine sigh in contentment as Kurt puts that wandering hand to better use by stroking Blaine until he's fully hard. Kurt presses a kiss to the bit of Blaine's chest that his lips can reach.

"I love it when you touch me," Blaine whispers. "It doesn't even matter where; I just like it when your hands are on me."

"Liar," Kurt says, a coy tone to his words and he lifts his head to peer into Blaine's eyes. "You know you like this best."

"Well, it's definitely in my top three."

"Oh, yeah? What're the other two?"

A pink flush rises to Blaine's cheeks that has nothing to do with Kurt's hand around his dick. Kurt lifts an eyebrow in question and Blaine wraps a hand around Kurt's wrist in order to drag it away from his erection. He guides Kurt's hand slowly, gently, until he lifts his hips and Kurt's palm is spread against the round swell of his ass.

"Here," Blaine admits, looking far too shy for his own good.

"I could've guessed *that*," Kurt drawls, though he's unable to resist giving Blaine's ass a firm squeeze.

"Probably," Blaine says with a chuckle, tugging Kurt's hand back around as he resettles his hips on the bed.

But then his eyes soften and his grin falls away, leaving Kurt momentarily perplexed. Blaine begins dragging Kurt's hand upward, over the bones framing his persistent erection, over the soft, bare skin of his stomach until he reaches his chest. There, he places Kurt's hand, palm down and fingers splayed, just over the steady beat of his heart.

"This, though," Blaine reveals, "this is my favorite."

That's when Kurt knows that their mantra of 'one more night, one more time' will never hold true. They're merely words to assuage their guilt.

-

"Okay, guys," Mr. Schue begins to say at the start of Glee rehearsal, "I know we're all really busy with opening West Side Story this Friday and we haven't had any time to celebrate the holidays beyond the usual decorations, but winter break is just a week and a half away and I want you guys to have a chance to get into the spirit of things. For some of you, this is your last Christmas here. It might be the last chance to share the holidays together. And I know we're cutting it close this year; it's taken a while to get West Side Story off the ground, but I think you're all going to be amazing. So, with that being said, I thought we could-"

"Blaine and I have the *perfect* Christmas duet!" Rachel squeals excitedly, already dragging Blaine from his chair and up to the front of the classroom.

"You know," Santana drawls, "for being Jewish, you sure do sing a lot of Christmas songs."

Kurt wishes he could give Santana a high five.

"It happens to be advantageous to keep a wide range of selections in my musical repertoire," Rachel argues. "I know a few Kwanzaa songs, too."

“Unbelievable,” Santana mutter under her breath.

“We’d be glad to hear what you’ve prepared,” Mr. Schue says with a pointed look toward the class.  
“Take it away, guys.”

Rachel gives a decisive nod and a wide smile before rushing over to whisper something in Piano Brad’s ear. The man rolls his eyes, Kurt notices, but when his fingers are poised to play, Rachel takes her place at Blaine’s side. Blaine looks to swallow hard, but then he plasters on his usual grin as they dive into the song.

*“I really can’t stay...”*

*“But baby, it’s cold outside.”*

*“I’ve got to go away...”*

*“But baby, it’s cold outside.”*

They dance together, spinning and flirting and touching, Blaine’s hands on Rachel’s waist and Kurt feels like he’s going to be sick. Usually Rachel is too busy stealing the spotlight for duets, but Kurt can deal with that. This, though, this cat-and-mouse with fluttering eyelashes and the way Blaine drags his finger over Rachel’s lips when the song talks about them looking delicious, this just makes Kurt’s heart hurt. It’s worse than when he watches them in the hallway or at lunch, but he has no idea why. Now, he just feels the tears welling in his eyes. Maybe it’s because he and Blaine had been talking about Christmas songs just a few days ago, and this very song came on the radio when they were in the car. Maybe it’s because they talked about performing it together one day and shocking conservative audiences at some big Christmas festival with such a beautiful, flawless cover of it.

Maybe it’s because, somewhere in the back of Kurt’s mind, he started thinking of this as *their* Christmas song. Never mind the content; they could do it justice as two talented performers in a way people might not expect.

But seeing this now, with Blaine swirling Rachel and dragging her to him where they fit like puzzle pieces, this makes him want to forget the song even exists.



He applauds politely when the song ends even though he wants to curl up and cry until he simply can't anymore.

Later, he receives a text from Blaine.

**I wish I could've done that song with you.**

*Yeah. Me, too.*

-

It only takes that last week for cloud nine to dissipate and reform in the shape of a hurricane.

He's grateful for the fact that the show comes to an end soon. He's so unbelievably tired of watching Blaine play Rachel's love interest on stage. There's enough of that in real life, thanks very much, especially after their cloyingly sweet rendition of Baby, It's Cold Outside a few days ago. What's worse is the fact that, despite the swell of pride he feels during the standing ovation they receive on opening night, Rachel is apparently stealing Blaine away for the evening. Kurt had been hoping to have an hour or so with Blaine after the show, but now he knows he won't get Blaine alone until god knows when. Rachel will want every spare minute of her leading man's time until their last matinee performance on Sunday afternoon, and probably more.

He sees the apologetic look Blaine tosses him as Rachel tugs him through the backstage door, but it doesn't lessen Kurt's disappointment.

After Kurt removes his makeup, his costume, and performs a thorough skin-cleansing routine in the bathroom, he finds he's the last one of the group to leave. He hangs his head sullenly, making his way through the hall without haste. It's not like he has anywhere to be.

Just as he passes the backstage door, though, he finds that it's still open. He peeks inside to investigate the sound of feet on the stage, only to see Blaine in his rehearsal clothing and practicing one of the dance numbers by himself.

"Hey," Kurt greets just as Blaine ends a spin.

"What – oh, hey," Blaine replies, slightly out of breath. "I thought I was the only one left."

"The stage makeup is horrible for my complexion," Kurt explains. "I didn't want to wait to get home for a proper cleansing."

"Gotcha."

"What're you still doing here? I thought you were going to Artie's after party with Rachel."

"I'm going," Blaine says. "But I messed up some of the moves tonight and I wanted to rehearse them a few more times. I can do better."

"Blaine, you were amazing tonight," Kurt says, taking a few steps toward Blaine. "Why do you-"

"Considering the list of things I did wrong that Rachel pointed out, I figure a bit more rehearsal can't hurt."

"She's not your director," Kurt argues. "If Artie didn't have any notes for you, I don't think you have anything to worry about."

"Maybe not. But I don't feel like listening to her critiques for the rest of the night. Her dads are letting me stay over and I'd rather not have her going on about everything I did wrong when I'm trying to go to sleep."

Kurt's stomach twists into a knot at the implication of Blaine and Rachel sharing a bed. Even though he's fully aware of Blaine's lack of attraction to Rachel, the thought of Rachel curling up to him in the middle of the night, of Blaine's arm tight around her waist in sleep, it all leaves a bad taste in his mouth.

"Oh," Kurt says lamely. "I didn't know you were staying over. I guess...that means I can't call you tonight."

"Better not," Blaine agrees with a nod. "She might start asking questions."

"You know, if you'd talk to me in public more often, it wouldn't be so weird."

"...What do you mean?"

"We just – I don't know. Even though we're...what we are, it's still doesn't seem like we're friends."

“What – of course we’re friends,” Blaine states.

“Yeah, behind closed doors.”

Blaine groans in frustration, running a hand over his face.

“Kurt, you know I can’t-”

“I’m not talking about coming out or anything like that,” Kurt says quickly. “But there’s nothing wrong with letting people know that we’re friends. We’ve been at this for a while now, you know? What’s the harm in letting people know that we talk or – or have coffee occasionally. We’re both into music and theatre, so it’s not like we don’t have anything in common. Being friends isn’t a crime.”

“I never said it was.”

“Then why don’t you ever talk to me when we’re in school?” Kurt asks, crossing his arms over his chest. Even though he understands why Blaine wants to keep their relationship a secret, he can’t help the jealousy that hovers just beneath the surface of his skin. He’s had to spend the last week avoiding Blaine during dress rehearsals because Rachel won’t leave his side. He hasn’t even been able to *see* Blaine outside of school or rehearsal and knowing that Blaine is spending all that extra time with Rachel is making him go slightly crazy. “Why don’t you *act* like we’re friends? Or am I too much of a loser to be seen associating with you in public?”

“Just – just stop doing that,” Blaine says. “You know that’s not what I think.”

“I think you’re content to have your cake and eat it, too,” Kurt snaps, knowing he’s at the end of his tether. They may be keeping their relationship a secret, but that doesn’t mean they have to keep their *friendship* a secret. “You keep saying I’m your friend, but nothing changes. Even after we kissed on the couch after Rachel’s party and before I saw you at Scandal’s, all you ever did was text me. You didn’t talk to me in front of anyone, you never asked me to eat lunch with you, and even though you sat next to me in Glee, you barely even looked at me. Now it feels like you’re not even trying. It’s like – like you’re fine with Rachel being your girlfriend and keeping me on the side. And even though you’re not ready to come out yet, I thought that you were working up to that.”

“It’s not that easy and you know it.”

"No," Kurt says. "I don't know that. Because we don't talk about it anymore."

"Yes, we-"

"No. We don't. The only time you ever mention Rachel anymore is when you tell me that you have to spend time with her, meaning you can't spend time with me."

"Because I know that talking about her makes you uncomfortable!"

"I *never* said that."

"You don't have to," Blaine says. "I see the way you look at us when she's next to me. You always look like you've tasted something sour and you know what? It kills me to see you look like that."

"I can't help the way I feel," Kurt says under his breath.

"And I can't help the fact that, when I'm around you, all I want to do is pull you in for a kiss. No matter who we're around or where we are," Blaine says.

"You – what?" Kurt asks, feeling slightly thrown.

"Christ," Blaine mumbles, shaking his head. "Do you seriously think I don't want to be your friend in public?"

"Well...yeah."

Kurt lowers his head, suddenly feeling a bit foolish even though he doesn't totally understand what Blaine is trying to say.

"Kurt," Blaine says in a soft tone, stepping forward in order to place his hands on Kurt's shoulders. "No. Just – just no."

"I don't understand," Kurt admits, trying not to sound too pathetic.

"It's hard for me," Blaine attempts to explain. "It's really hard for me to be around you and not touch you. I'm not talking about touching in *that* way. I'm talking about little things. Like, I'll be sitting next to

you in Glee and all I want to do is hold your hand or pull your chair closer to mine. I can't walk up to you in the hallway because I know I'll want to kiss you or – or wrap my arms around your waist. Even looking at you too long is difficult. So I...don't. Because it's easier to stay away from you. Well, okay, it's not *easier*, but it keeps me from doing something that might start rumors."

Brushing away a stray tear that escapes from his eye, Kurt shrugs and folds his arms around his middle. He feels stupid and needy and clingy and all sorts of things right now.

"Remember when you came to my house before Thanksgiving and Finn saw us on the porch?" Kurt asks.

"I do."

"And you said – you said you didn't want me to feel like you were ashamed of me. Well, I didn't. At least, not then. But it – it's been almost a month since then and now...I do."

Blaine's eyes widen in what appears to be horror, and Kurt immediately finds himself in Blaine's strong embrace, surrounded by his familiar scent and warm body. Kurt breathes deeply, willing himself not to cry anymore. He hates that he's been feeling so lonely this past week with Blaine just out of his reach.

"I could never be ashamed of you," Blaine whispers into his ear. "Never."

"But it feels like you're still okay with keeping me as – as a backup plan," Kurt confides. "Like you're resigned to staying with her. Or maybe you're...more into her than you say you are. And it scares me."

"You have *nothing*," Blaine says, pulling away to peer into Kurt's eyes, "to be scared of."

"But-"

"No." Blaine grapples for Kurt's hands, squeezing them in his own before placing them against Kurt's chest over his racing heart. "This is where I am. It's my favorite place, remember?"

"I thought *your* heart was your favorite place for me to touch."

"It is," Blaine says. "But this is *my* favorite place to be. Right here in your heart. Because you're always in mine. No matter where I am or who I'm with, I'm in here with you. Every time your heart beats, it's – that's me, okay? It's me telling you that I'm here."

"But you're always with *her* and-"

"Kurt," Blaine interrupts, "Rachel doesn't mean *anything* to me."

The words hit Kurt hard. The last time they'd discussed Rachel, Blaine was still on the fence in regards to whether or not he loved her in whatever capacity. But this – for him to say that she means nothing – is definitely a step in the right direction for them.

Any other argument Kurt might have is silenced by Blaine's lips on his, warm and smooth and a little salty from the tears that seem to have slipped from his eyes. Blaine tightens his fingers around Kurt's waist and Kurt drapes his arms over Blaine's shoulders, content to forego air for the rest of his life if Blaine can just keep kissing him like this forever. The longer they kiss, the quicker his pulse becomes and with every sharp beat, he hears Blaine's voice in his head:

I'm here.

I'm here.

I'm here.

Kurt decides Blaine had been wrong in that text message he sent a long time ago; secrets are definitely fun when they aren't for everyone. And for now, Kurt's okay with being Blaine's best kept secret as long as he can remember this moment. He just doesn't know how *much* longer he'll be okay with that.

They're too caught up in each other to hear the soft click of a door closing somewhere at the back of the house, somewhere in the dark.

## **Part Seven**

“We’re never going that long without going to Scandal’s again,” Kurt states as they wander out of the bar, both of them sweaty and smelling faintly of liquor despite the fact that neither of them had a drink tonight.

“Agreed,” Blaine says, winding his arm around Kurt’s waist. “It’s fun to just be us without worrying.”

Kurt smiles to himself, settling his arm around Blaine’s shoulders as they walk back to their cars.

“So what’re you doing tomorrow night?” Kurt asks. “It’s too late to do anything else now, but tomorrow’s the last day of winter break and I want to see you before we go back to school and have to...you know, pretend.”

“I was actually going to ask you about that,” Blaine says. “I...was wondering if you wanted to go on a date. Like, a proper one.”

“You – you want to go one a date with me? Like, out in public?”

“You make it sound so scandalous,” Blaine teases, pressing Kurt up against his car. He dips his head down to kiss Kurt’s exposed collarbone, nipping at his skin a bit and causing Kurt to suck in a sharp breath of surprise.

“Well you know we – ah – you know we don’t ever go out anywhere together except for here and Starbucks,” Kurt says. He’s doing his best to keep them on the subject at hand, but it’s hard when Blaine trails his lips up Kurt’s neck and further still to capture his earlobe between his teeth.

“I know,” Blaine whispers, “and I want to change that.”

“You do?”

“I wanna take you out,” Blaine says, “like a real boyfriend would. I mean, we still need to keep everything a secret, but I do want to take a step in the right direction and I thought that, you know, doing this might help.”

"You don't need to do something you're not comfortable doing, though," Kurt says. "I eventually *do* want to go out with you on a real date as real boyfriends, but it doesn't have to be now, not before you're ready."

"I'm not ready to tell everyone that I'm gay. But that doesn't mean we can't go out and do stuff. The most it might do is lead people on to think that we're friends outside of school and despite what you thought a couple of weeks ago, I don't care if people think that we're friends. I wasn't lying when I said that it's hard to be around you at school and not want to – you know, act like more. To us, though, we *know* it's more. And that's – that's what matters to me. I hope it matters to you, too."

"It does," Kurt says softly, resting his forehead against Blaine's. "I just don't want to move too fast for you in – in that way."

"It's not too fast," Blaine assures. "You need to know that I *am* working up to coming out. I don't know when that will happen, but I am trying."

"I know," Kurt says before pressing a kiss to Blaine's lips. "And a date with you sounds wonderful."

-

Their date turns out to be pretty fantastic. They don't run into anyone they know and Kurt thinks it has to do with the fact that the café they go to actually serves food that doesn't clog their arteries. They eat lunch together, sitting with their feet touching beneath the table and Blaine isn't shy when it comes to shooting Kurt those small, secretive smiles that make Kurt blush.

They decide to see a movie, though Kurt has to admit that he doesn't even remember the name of it because the theater is dark and they're the only ones in the back row. Everyone else is closer to the middle rows of seats, and Blaine's the one to lift the armrest so that they can sit even closer together as the movie plays out on the screen. Kurt briefly remembers that it's supposed to be a comedy, but all thoughts of laughter flee his mind the moment Blaine leans over to whisper in his ear, his breath hot and heavy against Kurt's skin.

"I wanna try something."

Kurt blinks at the screen as Blaine disentangles his fingers from Kurt's, only to slide them over Kurt's knee, up, up, up until those fingers are tracing the juncture where hip meets thigh. Kurt bites his lips



together to suppress a gasp. Blaine's lips are still at his ear and quite suddenly his tongue joins as well, tracing the soft shell before dipping down to flick at his earlobe.

"B-Blaine," Kurt stutters as quietly as possible.

"Shh," Blaine breathes in a whisper, the sensation causing Kurt to shiver.

He slides his hand further over, the tips of his fingers barely grazing Kurt's now-very-interested dick in his jeans. Kurt grips the armrest on his other side with probably too much force, but then Blaine slides his zipper down and reaches his hand inside Kurt's jeans, palming him through his underwear.

"I wanna blow you," Blaine states.

"Oh god," Kurt groans softly, his head falling back against the seat.

They've never done this before; they've definitely never done something like this in a movie theater of all places, and they haven't yet ventured into the mysterious, alluring world of blowjobs either. So when Blaine slides out of his seat and onto what has to be the most uncomfortable floor ever, Kurt is stunned into silence. Blaine's hands roam the planes of Kurt's thighs, blunt fingernails dragging up and down along the inseam of Kurt's jeans. Kurt trembles and attempts to steel himself, which turns out to be a fruitless effort the moment Blaine undoes the placket of his jeans completely and tugs the hem of his underwear down over his dick. The usually frigid cold of the theater is replaced by heat – heat swirling in his belly, heat from Blaine's hands gripping his thighs, and heat from Blaine's breath as his mouth hovers just above Kurt's erection.

And then Blaine wraps his slick, smooth lips around the tip and Kurt has to *look*. He glances down in the dark, barely able to make out the shape of Blaine's body on the floor, but Blaine's eyes glisten and glow as he looks up at Kurt through his lashes. Kurt's breath leaves him in a rush. Blaine slides his lips down, tongue pressing hard against the underside, swallowing Kurt up in his undeniably perfect mouth. He begins to bob his head and while there's not much of a rhythm, there is *plenty* of suction and tongue swirling. Kurt's fingers tangle into Blaine's hair in spite of the gel and, as if on instinct, he thrusts ever so slightly into Blaine's open mouth. Blaine doesn't seem to mind, like maybe he'd been expecting it, and holds his jaw open, allowing Kurt to thrust again.

Jesus fuck, it's glorious here. Blaine's mouth is wonderful and his tongue is eager and the entire thing feels so illicit and dirty and holy shit, this is not going to last long at *all*.

"Blaine," Kurt whispers, mouth dry and voice weak. "I – I can't – fuck, you look – oh god."

He thinks he feels Blaine moan around his dick and wow, that's another new sensation amidst a sea of new sensations and *fuck*. Blaine grips Kurt's hips with renewed strength, effectively stopping him from thrusting, and begins sucking with fervor. He squeezes his lips, sucks hard, and twists his tongue around the head and Kurt's orgasm hits him like a freight train with almost no warning at all.

He comes directly into Blaine's mouth.

Blaine coughs but he doesn't remove his lips, attempting to swallow and breathe at the same time. It takes Kurt a few moments to realize what happened as he rides out the last few waves of pleasure, but when he looks down to whisper an apology, Blaine is staring up at him with watery eyes and a broad, pleased smile on his swollen lips.

And there's a drop of Kurt's come on his chin.

"You're amazing," he finally breathes.

"Yeah?" Blaine asks quietly, looking entirely too hopeful for someone on his knees with come on his chin. "It was good?"

"Better than good," Kurt says, sneaking his hand out to brush that stray drop of come off of Blaine's chin. "That was – god, get up here."

Blaine scrambles back up into his seat, though he drapes his leg over Kurt's until he's practically sitting in his lap and promptly plants a messy kiss to Kurt's lips. Fuck, and Kurt can *taste* himself there and then he can't stop thinking about Blaine licking Kurt's come off of his fingers that one time in the car.

"I wanna do you," Kurt says quietly, attempting to push Blaine out of his lap so he can repay the favor.

"Some other time," Blaine replies.

“But you’re-”

“I know,” Blaine says, “but you can do it later.”

“Why not now?”

“Because that floor is *gross* and I know for a fact that you would not want to subject your beautiful jeans to that mess. Also, my parents aren’t home.”

-

“I don’t know how much time we have to hang out,” Blaine says as he slides his key into the lock of the front door of his house. “I’ve got a bunch of homework I haven’t done and I know you told your dad that you’d cook dinner tonight and – what – oh-”

Kurt doesn’t allow him the chance to finish whatever he was trying to say because the moment they step into the house, Kurt spins and shoves Blaine against the inside of the door. He pins Blaine against the wood, slamming their mouths together and hopefully driving any other thoughts from Blaine’s head.

“You looked so *good* earlier,” Kurt breathes in between kisses, “on your knees and between my legs.”

“J-Jesus,” Blaine stammers, head falling back against the door as Kurt begins nipping at his jaw.

“I couldn’t think about anything else after the movie,” Kurt continues, licking his way down Blaine’s neck. “Even in the car on the way over here.”

“Kurt, god, you – Kurt.”

And Kurt thinks maybe it’s that image of Blaine’s head between his legs in a movie theater, of Blaine’s eyes shining so brightly in the darkened room, maybe that’s what drives Kurt toward such lust. Or maybe it’s the thought that they’ve never done these things to anyone else. Or maybe it’s the fact that even Rachel, Blaine’s pretty, perfect girlfriend hasn’t had the opportunity to do what Kurt is about to do. Maybe it’s because, despite the pretending and the playacting, Blaine wants this: he wants a boy in front of him, he wants a boy to kiss him, he wants a boy to rut against, and he wants that boy to be *Kurt*, of all people.

Perhaps, Kurt thinks as he drops to his knees and reaches for Blaine's belt, it's a combination of all of it on top of the fact that they've got Blaine's house to themselves for a little while. There's no one around to hear, no one around to question them.

Just an empty house with two boys, yet filled to the brim with teenage hormones.

"And your lips," Kurt says, and he realizes he hasn't stopped talking; it's just been a litany of lewd things and descriptions from his imagination. "God, your lips, Blaine Devon Anderson. They were *made* for sucking dick."

Even Kurt is slightly shocked at his words, more shocked than he had been when Blaine mentioned wanting to lick Kurt's come from his fingers. But Blaine seems to be enjoying the filthy words because he's sweating and moaning without restraint, clawing at Kurt's shoulders until Kurt is finally able to free Blaine's dick and yank his jeans and underwear down to mid-thigh.

"Please," Blaine pants, staring directly into Kurt's eyes, his own already blown and dark with arousal.

Kurt wastes no more time. He never thought his first time giving head would happen in the entryway of someone else's house, but hey, Blaine's first time was on the sticky floor of a movie theater, so he can't complain too much. Kurt licks his lips and leans in to slide his lips over as much of Blaine's dick as he can without choking. The weight of it settles on his tongue along with the salty taste of skin, and Blaine's scent is so dense here, all clean sweat and *boy* and Kurt loses himself.

When he was younger, Kurt always knew he liked boys more than girls. He never knew why, not precisely, he had just thought they were nicer to look at and he had thought they smelled better than the overwhelmingly sweet scent of pre-teen perfume in middle school. As he grew up, he learned what gay really meant and, more importantly, what it had meant to him as a person. He liked boys. That had been – and is still – a fact. He likes their broad shoulders and the long, firm lines of their bodies as opposed to the soft curves of a girl. He likes their angular jaws, the muscles in their arms, and the strength in their hands. He likes a small waist with a round ass and he likes their lips and the thought of kissing a boy's lips and he just really, really likes boys.

Back then, though, he never gave much thought to what liking boys would mean for his future sex life. He wasn't necessarily thinking about dicks when he was nine or ten years old. He had just known that there had always been a person with a body like his that had haunted his wet dreams.

Now he just happens to have to have the chance to add another layer to what gay means to him and this is definitely something he really, really likes, too. Jerking Blaine off had been one thing, and touching someone else's dick was pretty damn nice, but it still felt similar to touching his own. This, however, with his tongue swiping along the thick vein on the underside of Blaine's dick, with his lips tight and sucking for all he's worth, *this* is another reason why he likes boys.

Kurt begins bobbing his head with renewed effort, spurred on by his own thoughts and the sound of Blaine mewling above him. Blaine's legs tremble and Kurt winds his hands around to grip Blaine's bare ass, forcing his dick further into Kurt's mouth. It's a bit too much and he thinks he might choke soon, but he ignores his watering eyes in order to focus on the heavy heat of Blaine in his mouth and the taste of pre-come dripping into tongue.

"Holy fu – *Kurt*," Blaine whines loudly into the entryway of his house.

Kurt knows it's happening the moment Blaine seems to lose control of his own hips. His jaw aches fiercely, his neck is sore, and the tile on the floor is doing nothing to ease the pain in his knees but Blaine tastes like everything that Kurt never even knew he wanted. He works one hand back around to give a gentle squeeze of Blaine's balls and that does it. Blaine comes, hot and sticky and bitter into Kurt's mouth. Kurt doesn't stop to actively swallow, he just keeps sucking and sliding his lips over Blaine's dick until Blaine is completely spent. By the time Blaine taps Kurt on the shoulder to remind him of the post-orgasm sensitivity, Kurt has spit and come dripping from his mouth and he feels a little messy, but mostly high on the whole experience.

He sits back on his heels and looks up to see Blaine staring down at him with wide, glazed eyes.

"You-" Blaine attempts to say before sliding one of his hands from Kurt's shoulder in order to wipe at the mess on his mouth. "I've never come so hard in my life."

With that, he tugs up his jeans and underwear and drops to the ground, crawling forward until he presses Kurt down onto his back. The tile is too cool against his over-heated skin, even through his clothes. Blaine

straddles his hips and dips down to lick at Kurt's face before kissing him properly, swiping his tongue into Kurt's mouth and sucking at his swollen lips.

"God, you're perfect," Blaine says against Kurt's lips. "You're just – in every way, I swear."

"High praise, indeed, Mr. Popular," Kurt teases.

Blaine pauses suddenly, heaving a sigh and pulling back just a fraction.

"Don't...say that," he says out of the blue.

Kurt frowns, looking up at Blaine's face to see a crease of anxiety between his eyebrows.

"What? Don't call you popular?" Kurt asks.

"I don't like being reminded that there's still something keeping us apart."

"...Your social status isn't what's keeping us from being real boyfriends."

"This whole thing wouldn't be such an issue if I wasn't," Blaine argues, leaning back to run a hand through his mussed hair. "If I wasn't popular, we could just be together."

"That's not the issue," Kurt says, sitting up and bracing himself with his hands on the floor. "You're dating a girl. That's what's keeping us apart."

"If I wasn't popular, I never would've started dating her. She never would've wanted to be with me. You know that's why she wanted to."

"Maybe, maybe not. Either way, she got her claws into you and she's not going to let you go without a fight. And you can't sit there and tell me that you'd rather be at the bottom of the barrel with someone like me."

"Is it so wrong of me to want to be liked by people?" Blaine asks, though his voice is too quiet and he looks perfectly miserable.

"No," Kurt says firmly. "Which is why it doesn't make sense for you to sit there and tell me not to address your social standing when it's nothing but the truth. You like being popular. You like that other people are nice to you. You like having the popular girlfriend and sitting at the popular kids' table at lunch and going to parties and all of that other stuff."

Blaine remains silent. He looks down to see that his jeans are still undone and goes about zipping and buttoning them while Kurt looks on in confusion.

"Look, there's nothing wrong with wanting to be well-liked," Kurt says. "I'm not condemning you for that."

"No?" Blaine asks. "Because it sounds like you are."

"You're the one that brought this up," Kurt reminds. "I was content to make out for another half hour and maybe have another orgasm before we have to go back to school tomorrow and pretend like we barely know each other."

"I never said we had to pretend like we didn't know each other," Blaine argues. "I *told* you that it was too hard to be around you without wanting to show you affection. I don't care if people know that we're friends. I wouldn't have taken you out today if I did. I thought you understood that."

"I do," Kurt says. "It's just – ugh, I don't even know. I do understand, okay? It's just really confusing to have to sit here and listen to you go on about how you wish you weren't popular, even though you really like it, and then I have to see you at school where we're barely able to acknowledge each other's presence. And you did just fine today at the restaurant during lunch, remember? We were hardly affectionate then, I don't see why it has to be any different at school. It can't be that hard to keep your hands to yourself."

"It is when I have to put my arm around Rachel's waist and see you down the hall looking like a lost kitten. It's easy when we've had all this time together over break. It's not easy when I'm expected to act a certain way toward her in front of everyone, and then I see you and all I want to do is lose myself in you."

"So...wait," Kurt says as Blaine crawls off of him to sit on the floor. "I'm just – that's what I am? A way to lose yourself? A way to forget that you're expected to date some girl?"

"That is *not* what I said," Blaine affirms. "I'm not – look, it's like this. You're my reality. You're truth. At school it's like I'm just some character everyone expects me to play. It's exhausting because I'm putting so much energy into it. It's even more exhausting when I'm alone with her and I'm expected to act like I'm in love with her. So when I look at you at school, it's like I can see my own damn happiness but I'm not even allowed to touch it."

"You're allowed to be happy," Kurt says gently.

"For a few hours a week," Blaine scoffs. "It's so frustrating because I'm scared to mix the two – my reality with you and what I pretend to be with everyone else. The shittiest part is the fact that it's my fault."

"It's not a *fault* that you're not ready to tell everyone that you're gay," Kurt says.

"However you want to phrase it," Blaine says, waving Kurt off and standing. "Look, this wasn't how this was supposed to go. I just wanted us to have a good time."

"I did have a good time," Kurt says, standing as well.

"I wanted to give you that second orgasm."

"This isn't about orgasms. Well, sometimes it's about orgasms. Most of the time, though, it's just about being together. But I don't – I don't want to sit on the sidelines watching you feel so terrible."

"I don't feel terrible," Blaine says. "Just frustrated. It's worse knowing that we have to go back to school tomorrow. I'd rather spend all night with you, orgasms or no orgasms."

"I know," Kurt says. "I'd rather do that, too. And I'm sorry it's so exhausting for you, having to pretend and all that. But – tomorrow, I want you to remember this. I want you to remember that I understand and you don't have to feel bad about it, even if I look like I'm ready to set Rachel on fire or something."

"I'll try," Blaine says, wrapping his arms around Kurt and pulling him in for a hug.

Kurt sighs happily the moment Blaine's arms are around him. He always feels like he's home when he's in Blaine's embrace, like nothing bad in the world can touch him.



"I don't know what I'd do without you," Blaine whispers into Kurt's ear.

"You'd probably still be trying to have sex with girls," Kurt says seriously. "I'm glad I was able to rescue you from such horror."

"I'm trying to be romantic, here."

"My bad. I'll do my best not to interrupt your next attempt at romance with-"

"Attempt!" Blaine yelps, indignant and adorable as he pulls away to look Kurt in the eye. "Hey, I can be plenty romantic. I did the thing with the hand over your heart, remember? I told you I was always in there."

"I remember," Kurt says coyly. "That was *weeks* ago."

"You just watch yourself, then," Blaine says. "I can totally do romance. Even secret romance."

"I'll believe it when I see it, *Mr. Popular*."

"You're an ass."

-

When Kurt walks into his house and immediately begins pulling out cookware to make dinner, Finn scrambles up on the counter with a bag of potato chips in his hands.

"...Did you need something?" Kurt finally asks after too many minutes of silence.

"Where were you all afternoon?" Finn asks through a mouthful of chips. "I thought you were gonna come help us at Burt's shop."

Kurt shrugs.

"I had plans."

"What kind of plans?"

"The kind that didn't involve me going to the shop today," Kurt says in exasperation. "Why does it matter?"

"You've just been gone a lot over the break," Finn says.

"Since when do you care if I'm here or not?" Kurt asks. "You spend most of your time avoiding me."

"No, I don't."

"Really? Because it sure seems like that when you pretend not to know me at school," Kurt says, feeling a bout of déjà vu after the almost-argument he had with Blaine less than an hour ago. This is really becoming a tiresome subject.

"That's at school," Finn argues. "Things are different there. You know that. I'm talking about here at home."

"And again, I have to ask why you care."

"I just wonder where you've been going all the time," Finn says. "I mean, your only friend is Mercedes and I overheard her telling you that she wouldn't be back in town until tonight."

"Why do you assume she's my *only* friend?" Kurt bites out in annoyance. "There are other people in the world besides the cattle that roam the halls of McKinley."

"...You've been hanging out with someone from another school?" Finn asks.

"I didn't say that," Kurt says. "But maybe you should consider that the next time you insult me by reminding me that I'm not as popular as you."

"I wasn't-"

"Yes, you were," Kurt sighs. "Just – I don't know. Just go do something else. I don't feel like talking to you right now."

"I just wanna know what you do every day."

"It's none of your business!" Kurt shouts, tossing a dish rag onto the floor in frustration. "What I do is none of your business! Who I hang out with is *none* of your business!"

"You're acting like I don't want you to have any other friends," Finn says, scrunching his brow in confusion.

"Well, isn't that the point?" Kurt snaps. "You want to keep me in my place, don't you? You want to make sure I stay in the basement with the losers while you're up in some high rise penthouse with your pretty blonde girlfriend and-"

"Dude, that's so not what I was-"

"I honestly don't care what you were or weren't. Just go away and let me cook. Unless you think that bag of chips is going to be enough for your dinner."

Finn's eyes widen and he looks into what must be an almost empty bag of potato chips. When his eyes meet Kurt's once more, he looks pretty terrified at the threat and hops off the counter.

"I was just – I was wondering if you wanted to talk," Finn says. "About...stuff."

"I don't have anything to talk about," Kurt states. "You can go now."

Kurt decides to ignore Finn's presence and continue gathering ingredients for their dinner, until finally his brother heaves a deep, put-upon sigh and leaves the kitchen. Kurt releases a breath he hadn't know he'd been holding.

That was just plain *weird*.

-

Kurt drops into his usual chair the next day during Glee and waits for the room to fill with his teammates. Mercedes takes the chair next to him, though she's quiet today after all of the travelling she apparently did yesterday. Finn lumbers in behind her with Quinn at his side, as per usual, and for about the billionth time that day, he shoots Kurt some strange look, as if he expects Kurt to know what it's supposed to mean.

But he doesn't.

So what's the point?

Kurt looks past him just in time to see Blaine stride into the choir room. Rachel has her arm hooked around his.

His smile is so far from genuine that it's actually painful for Kurt to look at him. He sits next to Kurt because that's his usual seat now, but he only has the opportunity to spare Kurt a single glance before Rachel is nattering about their upcoming regionals competition.

"Alright guys," Mr. Schue announces when everyone is finally in the room, "I hope you all had a good break, but it's time to get back to work. This week we're-

"Mr. Schue?" Blaine interrupts with a raised hand.

"Uh, yes, Blaine?" their teacher asks, just as confused as the rest of them.

Blaine never interrupts Mr. Schuester. That's Rachel's job.

"I actually – I have a song I'd like to sing."

"...Now?"

"If that's okay," Blaine says.

"Sure," Mr. Schue says, taking a seat in a chair by the piano.

Blaine smiles graciously, tugging his arm out of Rachel's grip in order to stand at the front of the room. His gaze is serene as he looks out at the small sea of faces staring back at him.

"I know we're about to get ready for regionals," he begins, "so I wanted to do this before we got too busy. This is for someone – someone really special to me."

He looks in Rachel's direction, but Kurt can see how his eyes cut over a bit, just for a second, and he catches Kurt's attention. Kurt sits up a little straighter in his seat. What on earth is going on?

“I was doing homework last night and I came across this song,” Blaine continues. “It might not sound like much, but I hope the message is clear. I felt like...being romantic today.”

The majority of the girls in the room coo over Blaine’s gesture, and Quinn even reaches over to give Rachel a small nudge. Mercedes rolls her eyes at his side.

One of the band guys begins playing a guitar in the corner. Kurt just stares at Blaine, doing his best to blink as little as possible because he doesn’t want to miss a moment of this.

*This song* is not for Rachel Berry.

It’s for *him*.

*Sometimes what you don’t say  
Makes all the difference  
Sometimes you find your own way  
Without interference*

*It’s not all darkness  
It’s not all light  
You don’t have to fix this  
Sit with me tonight*

*The sound of our breathing  
And the TV light  
I don’t want to fight it  
Just sit with me tonight*

Kurt can feel the tears bubbling up in his eyes and he’s thankful that no one is paying any attention to him. Blaine’s voice is sweet and smooth and he looks down at his feet and oh, when he looks back up again, he looks right at Kurt and there’s just so *much* behind it that Kurt thinks he’s going to melt right here in this chair.

*We pray for acceptance  
We pray for deliverance  
We pray for understanding*

*Like it makes all the difference*

*It's not all the way left*

*It's not all right*

*You don't have to fix this*

*Sit with me tonight*

*Sound of our breathing*

*And the TV light*

*I don't want to fight it*

*Just sit with me tonight*

*Oh, oh, oh, oh sit with me tonight*

*oh, oh, oh, oh tonight, tonight*

When he finishes, everyone applauds, though some applaud a bit slower than others. Kurt wipes at his eyes hastily, hoping to rid his face of any evidence of emotion. When Blaine approaches once again to retake his seat at Kurt's side, he brushes Kurt's arm with his elbow before sitting down and facing Rachel, who tilts her head as if in question.

"Well, I didn't think there was anything to fix," she says in reference to the lyrics, "but it was very pretty."

"Yeah, I thought so," Blaine says, blushing fiercely.

"Aw, don't be shy," Rachel says, leaning over to plant a kiss on his cheek. "It was sweet. Next time, though, a better-known ballad might fulfill the intent to a more specific degree."

Blaine nods, saying nothing in response, and Kurt wishes he could slap that stupid smile off of Rachel's face. When someone has the courage to stand in front of a crowd and sing *anything*, the sentiment alone should mean something. Rachel isn't a bad person, but Kurt doesn't understand how she can be so ungrateful when things like this happen.

He forces back his temper.

This isn't about Rachel Berry.

That song was for him. Blaine sang it for him and it was lovely and perfect and so sweet and he wishes he could lean over and thank Blaine with a kiss but he *can't* and it's *not fair*. Because Blaine *is* romantic. He is wonderful at romance and everything that comes with it. Things could be absolutely wonderful for them if they just had the chance, if Rachel wasn't in the picture, if Blaine would just come out of the –

No. No, Kurt won't let himself think like that. Blaine has every right to take his time with this. No one should be forced to come out. And he does understand Blaine's reluctance, he does.

It's just...getting harder.

-

When rehearsal comes to an end an hour or so later and they all file out of the building, Blaine steps in line behind Kurt.

He feels Blaine's palm against the small of his back, just for a brief second, and then he listens to the sound of his own heartbeat.

I'm here, I'm here, I'm here.

## Part Eight

For some reason, after the day he sang to Kurt in Glee, Blaine is suspiciously *not* there, despite the steady thump of Kurt's heart and the memory of Blaine's promise. They don't see each other outside of school for weeks. Even in school, Blaine doesn't act like himself. He's too quiet and too reserved and he doesn't linger in the hallway with Rachel or his friends like he usually does. He skips Glee enough times to warrant a dressing down from Mr. Schue before rehearsal in the privacy of their teacher's office, and when Kurt texts him to ask what happened, Blaine doesn't respond at all.

Kurt stares at Blaine from across the classroom most days. He wonders what's going on in the other boy's head, wonders what had transpired to make him act so strangely. At first, Kurt thinks that Rachel is monopolizing most of Blaine's time and tiring him to a ridiculous degree, but as it turns out, that isn't the case.

"-and we haven't gone on a date in *weeks*," he overhears Rachel saying to Blaine in the hallway during passing period. "You didn't even eat lunch with us yesterday."

Yeah, that had been something Kurt had noticed as well.

"I just needed some peace and quiet," Blaine says with a sigh. "But Brittany came over and asked if I would help her with some history homework."

"You're avoiding me," Rachel states. "You're avoiding everyone."

"I'm just – I'm just tired, okay? I'm not avoiding anyone."

Except maybe he is, Kurt thinks from his spot at his own locker. He doesn't have much time to ponder Blaine's strange behavior in that second because, a large hand shoves him harshly against the row of metal doors. Kurt's entire body collides with the lockers and he loses his balance, tumbling to the ground. He hears laughter and the sound of hands meeting in a high five. For a few seconds, he's slightly disoriented but when he shakes his head, Blaine is suddenly there.

And he looks livid.

"Kurt," Blaine says, his eyes inspecting Kurt's face for injury, "are you okay?"



“What?” Kurt asks in reply, too stunned about the fact that Blaine’s hand is on Kurt’s shoulder, in front of *everyone*, to focus on his words.

“Karofsky!” Blaine shouts to the sea of letterman jackets sauntering down the hall.

Karofsky, along with a fair amount of other football players, turns around to see who had called after him. He smiles.

“What’s up, Anderson?”

“Apologize,” Blaine demands, looking taller and more authoritative than Kurt has ever seen him.

“What?” Karofsky asks, just as baffled as everyone else.

“I said *apologize*.”

“For what?” Karofsky asks with a sadistic grin.

“For shoving Kurt,” Blaine says. “But mostly just for being a dick.”

The students still in the hall fall silent at Blaine’s words. Even Kurt is struck mute at the command. He stares up at Blaine in shock from his place on the ground and out of the corner of his eye, he sees Rachel cover her mouth with her hand.

“What’s your problem, dude?” Karofsky asks.

“My problem has to do with you and your fucking attitude, *dude*,” Blaine snaps.

And it seems like he truly does. He just – just snaps. Whatever has been going on with Blaine these past couple of weeks seems to come to a head, like some sort of fury has been bubbling and building and for whatever reason, Dave Karofsky shoving Kurt is what sets him off.

“Kurt’s never done anything to you and you treat him like he’s garbage and I’m sick of it,” Blaine states. “So apologize.”

“I’m not going to apologize to some fucking fairy,” Karofsky spits. “You’re cracked, man.”

"He is a *person* and if you don't stop this shit, I'll break your fucking nose."

"Dude, do you hear yourself right now?" Karofsky asks. "He's a *nobody*."

"He's my-" a quick stutter, "-my teammate," Blaine says. "I don't care what you think of the Glee club, but I'm part of it and so is he. And this stops now."

Karofsky lifts a single eyebrow, as if in challenge, and slowly begins to close the space between him and Blaine. When they're less than a foot apart, Karofsky comes to a halt. He's much larger than Blaine, both in height and build, and Kurt's heart pounds like a frightened rabbit's in his chest.

"I think you should probably check yourself, Anderson," Karofsky says, voice pitched low and dangerous.

"And I think you should stow your shit and apologize to Kurt for being such an asshole."

It happens too fast. Karofsky launches a single fist and Blaine clearly doesn't see it coming. The punch collides with Blaine's jaw, knocking him back and causing him to stumble. He doesn't fall, though, and when he regains his balance, he spits onto the floor and Kurt can see blood on Blaine's lips. He hears Rachel gasp behind them and then Mr. Schue is there, hauling both boys away to what Kurt assumes is the principal's office. The silence in the hall dissolves into whispers and the rushing clatter of feet as people try to make their way to their classes.

Kurt remains on the floor, staring at Blaine's retreating back.

"Kurt!" Mercedes calls, forcing her way through the crowd of students. "Are you okay?"

"I – yeah," Kurt says. "Yeah, I'm fine."

"That was-"

"I know. Let's just – let's go to class."

Mercedes helps him up and he brushes off her concerned glances and her inevitable questions, too busy trying to analyze Blaine's behavior for himself to discuss it with his friend.

Something is *wrong*.

-

Later, when Kurt doesn't see Blaine in one of the classes that they share, he gathers his courage and seeks out Mr. Schuester, who informs Kurt that Blaine was taken to the nurse after the talk in Principal Figgins' office. Kurt ducks out and skips his next class, slinking into the nurse's office to find Blaine propped up on one of the small beds behind a curtain, staring blankly at a wall with his arms crossed over his chest. At first, he doesn't appear to notice that he has a visitor and his apathy causes Kurt to worry even more.

"Hey," Kurt says softly, shuffling on unsure feet at the foot of the bed.

At the sound of Kurt's voice, Blaine turns his head and his eyes refocus. A small, tight smile settles on his lips.

"Hey," Blaine says.

"You weren't in English," Kurt says. "I was worried that you got expelled or something."

"Nah. Karofsky got a three-day suspension for hitting me, but I didn't get in trouble because I didn't throw any punches. My lip got cut on my teeth, though, and I guess I'm getting a pretty bad bruise so they sent me here."

Kurt nods, feeling too thrown at the situation to be able to say much else. Blaine had stood up for him in front of everyone. He took a punch on Kurt's behalf. He called Dave Karofsky a dick and an asshole to his face and had lived to tell the tale.

"Thank you," Kurt whispers, "for what you said out there."

"I should've said something sooner."

"I doubt it'll make much of a difference."

"Maybe not," Blaine says with a shrug. "But I had to try."

"Well, thank you again," Kurt says.

They both fall quiet and Blaine turns his gaze to his lap, avoiding Kurt's eyes and appearing to close in on himself.

"I know this isn't the best time to ask," Kurt begins, "but...are you okay? Not with the – the fight or whatever, but just...in general. It feels like you've been really distant. And not just in regards to – you know."

With a heavy sigh, the tension in Blaine's limbs melts away and he drops his arms to his side, leaning his head back against the wall. When he looks at Kurt, there's this sort of hollow pain that peeks out and spears Kurt's heart with its intensity and that's when he's able to notice the purpling circles beneath Blaine's eyes that hint at severe exhaustion and lack of sleep. He looks perfectly ill, sitting there with a cut lip and a bruise forming on his jaw and what seems to be the weight of the world on his slumped shoulders.

"I'm sorry," Blaine says quietly. "You're right, I have been distant. But I can't talk about it. Not here, anyway. Later."

"Um...auditorium?" Kurt asks, attempting to be discreet, lest anyone pass by the partition and overhear their conversation. "After rehearsal?"

"Sure," Blaine says, nodding once before turning his head and closing his eyes against the bright light of the room.

Kurt stands, not at all ready to leave Blaine alone when he looks so awful, but maybe the nurse will let him sleep for a little while. Blaine clearly needs rest and Kurt refuses to burden the boy with more questions when they can't even have a proper talk. He slips out of the little room and back into the main hallway, biting his lip to keep himself from crying. He has the most dreadful feeling that something terrible is about to happen and the fact that he can't pinpoint why or what is going to drive him mad.

-

"So," Kurt says later that evening after Glee rehearsal ends and the school is empty. He and Blaine stand on the stage, too far apart for Kurt's liking. "What's going on?"

Blaine swallows. Kurt can see the bob of his Adam's apple in his throat and the hesitation makes Kurt's skin prickle with fear.

"I lost it today," Blaine begins to explain, "and I'm really sorry you had to see that. I never meant to let myself get so out of control but when he pushed you and nobody said anything, I sort of..."

"Snapped?" Kurt offers.

"Yeah," Blaine says with a heavy exhale, rubbing his hand along the back of his neck. "Things have just been really complicated and confusing and I overreacted. I tried to take some time for myself to figure everything out, but I guess it didn't work. I never meant to like, ignore you completely."

"I understand," Kurt says. "You've been avoiding Rachel, too."

"She was so *mad*," Blaine groans in what sounds like pain. "As much as she says it, she doesn't really understand the concept of personal space or the need to be alone every once in a while."

"Yeah, I pretty much got that."

"She's been harping on me for days," Blaine says. "She keeps saying that I'm ignoring her and that I obviously don't love her if I'm not willing to have a Streisand marathon with her every weekend and the other day I – god. I almost said it. I almost said that I didn't love her anymore. I could've ended it right then and there and I didn't. I didn't and I feel like such a – I feel so fucking terrible about it. Why didn't I end it?"

"Is that...rhetorical?"

"I don't know," Blaine admits. "Do you have an answer?"

"Well, I think it's because she's become habit," Kurt says slowly. "You've been with her for so long that it's scary to think about ending it. I also think you might be, you know, slightly masochistic."

"But I don't *enjoy* anything about this," Blaine says. "I hate it, actually. It's – it's tearing me up inside, Kurt. Pretending is just too hard."

Kurt can feel the worry churning in his stomach. It makes him nauseous and dizzy. He doesn't want to crowd Blaine with his presence, not if it's making him so upset all the time. This conversation can go one of two ways: Blaine can end things with Kurt and put distance between them, with the caveat of reuniting if he ever decides to come out, or he can end things with Rachel and continue to see Kurt in secret until he finds the courage to tell their friends about his sexuality. Neither option sounds too great at this point

because Kurt doesn't want Blaine to have to pretend at *all* anymore. But it isn't his call to make. All he can do is be supportive and be there, with open arms and honesty.

"I – I know you're working hard on yourself to make this okay," Kurt says, voice thick with concern, "but just seeing you...it breaks my heart."

"I'm sorry," Blaine whispers, lowering his head.

"You don't have to be sorry. I just - it's killing me to see you like this," Kurt continues. "I see how miserable you are, Blaine. All I see is your pain."

"I don't want to be miserable anymore."

"You don't have to torture yourself like this," Kurt adds, taking a step closer and holding hope close to his chest.

"But I don't know what to do about it anymore," Blaine says, shrugging helplessly. "I'm too much of a coward to break up with her."

"You're not a coward," Kurt says at once. "Look, I know you – I'm not saying you should come out tomorrow, but...maybe soon, the moment will arise when you can."

"I can't even break up with my girlfriend for the sheer fact that I'm not into her anymore," Blaine says. "How am I supposed to tell the whole world that I'm gay?"

"It's not about telling the whole world," Kurt replies. "Just the people that matter to you. But I think if you broke up with her first, if you ended it before letting anyone know the real reason why, it might not be so bad."

"She'll never let it end that easily," Blaine reminds. "You know she won't. That's been the problem from the start."

"But she knows that's something's wrong now," Kurt says. "You've been distant and quiet and you can just tell her that your feelings have changed and you can't be together anymore. It takes two people to make a relationship, not just one. You have a say in this, too. And no one will know the truth. They'll just, you know, think that Rachel's a bit crazy and that you couldn't stand her anymore."

Blaine sighs heavily, lifting a hand in order to pinch the bridge of his nose. He opens his mouth to say something, but closes it at the last second, piquing Kurt's curiosity and worry.

"What?" Kurt asks. "What is it?"

"There's something else," Blaine says.

Kurt feels his stomach drop to his feet.

"Someone else knows," Blaine reveals. "It's – it's why I started acting so off and pulling away from everyone. It was just too weird to be around her after she told me."

"Who?" Kurt demands to know. "Who knows?"

"Santana," Blaine says.

Blinking back in surprise, Kurt stares directly into Blaine's wide eyes.

"Oh," he finally says in reply. "Shit."

## Part Nine

### *3 Weeks Earlier*

“Hey. Helmet Head.”

-

Blaine Anderson spins around to see Santana approaching him as he unlocks his car, her expression strangely unreadable. Her flyaway cheer skirt flits in the wind and she pulls her jacket tighter around her shoulders as she stops in front of him. It’s strange to think that he used to imagine Rachel in one of those skirts; he’d settle on his back, the image in his head, and he’d slip a hand down into his underwear in an attempt to get himself off on the fantasy. Of course, in the end, he’d end up imagining Kurt face down, ass in the air, only coming when he imagined the accompanying sounds Kurt might make as Blaine fucked into him.

But now he doesn’t even have to imagine the sounds Kurt makes.

He shivers. Maybe Kurt will want to meet up for frozen yogurt later and maybe he’ll let Blaine lick the taste of raspberries from his lips. Yeah, that sounds like a really nice way to spend his evening.

“Hey, Santana,” Blaine greets. “Did you need a ride home?”

“We’re going for coffee,” she says, pointing the locking remote on her keys toward her car as if to demonstrate her point. “I’ll meet you there.”

“Uh...that sounds nice, but I sort of have things to do.”

“What? Like Hummel?”

Blaine drops the textbook he’d been attempting to slip into his bag. He freezes, feeling like he’s just been kicked and winded and thrown into a dangerous trap. A satisfied grin creeps onto Santana’s face. She winks, putting a single finger to her lips as if to shush him.

“So,” she says, “coffee?”



"Y-Yeah," Blaine stammers in terror. "Coffee sounds – sounds good, actually."

"I'll see you at the Lima Bean in ten minutes."

-

Blaine has never been as nervous as he is now. He taps his fingers against his cup, impatiently waiting for Santana to come back from the bathroom. He briefly considers fleeing the scene to spare himself the conversation that is clearly about to be had, but then she emerges from the bathroom in regular clothes instead of her Cheerios uniform.

"You changed," he says.

He hates that he has a habit of pointing out the obvious when he's nervous. It's one of the smaller things about himself that he finds annoying, far down on a list of sins he can't ever share, except with Kurt, of course. Kurt knows most everything about him.

Christ, he should probably find a way to stop thinking about him so much.

"I have a date to get to after we're done here," Santana says with a shrug.

"Oh, that's cool."

"Mm, but we're not here to talk about me."

"Listen," Blaine says, attempting to take control of this catastrophe, "I don't know why you think-

"Just cut the crap, Blaine," she interrupts. "I know."

"...About what?"

"That you're *gay*," she says plainly.

"W-What? I'm not-

"And second of all, I know about you and Kurt."

At first, Blaine just stares at her, wondering how she could have found out, but then he realizes that he's being stupidly obvious in his reactions. To cover his shock, he snorts, rolls his eyes, and shakes his head.

"You're crazy," he says. "There's nothing going on between me and Kurt."

"And yet your nose grows longer when you say it, Pinocchio."

"We're just friends," Blaine says. "We go for coffee sometimes and do our homework together."

"Really? Because I've never seen you guys here together."

"We go – we go somewhere else."

"Because you don't want anyone else to see you together."

"Yes. No! No, that's not – look, you know how people act toward Kurt. If – if someone saw us together, they'd think exactly what you're thinking right now. But we're just friends and we want to be friends without anyone judging us for that."

"And if your tongue slips into his mouth over mochas and essays, that's not gay at all."

"We're *not* together."

"Oh my god, this is pathetic," Santana groans before leaning over the table. "I *know*, Blaine. You two have been fooling around, probably for some time now, and there are definitely feelings involved. I saw the way you sang half of that song to Kurt today. And the way he was bawling like he was watching the Notebook for the first time was a pretty dead giveaway."

"Would you just *stop*?" Blaine hisses, eyeing the other customers in the room, praying he doesn't see anyone from school.

"Not until you admit it."

"Well, I'm not going to so just – please. Please stop."

"I have to wonder if Berry knows," Santana says, leaning back in her chair and looking far too at ease and pleased with herself. "Honestly, she seems like someone who would totally be your beard as long as she gets to watch you make out with another guy. And *speaking* of making out, I happen to recall a pretty hot kiss between you and Hummel at Berry's party. Bet you thought we all forgot about that. Is that when it all started? You got your first taste of boy tongue and you were sold? Once you go gay, there's no other way?"

"If you keep talking, I swear to god I'll punch you in the tit."

"And then I'll cut you with the razor blades I keep in my hair."

"Just – fuck," Blaine growls. "What do you want from me?"

"When did I ever say I wanted anything from you?"

"It's obvious that this is about blackmail or something equally horrible. So what is it? Do you want money or something?"

"I don't want anything from you."

"Then *why* are you even talking to me right now?"

Santana's eyes cut away, and she checks around the vicinity as if to make sure that no one's listening to their conversation. She sucks in a breath, gives a decisive nod, and leans forward.

"Because I am, too," she says.

"...You're what? Sleeping with Kurt?"

"No, you little – ugh. I'm *gay*."

She falls silent after that, eyes locked on his, not even blinking in an attempt to read Blaine's reaction. Okay, so he is a little caught off guard at the confession. Last he checked, she was hooking up with Puck like, every single weekend and screwing half of the other guys at this school. The longer he thinks about it, though, it all makes sense. Santana definitely seems like the kind of person to act out when she gets insecure. Sleeping with the majority of the male population at McKinley would probably gain her some

horrible label like 'slut' or 'whore' but...maybe, for her, it's an easier label to handle than something else offensive, like 'dyke'. He cringes internally at the language.

"Why are you telling me?" he asks softly.

"Because you need to be careful," she says. "I'm all for being all you can be and all of that other bullshit Mr. Schue preaches, but I know what it feels like to want to come out on your own terms and not someone else's."

"You – you think someone else knows? About me?"

"I think it could come to light very easily if you keep singing little romantic songs to him in front of the entire club and staring at his *ass* the way you did today during rehearsal when he was dancing."

Blaine flinches.

"I was staring?"

"It was like your eyes and his ass were magnetic. You couldn't even look away if you tried."

"Fuck," Blaine mumbles.

To be fair, Kurt's ass had looked particularly fantastic today. He was wearing those jeans, the ones that are so tight that Blaine can see Kurt's religion in them, and he was still able to be limber and graceful as he moved. How was Blaine supposed to ignore that?

"I don't understand why you don't just break up with Berry and make Hummel your main squeeze."

"Because Rachel would start world war three if I tried," Blaine says. "It'd be apocalyptic."

"Hm. Well, there is that. She'd fight tooth and nail to keep you."

"It's getting harder, though," Blaine admits. The cat's already out of the bag and while it's definitely weird knowing that somebody else is aware of his secret, he finds he can't keep his mouth shut on the subject now. "It's getting harder to pretend that I love her and it's getting harder to stay away from Kurt."

He's been so damn patient with all of this and I feel like shit for keeping him on the side, but...I'm just not ready."

"And *that* is why I don't do relationships."

"I thought you said you had a date."

She levels him with a gaze that clearly says, 'Are you fucking serious, bro?'

"Oh," he says flatly, feeling the heat rising to his cheeks. "You meant a date with a girl."

"No, with Obama. *Yes*, with a girl, you idiot."

Ignoring her jibe, Blaine downs the last of his coffee.

"Look, I'm just trying to do a solid and warn you that you're becoming dangerously close to instigating your own rumors. Because if you're not careful, you and Hummel will make the front page of that shitty gossip rag the school calls a newspaper, and you're done."

"I don't want that," Blaine says immediately. "I don't want the truth getting out like that, not before I'm ready."

"Then be careful. That's all I wanted to say."

-

### ***Present***

Blaine heaves a deep breath the moment he finishes his retelling of the events. He looks to Kurt, and Kurt can see the worry in his eyes, like he's afraid Kurt might consider skinning him alive for letting their secret out.

"You were staring at my ass?" Kurt asks, attempting to ease some of Blaine's discomfort.

"That is so *not* the issue here," Blaine scoffs in amusement.

"So she knows," Kurt says with a shrug. "It doesn't sound like she's going to tell anyone. Though, her being a lesbian actually does make a lot of sense. I saw her and Brittany looking pretty cozy at the mall last weekend. Like, cozier than they normally are."

"You don't think she'll accidentally let something slip?"

"No," Kurt says, fairly certain in his answer, "because you know about her. She wouldn't let anything slip, now when you have the same kind of dirt on her. It wouldn't make sense for her to tell you, otherwise."

"I guess," Blaine says. "It just creeps me out, you know? She's in Glee with us and she's sitting across the room and she – she knows. It's weird."

"Is that why you've been skipping rehearsal?" Kurt wonders.

"It made me nervous for a while," Blaine admits. "I kept expecting her to drop the knowledge like a bomb, just to watch the inevitable fallout. She does like to cause some shit."

"I don't think she'll do that this time."

"Probably not. It still worried me, though."

"So, after you talked to her, that's when you started pulling away? Because of all of that stuff she said about being careful?"

"I guess it made me really think about the things I've been doing and the way I've been acting around Rachel. And it – well, it made me think about how much I'm hurting you in all of this."

"Blaine," Kurt says, winding his arms around Blaine's shoulders and pulling him in for a hug, "the only thing that hurts me is seeing *you* look so miserable all the time. I've told you a thousand times – I understand that you're not ready to come out."

"But you have to put up with me sneaking around and spending time with Rachel when I could be spending time with you."

"Then break up with her," Kurt says, pulling back a fraction. "I can only have this conversation so many times, you know? I don't have any other advice to offer."

Blaine sighs, hiding his face in the crook of Kurt's neck. Kurt feels Blaine's lips against his skin in a whisper of a kiss and the familiar fluttering sensation in his stomach returns at the touch. Blaine's lips have the ability to drive him wild, no matter where he presses them.

"I know. I'm sorry. You just – I can't help but think that you deserve better than this. But then I feel guilty because I don't *want* you to be with someone else because *I* want you."

"You've got me," Kurt promises. "I'm not going anywhere."

"You're sure?" Blaine asks, sounding small and scared and his voice makes Kurt want to wrap him up in a blanket and tuck him into bed and keep him safe forever and ever and *god*, he's got it *bad*.

"I swear it."

-

By the time Kurt finally gets home later that night, long after he and Blaine had kissed for a while in the auditorium and after they went to Starbucks for coffee, he's pretty drained. He drops onto the couch to flip through the DVR to see what shows he can catch up on before bed, but then Finn walks in with a massive bowl of popcorn and a case of root beer.

"Hey, man," he says, easing himself onto the couch so that he doesn't jar the bowl of popcorn. "Want some?"

Kurt shakes his head, too tired to reply. Finn shrugs, stuffing a handful of popcorn into his mouth and getting butter all over his face in the process. After ten minutes of listening to his munching and after ten minutes of Finn sitting through *Bridezillas* without any complaint, Kurt knows that something is up.

"And so?" Kurt prompts.

"What?"

"Finn, you can't sit through two minutes of this show without groaning about how stupid it is. I find it difficult to believe that you're actually going to sit through an entire episode without reason. So what do you want?"

"Just some bro time."

"You want to *bro* over Bridezillas?"

"Well I'd rather like, talk or whatever, but you like your show. So yeah."

"Would you stop being cryptic and tell me what you want to talk about, then?"

Finn pops open a can of root beer and hands it to Kurt, who mentally curses his brother as he accepts the soda. Kurt fucking loves root beer. Finn knows he can't turn it down. It's one of his weaknesses.

"You've been gone a while," Finn says. "After Glee, I mean. Where'd you go?"

"What *is* it with you keeping tabs on me? You're my brother, not my dad."

"He's been wondering too, actually. He got home from work earlier and asked if I knew where you've been going lately."

"Just out. I get tired of being at home."

"With Mercedes?"

"Sometimes," Kurt says, though it's a lie. He hasn't had any real substantial time with Mercedes in a while, not beyond a trip or two to the mall, and even though he feels guilty about that, he has other things to worry about right now.

And Finn trying to play detective is one of them.

"Who else?"

"For the love of everything that is good and pure in the world," Kurt says, groaning in annoyance. "Look, I'm tired, okay? I don't need an interrogation tonight."



"I'm just wondering. I don't understand why you won't say who else you're friends with. It's weird, you know?"

"It isn't weird. I happen to not feel the need to spill every secret about my life to everyone."

"...So you have a secret?"

"No, I don't have a secret!" Kurt erupts. "Jesus, what is wrong with you? First that weird talk in the kitchen at the end of Christmas break, then the weird looks in school, and now this. You aren't making any sense."

"It feels like you're like, keeping stuff from me."

"We're not friends, Finn. We've never been friends. You suddenly taking an interest in my life and angling for bro time is peculiar; the fact that I have friends that you don't know about isn't."

"What about Blaine?"

Kurt pauses. He feels his blood run cold. No. Wait. Oh god. What does Finn know about Blaine? Had Santana accidentally let something slip to Quinn who said something to Finn? Is everything falling apart, right here and now? Shit. He's panicking. Why is he panicking? The abrupt whirlwind in his head makes him want to bolt.

"...What about Blaine?" Kurt asks, doing his best to remain calm despite the terror he feels.

"I remember you guys hanging out that one night close to Thanksgiving," Finn says. "Are you friends with him?"

"I was just helping him out with Rachel's present, remember?"

"Yeah, but first Blaine said that you guys were friends and that you texted."

"We text about Glee stuff sometimes. And we've had coffee a few times. We were – we were partners for a project in French class once," Kurt lies, knowing that French is the only class that he and Blaine share that no one else from Glee is taking.

“So you’re not like...close friends?” Finn questions.

“Not – uh – really,” Kurt replies, hating the fact that he stumbles over the answer. “Blaine’s about as close to me as you are on the friendship scale.”

For some bizarre reason, Finn’s face becomes deathly pale and he looks like he’s just seen a freaking ghost.

“What?” Kurt asks warily.

“Uh...nothing. Just – never mind. That’s, um, cool. That you guys are friends, I mean. It’s cool. Weird that you don’t really talk at school, though.”

“It’s not like *you* do that either. I expect he doesn’t for the same reason.”

Finn’s pale face becomes red and he ducks his head in what appears to be embarrassment. He isn’t a bad guy, Kurt knows, and Finn has never been actively cruel to him in any way. The passive sort of cruelty stings sometimes, but Kurt has become used to it. He doesn’t want to make Finn feel bad, but he doesn’t want to perpetuate the idea that Finn’s stupid behavior is right.

“It’s the way it is,” Kurt says. “I don’t want to fight about this. I just want you to leave the situation alone because every time you bring it up, you make it sound like I’m not allowed to have as many friends as you do.”

“I don’t mean to do that, though.”

“I know. But it’s what happens. So just – can you drop it? Please?”

After chewing his lip for a few moments, as if it’s the most difficult request he’s ever heard, Finn finally nods.

“Yeah. Okay.”

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Three days later, Blaine is sweating more than he has in a while, beating the crap out of a punching bag in the locker room while pretending that it’s Dave Karofsky’s face. The guy had returned to school today

after his short suspension and the glares he kept sending Blaine all day just made his skin crawl in an extremely gross kind of way. He wanted to scream. Actually, with every five or so punches, he imagines that it's Finn's face instead. He's been acting so...different these past few days. Sometimes, he'll talk right over Blaine whenever they're in Glee, completely ignoring Blaine's suggestions for songs or dance moves. He acts like Blaine isn't there, or that he isn't worth considering, or that he's just sticky gum on the bottom of his shoe that he can't wait to be rid of. He eyes Blaine strangely in the hallways, staring at him for just a few seconds too long, like he's making calculations in his head. And after Kurt had told Blaine about the conversation he had with his brother a few nights ago, Blaine is officially on high alert. Santana knowing about them is one thing, but if Finn somehow figures this out, it's an entirely different ordeal.

Fifteen more minutes, he tells himself after a particularly forceful punch to the bag, and then he'll shower and meet Rachel for dinner. Maybe he'll be too content from his workout to be very annoyed with her tonight and dinner will go by quickly. After that, he hopes to sneak an hour or so in with Kurt. He read about this nifty thing online, something he can do with his fingers that Kurt might let him try. If Blaine asks nicely, of course. Because Blaine's a nice guy. He just really wants to put his fingers in Kurt's ass.

The door to the locker room swings open.

In walks Finn Hudson, just as tall as ever. He strides over to Blaine without a word at first, stuffing his hands in his pockets as if that makes him appear less intimidating.

It doesn't work. Blaine's throat closes up, fear joining the adrenaline pumping through his veins. Glee rehearsal ended half an hour ago. Why is Finn still here?

"We should talk," Finn says plainly.

Blaine does his very best not to faint.

Or run.

Or puke.

*Why* does this keep happening to him?

## **Part Ten**

Blaine locks his eyes on the punching bag, refusing to see anything other than the smack of his fist against it despite the bile rising in his throat at the sound of Finn's voice.

"I said I think we should talk," Finn says.

"For the past few weeks, you've barely said two words to me," Blaine bites out through clenched teeth. "I'm not at your fucking whim, Finn."

"I think you'll want to listen to what I have to say."

"I *think* I don't really care right now," Blaine returns, landing a sharp punch to the bag.

"I'll stand here as long as it takes," Finn says calmly, "but I can't let you leave here without talking to me first."

"Are you gonna explain why you've been acting like such an ass to me lately? Because that's something I'll talk about."

"If you were standing in my shoes, dude, you'd say you deserved it."

"Jesus, I haven't done *anything* to you! But you – you look at me like I make you *sick*!" Blaine shouts, dropping his arms because he thinks he'll break them if he continues swinging so carelessly. He turns, feeling the fire sizzling in his eyes and hoping he burns Finn with his gaze. "And it's like – shit. I don't even - what is your problem with me, anyway?"

"I've got a few right now," Finn states. "And I think you do, too."

"I don't have any problems, not beyond whatever this is with you."

"Well why don't you just come out of the closet?"

Blaine stops breathing. He feels as if someone smacked him in the stomach with a baseball bat. Finn simply stares at him, pity and sorrow twisting his expression into one Blaine doesn't recognize. He looks pretty tired, actually. Blaine can sympathize. He's exhausted.

But still, he has to fight. He sucks in a breath of air in an attempt to dissolve the dizziness he feels swimming behind his eyes. There's too much at stake now. He's too deep into this lie that he's created for himself and even though every day feels like he's digging another foot for his own grave, he steels himself and offers up a shrug and a blank stare.

"What are you talking about?" he asks.

"That must hurt," Finn says with a similar shrug to Blaine's, "to not be able to admit to everyone how you really feel. I bet it was really hard for Kurt, too, back in the day."

"Look," Blaine says, tugging off one of his gloves in order to flex his fingers. "I honestly don't know what you're talking about."

"I think you do," Finn says. "Most guys would get really angry about this. If I called another guy gay and he wasn't, he'd be pretty pissed. And then he'd probably try to fight me or something."

"Maybe I'm not most guys," Blaine snaps. "Being gay isn't an offensive thing to me. I have nothing to be mad about. But I don't know why you think I'm gay because I'm dating Rachel, in case you haven't noticed. And she's very much a girl."

"I know that. I also know that I saw you kissing my brother in the auditorium after the opening of West Side Story."

At first, all Blaine can do is gawk because Finn is very serious and Blaine *knows* he's serious because yeah, that's definitely something that happened. Blaine remembers it perfectly; he remembers the way Kurt had smelled like his face wash and hairspray and the tiniest dab of his cologne because Kurt doesn't like to overuse it. He remembers how soft Kurt's lips had been against his. He remembers the solid thumping of Kurt's heart beneath his chest where Blaine had placed their hands.

Lately, though, it feels like all of that is slowly slipping away, ready to drift and turn to dust and no matter what he does, he can't stop it. It's like he's standing at the base of solid, brick wall that's a thousand feet high and there's no way to climb over it.

He is well and truly caught now.

How is he supposed to explain this away? Finn saw. He *saw* them. It's not like he can say they were drunk, like at Rachel's party. No, they were alone and in the serene silence of an empty stage and they had kissed, heedless of potential onlookers.

This is why it's so hard for Blaine to be around Kurt at school among all of their friends. His judgment and sense of rational thought just falls by the wayside when Kurt is involved. They were at school and sure, it was long after school hours and they thought they were alone but they can't ever be sure. It's too hard to pretend like he doesn't want to be with Kurt when they're side by side and breathing the same air and maybe touching a little bit because he likes it when they touch, even just a brief encounter of skin, because Blaine feels closer to Kurt than anyone else he's ever met and Kurt is *wonderful* and Blaine is –

Blaine is lost in the world. And slightly broken.

And Finn is staring at him like he knows all of that.

But Blaine still has to lie – he just has to make it a believable lie. And he has to lie because he's too afraid of what might happen if he were to tell the truth instead.

"I thought I was," Blaine says, eyes cutting away from Finn's face because he honestly can't bear to look at him right now.

"...What d'you mean?"

"I thought I was gay," Blaine reiterates. "After we kissed at Rachel's party that one night, I started to think I was. I got really confused for a while because I didn't know if it was because I liked it or if it was because I was drunk."

"What happened?" Finn asks softly, and he sounds so genuine in his concern and it isn't *fair*.

Blaine wants to stomp and scream like a toddler having a temper tantrum. He wants to shout at the sky and ask the great unknown why this is happening to him and he wants to ask why he can't just tell the truth.

"Do you remember that night around Thanksgiving? When Kurt was helping me pick out a present for Rachel?"

"Yeah. I saw you guys on the porch."

"Well, that night I talked to him about it. He was the only one I knew that might understand."

"I don't know," Finn says, slightly uncertain. "I'm not sure Kurt ever thought he was straight."

"It's not like I had anyone else to talk to," Blaine says. "He was the only one who wouldn't think I was crazy or gross."

"I guess. I wouldn't have thought you were gross."

"We're also not all that close," Blaine reminds. Because they're not. Sure, Blaine has joined in with all the other guys when they had game nights at Finn's or Puck's but beyond that, they only ever really hang out when Rachel and Quinn want to do double date things. "You would've understood even less than he did."

Finn shrugs, looking to the floor.

"So I talked about it," Blaine says. "And that night, he walked in on me rehearsing one of the numbers and I...wanted to kiss him. Because I wanted to know."

"And he let you."

"He let me," Blaine echoes. "That's all it took, though."

"And you decided...what?"

"That it was the alcohol," Blaine lies. "Kissing can just be kissing when you're drunk, really. But I'd never kissed a guy before that, so I was confused."

"Wait," Finn says, holding up one of his hands. "So you – he let you kiss him and that's – that's it? You just stop talking to him? You just drop him off your radar? Not cool, dude."

"We're still friends," Blaine says, and it feels good to not have to tell a complete lie. "We hang out sometimes, go for coffee, go for lunch, stuff like that. But you know how people are at school. If they saw me being like, actually friendly with him, they'd take it the wrong way and god only knows what would

come of that. So we keep it quiet. Kind of the same way you do. You talk to Kurt when you're at home, but you barely even look at him when we're at school."

"It's just...easier that way," Finn says, appearing uneasy. "Kurt's – I mean, he's my brother now but it's still – I don't know. People just aren't very nice."

"So you get it, then," Blaine says. "You understand why things are the way they are."

"Yeah, I get it. It still – it's weird."

"What's weird?"

"I was...kind of happy," Finn says. "For Kurt, I mean. I would've been happy that Kurt had someone to make *him* happy, even just for a while."

"Really?"

"Well, yeah. Like I said, he is my brother," Finn says. "But I was mad because I thought you were like, using him or whatever. I thought you were sneaking around behind Rachel's back and cheating on her with him and that's bad enough, you know? I think cheating's pretty stupid. But I think Kurt could do better than being like, somebody's back up plan."

"Y-Yeah," Blaine stammers. "He does deserve better. Kurt is – he's a good guy."

"And Rachel's kind of really super hot right now," Finn adds. "Only an idiot would cheat on her."

"Right," Blaine says, not willing to prolong the conversation because he doesn't want to have to explain anything else. "Glad we, uh, cleared that up then."

"Sorry for being such a douche bag," Finn says, blushing slightly in his apology. "I just – well, you get it."

"It's fine. Talk to me next time, though. Okay? *Before* you decide to hate me."

"Sure thing, man," Finn says with a goofy grin. He claps Blaine hard on the shoulder and even though he's smiling, Blaine feels so *small*.



Finn leaves, whistling to himself like Blaine's world hasn't just cracked in half. Blaine must be a damn good actor because on the inside, he's sobbing at Finn's candid conversation. He drags a hand over his face, not feeling any lines of anxiety on his forehead, and noting the slightly upturned corners of his lips. He probably looks like a normal guy, one who's thinking about all of the awesome things he might do tonight.

Blaine doesn't feel normal at all.

He feels numb.

-

"You told him *what?*"

"I basically said that I thought I was gay after we first kissed at Rachel's party, so I kissed you again just to be sure, and realized that I wasn't."

"Isn't that...the exact opposite of what happened?" Kurt asks through the phone later that evening. The rest of the house is asleep, Finn included, thank god, and Kurt is curled up on his bed in the dark.

"It's not like I could tell him the truth," Blaine says with a sigh. "I thought about telling him that I was helping you practice for an audition or something, but that wouldn't have made any sense. And I figured if I told him something that seemed personal enough, he'd leave it alone."

"Yeah. I guess that makes sense."

"But then he started – started talking about how he thought I was cheating on Rachel with you and keeping you as a backup plan, and about how you deserved better than that. And it – it hurt," Blaine admits. "Because he's right. You deserve more than what I can give you right now."

Kurt stops breathing.

"...If you're breaking up with me, I swear to god, Blaine Anderson," he says firmly. "I will burn all of those comic books you keep hidden in your closet."

"Well that's a low blow."

They both stop speaking for a moment after that because Kurt's too caught up in his own panic and he's sure Blaine is caught up in his decision. Kurt wants to say something. He wants to make this all better with a few magic words and he wants Blaine to not feel so bad about himself anymore. He wants Blaine to be *happy*.

But he knows that he doesn't have the power to right the situation on his own. He can tell Blaine a million and one times that he doesn't mind keeping this a secret and he can tell him that he's still here, ready and willing to wait for the day Blaine is ready to give up the ruse and come out of the closet. None of that, however, can make Blaine do what he isn't yet prepared to do.

"I'm not breaking up with you," Blaine finally says. "How can I when we're not even real boyfriends?"

"You know what I mean," Kurt says.

"I know. But I'm not. I think that I'd go crazy without you, Kurt. It's just that – that everything feels so *hard* right now. And it's like I have to fight every single day just to be *okay* when I know what it would take to make things *great*."

"I wish I could do more to help you," Kurt replies in a whisper. "But all I can really do is be here for you. And maybe kiss you occasionally."

"More than occasionally, I would hope."

"Let's go to Scandals this weekend," Kurt suggests after a beat. "We always have a good time at Scandal's. I'll even be the designated driver so you can get properly drunk."

"I'm not sure if drinking is going to solve this."

"Definitely not. But what's the harm in having one good night out together where we don't have to worry about anything else?"

"I don't know," Blaine says. "I might not be in the best of moods."

"I'll just have to make sure that you are, then."

-

"Best idea *ever*."

Kurt laughs brightly as Blaine continues to hop around to the music. He's so adorable and carefree right now. Kurt wishes he could give this to him every day.

Minus the alcohol, of course.

Scandal's is busy this weekend, more so than usual. They actually had to wait in line at the door until the door man noticed that they were regulars and let them cut to the front with a sly wink as they passed. Now, an hour and a half in, Blaine has already had one too many drinks and is currently drunk-dancing, jumping all around him and yelling the words to YMCA along with the jukebox. As cute as he is, though, his energy isn't so infectious while Kurt is completely sober and sweating buckets.

"I'm going to the bar," he says into Blaine's ear.

"Okay!" Blaine shouts back with a lopsided grin. "Come back soon!"

Kurt kisses his cheek and turns away, winding through the crowd in order to get to the bar. Gina the bartender already has a virgin cocktail for him despite how busy she must be tonight, and he's sure to drop a ten dollar bill in her tip jar. Kurt settles on a barstool, spinning around in order to keep an eye on Blaine. He's too attractive for his own good, really, if the swarm of men that crowd around him after Kurt's departure is any indication. Blaine is clearly too drunk to care. He simply laughs at their attention, his little nose crinkling in amusement as one of the men attempts to give him a twirl.

"Better keep an eye on that one," someone says from a barstool next to him. "You youngsters are like prime real estate in this place."

"I'll be sure to keep that – *Luke*?" Kurt gasps when he finally catches sight of the stranger's face. He looks the same as he did when Kurt met him his first night here, save for the fact that he has apparently allowed his beard to grow out to that degree of sexy-scruffy. It looks good on him. He looks good. He still isn't Kurt's type, but he does look good. "Oh my god, where have you been? We haven't seen you in here in forever!"

"Been a bit preoccupied," Luke says with a broad smile. "Found a forever fellow of my own."

"You – really? Where is he?"

"He's currently attempting to teach your boyfriend how to drop it like it's hot," Luke says, gesturing to the dance floor where a guy who looks *suspiciously* like a guy he might have seen in a gay porno once is trying to teach Blaine the finer points of...dancing.

Not that Kurt watches porn. Not at all.

He clears his throat.

"He's cute," Kurt states. "But Blaine isn't my boyfriend. Well, not technically, anyway."

"Uh oh," Luke trills. "We've got technicalities to deal with. Spill, sweetheart. What's going on?"

"It's...complicated," Kurt sighs.

"From what Gina tells me, you two have been in here a lot, and always with each other."

"It's the only place we can really act like a couple without causing World War Gay."

"...Yeah, I don't follow."

"He's not out yet," Kurt clarifies. "And he's dating a girl at school who is hell bent on affirming her social standing by keeping Blaine as her boyfriend."

"She sounds dangerous."

"She's not a bad person," Kurt explains. "But they've been together for like, two years and Blaine has only known that he's actually gay for a few months now. He's just not ready to give all of that up yet. And I get that, I do, but putting on the act is draining him and I don't know how much longer he's going to last before he gives up. But when he *does* give up, I don't know if he's going to give her up or if – if it's going to be me."

"Well, considering he keeps looking over at you every ten seconds just to make sure you're still here, I get the feeling he won't be giving you up anytime soon."

An eyebrow lifts in curiosity, and Kurt turns his attention back to Blaine. His smile is so big and cheesy, but then he – oh. Luke is right. Every few seconds, he turns his gaze back to the bar, no matter who he's dancing with at the moment. When their eyes lock from across the room, Blaine brightens instantly and offers an excited wave. Kurt raises his hand in acknowledgement, sure to toss him a grin for good measure.

"Boyfriends or not," Luke continues, "the kid's got it bad for you."

"Maybe," Kurt says. "That doesn't change the fact that he's about ten shades of confused right now."

"No," Luke says in understanding, "but I don't think you have to worry about him leaving you. He'll be ready when he's ready. I'm sure you know that, though."

"I do."

"You just gotta be there for him. When he does come out, you might be one of the few people he has to lean on. That's the important part."

"I know. I just hate seeing him suffer."

"That's because you've got a heart the size of your body and a compassion streak a mile and a half wide, blue eyes. Don't get so down with all of this. Life will sort itself out, one way or another."

"Thanks," Kurt says sincerely. "You're the first person I've really had the chance to talk to about all of this."

"Anytime," Luke says, lifting his beer as if to toast Kurt. "Now what're you drinking? I'll buy you and your boy your next round."

"Oh, no," Kurt says. "I'm not drinking. Tonight is for him. I'm designated driver."

"Why do you need a designated driver? There's a motel right up the road."

Kurt blushes, a fierce shade of red coloring the apples of his cheeks, and he scrunches his nose. Sure, he's seen the motel. They pass it every single time they arrive and leave the bar. But he's never actually

*considered* taking their activities to a cheap motel, not when they have cars and Blaine's occasionally empty house.

"You can even pay by the hour," Luke says with a wink.

"Oh my god," Kurt groans because *of course* you can.

"Come on," Luke says, elbowing Kurt gently in the side. "Live a little, blue eyes. Get drunk, dance with your boy, and walk to the motel. Gina won't mind if you leave your car in the lot overnight. Actually, I'm sure she condones it."

"Will they even give us a room?" Kurt wonders, unable to believe that he's asking at all. "We look like we're fifteen."

"You got in here, didn't you?"

"Only because this place has horrendous security and Gina likes to play matchmaker to underage gays."

"Who cares?" Luke returns, shrugging and waving Gina over to their end of the bar. "Just have a couple of drinks and go get naked together. You know you want to. Your half-boyfriend isn't the only one that needs to unwind tonight. Hell, *I'll* pay for the room if it means you'll get laid."

"You are terrible."

"Gina!" Luke calls. "Something strong for Kurt and his boy! They've gotta get drunk and go have sex!"

Kurt buries his face in his hands in embarrassment, but everyone nearby seems to cheer and holler. Gina claps loudly and gives a sharp, celebratory whistle.

And then –

"What's goin' on?"

Blaine is there.

“Apparently I’m being plied with liquor so I can take you to a cheap motel and screw you all night.”

Blaine blinks back quickly, Kurt’s words taking a few seconds to process in his mind.

“Really?” he asks.

“Yes.”

With a nod, Blaine looks to Gina who has appeared right behind them and says just one thing:

“Make his a double.”

-

The night air cools Kurt’s drunk-warm cheeks as they stumble out of the bar and down the road. He has his arm wrapped securely around Blaine’s shoulders, while Blaine’s is looped around his waist. They giggle against each other’s necks, and every once in a while they press sweet, messy kisses to each other’s lips.

“I’m so glad we came out tonight,” Blaine says happily as he tosses his free hand up and out, as if to demonstrate the beauty of everything around them. “It’s perfect! Everything is perfect. Especially you. But you’re always perfect. Did you know?”

“You’re crazy,” Kurt responds as he laughs.

“I’m not crazy. I’m *drunk*. There’s a difference.”

They kiss their way to the motel, and Kurt is only faintly worried about the cars passing so close to them on the road. When they reach what is considered the lobby of the place, the attendant barely looks up when they enter. Kurt hands him the fifty dollar bill that Luke had slipped into his pocket earlier and the guy behind the desk hands over a key without even asking for their names or identification.

“Check out’s at noon,” he mumbles, eyes never leaving his magazine.

Kurt and Blaine laugh behind their hands as they rush to the room that matches the number on their key. This is absolutely ridiculous, Kurt thinks as he tries for the second time to unlock the door of their room.

They're going to spend the night in a *motel*. He finally pushes the door open and they stagger inside, cackling loudly when they catch sight of the décor. It's just about as bad as they'd expected and equally cliché.

But they're alone and the bed is pretty freaking huge and he has lube in his pocket.

Because Luke-Nice-Guy is an *enabler*.

"I can't believe we're doing this," Blaine says with a grin as he clutches Kurt by his shirt and tugs him closer. "I never thought I'd get drunk and have sex in a cheap motel."

"Neither did I," Kurt says, his smile just as big. "But it's just one night. And we deserve to have fun for a night."

"Agreed," Blaine says. "Now shut up and kiss me."

Kurt pushes Blaine back onto the bed and crawls over him, dragging his thigh between Blaine's legs and pressing where he's already half hard in his jeans.

"I can do *so* much better than that," Kurt says, pitching his voice low.

Below him, Blaine sucks in a sharp breath. The alcohol in his bloodstream suppresses his inhibitions and he feels so free, like they can just take what they want and not worry about the morning or the people beyond the door. He wants to make Blaine writhe and moan, he wants him to pull him apart with his tongue and his hands and he wants Blaine to do the same to him. The rest of the world and their real lives seem like some hazy dream that's lost in the back of Kurt's mind, and he's content to leave it there for a few hours because he wants *this*.

He dips his head down to lick a long line over Blaine's throat, tongue on salty, sweaty skin until he reaches Blaine's mouth. Instead of kissing him, he laps at Blaine's pretty, parted lips as Blaine sighs, lifting his head in an attempt to get a proper kiss.

"Fuck, you're such a tease," Blaine groans, thrusting his hips up against Kurt's thigh.

Kurt hums his agreement before trailing his lips over to Blaine's ear. He licks at the shell and Blaine squeezes his back, fingers clawing at his shirt in an effort to feel skin.



“N-Naked,” Blaine stutters as he shivers. “We need to be naked.”

Not even willing to argue the point, Kurt scrambles off of Blaine’s lap in order to rid himself of his clothing. Blaine does the same. There is no show of finesse, no slow reveal; only tugging and stripping as quickly as possible because there is no time for clothing. He needs to feel Blaine’s skin against his, needs to feel his dick pressed against the dip of his hip. He very nearly trips when he tries to peel off his jeans and underwear at the same time, but that’s okay because Blaine gets his shirt tangled around his head in his haste to be naked.

When their clothes are finally strewn about the room, Kurt reaches for Blaine once more. Blaine grabs Kurt by his face, hands grasping the side of his head as he pulls him down for a hard, hot kiss, tongue immediately darting out to lick inside of Kurt’s mouth.

Kurt moans in response, aligning their hips just so before pressing Blaine down into the bed with his body and rocking slightly, barely enough to elicit any real friction.

“*Kurt*,” Blaine says, but it comes out as a growl.

“What d’you need?” Kurt asks as he presses a few wet kisses to Blaine’s jaw.

“Just – god, just touch me. Touch me everywhere.”

Kurt buries his face in Blaine’s neck and shifts just enough to be able to drag his fingernails down Blaine’s naked chest. Blaine hisses at the sensation, arching up into Kurt’s touch. His hiss turns into a whine, however, when Kurt wraps his hand around his dick.

“Yes,” Blaine sighs in relief, tossing his head back. “God, yes.”

“Tell me,” Kurt whispers into Blaine’s ear, “do you think about me? Do you think about me when you do this to yourself?”

Blaine’s mouth drops open, he squeeze his eyes shut, and Kurt pulls a long moan from his throat with a single twist of his wrist.

“Do you?” he prompts again.

"Y-Yes," Blaine admits in a strangled voice. "Christ, all the time."

"Do you think about me sucking you?" Kurt asks softly. "Do you think about *fucking me*?"

"Oh, *god*," Blaine replies, which isn't really an answer to Kurt's question.

"Tell me," he says again.

"Yeah," Blaine says before licking his dry lips. "Yeah, I think about fucking you."

Kurt releases his dick, his hand drifting down to cup Blaine's balls instead. He rolls them gently in his palm and fingers as he sucks on Blaine's neck, biting ever so slightly before soothing his skin with his teeth.

"What about when you're with her?" Kurt asks darkly, liquor loosening his lips. "Do you think about me when you kiss her? Do you think about fucking me when you're pretending to be in love with her?"

Blaine doesn't answer right away, instead jerking his hips up against the empty space between their bodies in desperate need of friction against his dick. Kurt claws at Blaine's thigh, scratching at the skin and feeling Blaine's strong muscles clench beneath his hand in response. He spreads his legs eagerly, and Kurt grabs at his inner thigh.

"Do you?" he asks, pressing his own dick against Blaine's hip. "Because I think you do."

"F-Fuck," Blaine stammers, chest heaving as he pants. He turns his head to nuzzle his nose against Kurt's cheek and press a kiss to his temple.

"Do you?" Kurt asks one last time.

"Yes," Blaine breathes. "She – she kisses me and I think about you. Wish it was you, always want *you*. G-God, always."

His strong arms drag Kurt back down until their bodies are pressed together from their ankles all the way up to their shoulders. He kisses Kurt possessively, like *Kurt's* the one with a girlfriend, hands clutching Kurt's back, limbs trembling as if he's going to come unglued at any second.

"Please," Blaine begs in between lips and tongues and teeth, "*please*."

“Tell me what you want,” Kurt says.

“You – I want – I-”

“I’ll give you anything,” Kurt tells him, his hips jerking at the truth of his own words. “Anything you want.”

“Your – your fingers,” Blaine whimpers as he squeezes Kurt’s ass. “Want – I want your fingers in me.”

As soon as Blaine’s words drift through the thick cloud of lust impairing most of Kurt’s rational thoughts, he pauses. Blaine is staring directly up at him with wide, dark eyes and he looks like he’s about to unravel if Kurt so much as kisses him again. It seems like everything about tonight is unexpected.

“You do?” Kurt asks blithely. “You want me to finger you?”

“Yes,” Blaine says, breathy and desperate, reaching for Kurt’s wrist as if he needs to demonstrate his point. “Will you?”

“I – yeah, of course I will. If that’s really what you want.”

“What makes you think I don’t really want it?”

“I just figured that you were, you know, the one who actually thought he was straight at some point so you’d always want to top, uh, exclusively. I didn’t think you’d ever be into anything like...that.”

“I wasn’t,” Blaine says, thumb tracing the inside of Kurt’s wrist as a smirk settles on Blaine’s lips. “Until I did it to myself. I’ve since reconsidered.”

It’s hard to put all of this new information together at once, given Kurt’s drunken state. When he finally does and the image swirls into being in Kurt’s mind, of Blaine spread out, completely alone in his bed, with his fingers deep in his own ass, he almost falls over. Blaine seems to realize what he’s done and pulls Kurt in for a deep kiss, tongue lapping at Kurt’s teeth.

“So,” he whispers against Kurt’s mouth, “will you finger me?”

“Yes. Yeah. Yes,” Kurt says at once. “Just – hold on.”

He leaps off the bed and fumbles around, seeking out his jeans among their clothing scattered all around the foot of the bed. He reaches into the pocket when he finds them and withdraws the small bottle of lubricant that Luke had slid into his hands beneath the bar before they left. Who just – just carries around bottles of this stuff?

Considering what he’s about to have the opportunity to do, he really shouldn’t look a gift horse in the mouth at this point.

“How-”

“Luke,” Kurt says before Blaine can finish asking the question.

Blaine stares at Kurt’s face, then looks to the bottle in his hands, and then looks back up into Kurt’s eyes.

“Well, get over here, then,” he says.

Kurt presses Blaine into the bed once more, kissing him fiercely and grinding their hips together for good measure.

“Never thought I’d get to do this to you,” he admits, clutching Blaine’s bare hips with a strong, relentless grip.

“Want it so bad,” Blaine says, head lolling back against the bed. “*Please*, Kurt.”

Leaning onto one of his elbows for balance, Kurt flicks open the tiny bottle of lube and squeezes a good amount onto a few fingers. Blaine simple stares as he does it, his sweaty chest heaving against Kurt’s as he waits. Kurt resettles himself off to the side just slightly and he knocks Blaine’s thighs apart with his knee. Obliging, Blaine lifts one of his legs up and pulls it to his chest, baring himself for Kurt’s hand and fingers.

“How-” Kurt pauses to swallow, needing to moisten his dry mouth and throat, “how many did you use when you did it to yourself.”

“Two.”

God, the image of Blaine fucking himself down against his own fingers is entirely too much to handle right now.

“Tell me if it hurts,” Kurt says.

Blaine nods and Kurt slides his hand between their bodies, flexing his wrist so that the base of his palm drags down Blaine’s chest and brushes over his dick, against his balls, and then he slides one, slick finger over Blaine’s hole. Blaine gasps above him, already lifting his hips in the direction of Kurt’s fingers, seeking more, and Kurt hasn’t even *done anything yet*.

It feels like Blaine wants this more than Kurt has ever fantasized about actually doing it to him.

“Please,” Blaine whines, fingers curling forcefully around Kurt’s bicep. “In me, now, please, please, *now*.”

Swallowing hard and willing himself not to come against Blaine’s hip, he swirls his finger around Blaine’s hole before finally pressing the tip of it inside, only barely breaching the little ring of muscle. Blaine’s lips part as he sucks in a breath. As Kurt pushes his finger in further, he barely has time to think about how *hot* and *tight* Blaine is here because he’s too busy studying each and every expression that passes over Blaine’s face; there’s a hint of pain, but it’s overshadowed by the way his lower lip is caught between his teeth and the way he throws his head back when Kurt’s finger is finally sheathed, down to the knuckle.

“Holy shit,” Kurt breathes, in complete awe of the boy below him. “You’re beautiful like this.”

“P-Please,” Blaine begs for about the hundredth time that night. “I – you have to-”

Kurt takes the cue and withdraws his finger without fully removing it, and when he presses back in, Blaine’s moan is so deep and long and low and Kurt has *fallen in love*.

How is he ever supposed to give this up?

Forcing his emotions back into the lock box where they belong in his mind, he focuses on the slick glide of his finger in Blaine’s ass. Blaine clenches around him like a vice every time he pulls out, like he’s afraid Kurt won’t push it in again, but then he begins to rock, ever so slightly, and fucks himself on Kurt’s finger.

“C-Can – will you – can I have two?” Blaine stammers, clearly too far gone to worry about complete sentences.

You can have whatever you want, Kurt thinks to himself.

Outwardly, he nods and presses a second finger inside, slowly adding to the stretch and burn he knows that Blaine must feel.

“Oh, *god*,” Blaine groans below him, clinging to Kurt’s arm with trembling hands. “It’s – fuck, you’re – it’s perfect.”

Kurt dips his head down for a kiss, claiming Blaine’s lips with his own and swallowing the whines and whimpers that barely make it out of Blaine’s throat as he continues to pump his fingers in and out of Blaine’s wonderfully tight ass. The room is filled with fractions of sound, from the wet slap of Kurt’s fingers, to the intermittent squeak of the mattress springs as Blaine rocks himself against those fingers, to the muffled moans caught between their lips and the occasional huff of breath that escapes through their noses.

And then he has an idea.

He stills his fingers in Blaine’s ass, though he’s sure to press them in deep when he pauses, and breaks their frantic kiss.

“What’re you – no, come back,” Blaine says, attempting to grab at Kurt’s shoulders in order to pull him back up.

But Kurt continues his journey south, heedless of Blaine’s pleading. He kisses his way down, teeth grazing one of Blaine’s nipples, and tongue swirling around Blaine’s bellybutton as he goes.

“What – what-”

“Shh,” Kurt breathes when he’s finally crouched over Blaine’s dick.

And that’s when he licks at the head of it, swallowing the drop or pre-come he finds there, before he begins moving his fingers again. Blaine’s hands fly down to tangle him Kurt’s hair. As he pushes his fingers into Blaine’s ass, he slides his wet mouth over Blaine’s dick and sucks until his cheek hollow out.

*"Jesus fuck Christ, yes,"* Blaine swears above him, his other leg joining the first where it's curled up against his chest to allow Kurt more access.

He's completely spread open now, and Kurt is able to suck him and finger-fuck him freely. It's obvious that Blaine doesn't know if he wants to thrust into Kurt's mouth or rock down against his fingers, so Kurt presses his arm down against Blaine's hips, flat and firm and spanning from bone to bone. He holds him against the bed while he continues to suck him in time with the pace of his fingers. He can really only fit the head and an inch or two of Blaine's dick in his mouth, but it seems to be enough because Blaine is moaning so *loudly* that Kurt knows everyone else in this motel will be able to hear him.

Kurt's own dick is heavy and hard against his lap, aching with the need to be touched, but he ignores his own plight in favor of making Blaine scream.

"K-Kurt," Blaine pants, fingers twisting almost painfully in Kurt's hair, "I'm – baby, I'm gonna – *oh my god.*"

Blaine comes right then, hard enough to curl in on himself as he does, and spills into Kurt's warm mouth. His ass clenches around Kurt's fingers and fuck, Kurt can feel it when he comes; he can feel the sweet, erotic pulsing of Blaine's orgasm as his body automatically squeezes and releases, squeezes and releases, and it's so unbelievably intimate that it feels like a dream.

Eventually, Blaine relaxes back into the bed and Kurt releases his dick and slips his fingers out of Blaine's ass. When Kurt sits up on his knees, Blaine is gazing at him with such open adoration that Kurt's heart stutters in his ribcage. But now, Kurt doesn't have anything to focus on, and the heavy ache of his own erection causes him to whimper. He reaches between his legs and begins to stroke himself because he *needs* to be touched and he *needs* to come. It feels like he's been hard for hours.

"Come here," Blaine says, scooting up on the bed until his neck and shoulders are propped up against the pillows.

Kurt crawls and follows, but then Blaine grabs him by the waist and forces him to straddle his chest. When Blaine licks his lips and Kurt finally catches up with his intentions, he moans and spreads his legs wide. Blaine splays his palms and fingers against the muscled flesh of Kurt's ass and guides his hips forward. Kurt uses his hand to align his dick with Blaine's open mouth. Just as Blaine sucks the tip inside, Kurt braces himself with both hands on the headboard and gives a few shallow, experimental thrusts.

He's *fucking* Blaine's *mouth*, he realizes.

At first, he's too afraid of hurting Blaine or making him gag, but then Blaine forces him in deeper with the help of his hands on Kurt's ass.

"Blaine," he breathes, "this is – I'm not gonna be able to–"

And Blaine just groans around his dick like he's hungry for it. His fingers squeeze Kurt's ass, sure to leave behind tiny claw marks. Kurt fucks into his mouth at quick, steady pace and Blaine's tongue is pressed just *so* and he's been hard for at least an hour, ever since they left the bar, and Blaine is letting Kurt do this to him and he let Kurt finger him and begged for it to happen and maybe one day Blaine will let him fuck him with his dick instead of his fingers and – and *fuck*.

He comes in less than five minutes, comes in Blaine's mouth, on his tongue, on his chin, and it even drips down Blaine's neck.

For a few seconds, he doesn't exactly remember where he is or what he's doing, but then he comes back to himself and looks down to see Blaine's lips and chin covered in his come.

"Shit, I'm sorry," he says, climbing off of Blaine's body.

"I really *don't* mind," Blaine says.

With his eyes locked on Kurt's, he swipes his hand through the come on his chin before bring it to his mouth, licking his own skin clean.

If Kurt hadn't just come a minute ago, he'd turn Blaine over and fuck him into the mattress until morning. Instead, he watches Blaine clean himself until most of Kurt's come is in his mouth instead of all over his face, and then he hurries into the tiny bathroom. He returns with a wet cloth and cleans Blaine properly before tossing it aside, flicking off the light, and kicking the shabby comforter to the foot of the bed. They curl up under the sheets. Kurt purposefully ignores the chiding voice in the back of his head that tells him this mattress probably isn't the cleanest, but he's still too drunk and now too sated to give a damn.

He snuggles close and rests his head against Blaine's chest, draping an arm over his middle.

"Tonight was perfect," Blaine says softly, carding his fingers through Kurt's mussed hair.



“It really was,” Kurt agrees.

“Goodnight, Kurt.”

“Mmm,” Kurt hums in response. “Night, Blaine.”

The alcohol saps them of their energy in a way that even sex can’t, and their heavy eyelids fall shut. With lazy limbs, full hearts, and soft smiles of their faces, they succumb to sleep.

-

When the sun peeks through the slight crack in the curtains covering the window, it’s bright enough to drag Kurt back into the land of the conscious, groaning in frustration as he squints against the light. It takes him a moment to remember where he is, and when he realizes why he isn’t in his own bed, the memories of last night come rushing back into his mind all at once.

Right, they went to Scandal’s. And he ran into Luke. And then he got drunk. And they got a motel room. And Blaine let Kurt put his fingers in his ass.

Wow.

Even though his mouth is disgustingly dry and feels like something died on his tongue, he has to grin into the morning sun because *wow*.

He rolls over to see Blaine’s head on the pillow next to his, hair a mess and snoring slightly. It kind of scares Kurt that he could get used to this; Blaine naked and asleep at his side, a boy to warm his bed, a boy to kiss before he sleeps.

It would be a perfect view if the bed didn’t smell like dust and the room wasn’t so...gross.

With a quick glance to the clock on the bedside table, Kurt sees that it’s nearly ten in the morning. He vaguely remembers the lobby attendant telling him that check out is at noon, but they probably shouldn’t overstay their welcome. He’d texted his dad last night to tell him that he’d be staying the night at Mercedes’ and he doesn’t want to push his luck with the lie.

“Blaine,” he says softly, giving his shoulder a gentle shake. “Blaine.”

Blaine mumbles something unintelligible, but then he cracks an eye open and glares at Kurt.

“Sleep,” he says flatly.

“It’s almost ten,” Kurt says. “We still have to walk back to the bar and get my car.”

“Sleep.”

“No sleep,” Kurt says, suppressing a snort. “Time to get up.”

“But *sleep*,” Blaine groans, burying his face in the pillow.

He pauses. He lifts his head. He looks to Kurt.

“Why does my pillow smell *stale*?”

“Because we got drunk and had sex in a sleazy motel room. Remember?”

“Oh,” Blaine says, scrunching up his face. After a beat, he gives a toothy grin. “*Oh*.”

“You remember now, don’t you?”

“I do,” Blaine says happily before propping himself up on his elbows. “It was awesome.”

“Yeah?” Kurt asks warily, sitting and pulling his knees up beneath the sheet.

“Definitely.”

“So, you’re not – um, all those things I said. You’re not upset?”

“What? Upset about what?”

“I’m sure there’s a cheating handbook somewhere,” Kurt explains. “And I’ll bet there’s an entire chapter dedicated to not bringing up your lover’s girlfriend during sex.”

“What’re you – oh,” Blaine says slowly. “When you were asking me if I thought about fucking you when I kissed her?”

Kurt flushes bright red. He hangs his head in embarrassment.

“Yes. That.”

“Why would I be upset?” Blaine wonders. “It was the truth.”

“It – what? It is?”

“Well, yeah. The only way I can even pretend to be into her when she kisses me anymore is to think of you. Though it’s not like we’ve been having super intense make out sessions as of late.”

“You haven’t?” Kurt asks in confusion. “But I thought you were around her all the time.”

“I am,” Blaine says. “I try to steer clear of the lip locking, though.”

“You don’t think she’ll realize something’s, you know, off?”

“We’ve been together for two years and we’ve never gone past making out,” Blaine reminds. “Our relationship isn’t exactly one based on that kind of intimacy.”

“Oh. Right.”

“To answer your question, though – no. It didn’t upset me. In the heat of the moment, it was actually really hot.”

If it’s even physically possible, Kurt blushes harder.

“Don’t you go all shy on me now,” Blaine says, shuffling over to lean up and press a kiss to Kurt’s naked shoulder. “You had your fingers up my ass. The time for shy has passed, darling.”

“Are you sore?” Kurt asks, suddenly remembering the discomfort he always feels the next day after he does it to himself.

“Yup,” Blaine says happily. “And I don’t even care.”

“You’re sure?”

“I’m more concerned about the fact that we actually *slept* in this bed. I’m going to take like, three showers when I get home.”

-

Monday morning dawns far too early for Kurt’s liking. His Sunday had passed without incident; all he did was shower and do homework. Even Finn failed to make an appearance and that, in itself, had been strange. He’d flirted with Blaine via text message for most of the day, so he can at least call that a win.

He’s running late today, though, which means he didn’t have time to stop for coffee on the way to school, so his brain isn’t completely awake yet. As such, there’s nothing in his system to prepare him for the two tests he has today and the act he always has to put on around Blaine at school. He sighs to himself and pulls open one of the main doors to enter McKinley.

As soon as the door closes behind him, he knows something is dreadfully wrong.

It feels as if the entire world stops, tilts, and zooms in on him and him alone. He feels the familiar burn of judgmental stares on his face, and he freezes in his tracks when he realizes that they *are* staring. *Everyone* is staring.

And they’re all staring directly at him without shame, not even attempting to hide their scrutiny. His stomach twists dangerously and he swallows down his fear. It takes every last bit of strength and courage in his body just to move his feet again, but he does continue walking towards his locker. As he passes, whispers break out in abundance and everyone chatters behind their hands, their textbooks, and what appears to be the school newspaper.

Suddenly, Mercedes is there and holding a school paper of her own.

“Why didn’t you *tell* me?” she asks in angry, hushed tones, eyes darting to gossiping passersby. “I thought we were best friends.”

“What?” he asks. “You are my best friend.”

"Then why am I finding out about all of this at the same time as everyone else?"

"...Okay. I woke up late, I have no caffeine in my system, I just got here about thirty seconds ago, and I honestly have *no* idea what you're talking about."

At that, Mercedes' eyes widen in horror.

"You haven't-" she lowers her voice, "you haven't seen the paper yet?"

"Since when do you read the school newspaper?" Kurt asks. "You know it's all gossip and lies and blind items."

"It's a bit more believable when there are multiple pictures of your best friend hanging outside a sleazy motel with Blaine Anderson."

Kurt can feel the color leave his face. He stares at her with large, fearful eyes, not even bothering to blink as she holds up the paper for his benefit.

There, littering the front page, are half a dozen pictures of them outside of the motel they'd been at this weekend. There's one of them walking into the lobby, one of them walking out, a couple of them kissing, and another of them at the door of their room with drunk, happy smiles on their faces. It's all there, quite literally, in black and white. Kurt can make out their forms and faces and expressions perfectly. No mistakes, no photo editing, only facts.

The article below the largest picture, one of them with their arms around each other and kissing, reads:

### ***Scandal Near Scandal's?***

*McKinley's resident gay, Kurt Hummel, was seen snuggling up to Blaine Anderson outside of the American Family motel. Despite the misleading name, the American Family motel is a notorious location for gay hookups given its quarter mile displacement from Scandal's, the well known gay bar in west Lima. The couple stumbled into a room around one in the morning this past weekend, holding onto each other and kissing passionately (yes, on the lips!). While Kurt Hummel is known to be single, Blaine Anderson is openly dating the school's queen of show choir, Miss Rachel Berry. Watch out, Rachel! It looks like your boyfriend needs to get his facts **straight!***

When he finishes reading the short article, Kurt chokes down a terrified sob and wishes he could disappear.

This is *disastrous*.

And then it gets implausibly worse.

Because Blaine walks in.

## Part Eleven

There is a split second, a fraction of a moment just after Blaine walks into the school where he looks happy. His smile is broad and he glows as he soaks up the newness of the day. It reminds Kurt of the way Blaine smiles at him when they're naked and pressed together on a bed, when they're out of breath and perfectly, wonderfully content to look at each other without trying to hide their emotions or pretend like their promise of 'one more night' should actually be upheld.

And then it's gone.

As if someone had slapped any semblance of peace or joy from his small body, his smile drops. His golden eyes dart around rapidly, taking in the glares from their peers as he stops just inside the door. They aren't even whispering anymore. Instead, they stare at him, dead on, and no one offers any explanation. Blaine swallows and Kurt notes the way he shifts on the spot, just barely, from leg to leg, like he's afraid to move but he's more afraid to stand still.

He looks so fragile and nervous, like a baby animal caught in a trap, caged and put on display before slaughter, and Kurt is stuck. He has no idea if he should walk over to Blaine and tell him what's going on or if he should remain at his locker and try not to perpetuate the rumors any more than necessary.

But Blaine's just standing there, hands clutching at the strap of his bag so tightly that Kurt can tell his fingernails are cutting into his skin. His shoulders hunch slightly, as if maybe he can disappear and no one will take notice of him anymore.

Kurt wants to *cry*.

"This isn't a zoo, you *assholes*!"

Quite suddenly, Santana appears, throwing her arms up as she strides down the hallway with purpose. She sneers at students as she passes, half willing them to start an argument because she's clearly ready to beat someone into ground.

"Pick your jaws off the floor and keep walking!" she shouts.

People begin to scatter like a nest of disturbed roaches. Just as she's about to pass Kurt, she grabs him by the collar of his shirt and tugs him after her. Kurt offers up a squeak in protest, but then she drags him towards Blaine and grabs him by the arm and forces them both through the doors and out of the school.

"This is not how I wanted to spend my morning," she states when they're finally outside and beyond the eyes of their classmates. "But there's nothing for it now."

"What's going on?" Blaine asks nervously, eyes darting to Kurt for a second. "Why – why was everyone staring?"

"Remember how you were worried about the truth getting out?" Santana asks, sure to put air quotes around the word truth. "Well guess what? It's *out*."

"What – but – *th-that* truth?" Blaine stutters in a panic. "About – about-"

"About you and Hummel sneaking off to screw in some sleazy motel this weekend?" Santana drawls impatiently. "Yeah, that truth."

Blaine's face takes on a sickly pale hue, and he looks like he's about to faint.

"How do you know about-"

"The whole school knows," Santana states, snatching the newspaper from Kurt that he had taken from Mercedes and shoving it into Blaine's hands. "You made the front page, boys. Congrats."

With shaky fingers, Blaine unfolds the paper to peer down in horror at the Muckraker. His eyes grow large as his lips part in a strangled, futile moan of despair. He scans the page, taking in the photographic evidence that had clearly fallen into the worst possible hands.

"But who – who would do this?"

"Jacob Ben Isreal's been parading around all morning," Santana reveals. "He's showing everyone the other pictures that are still on his digital camera that never made it into the paper, just in case anyone decided to doubt the truth of the whole thing."



"Why, though?" Blaine asks softly, and Kurt can see the thin, glistening sheen of tears welling up in his big owl-eyes. "Why would he do something like this?"

"Because he's a stalking little *rodent* without a life of his own," Santana says. "He doesn't really need much of a motive to be a prick."

A single tear slips down Blaine's cheek and Kurt has to curl his hand around his bag in order to physically stop himself from reaching up to wipe it away. Blaine attempts to take a deep breath, but it comes out as a shudder, and he tries again.

"I don't – I don't know what to do," Blaine admits in a soft, pained voice. "I don't know what to do."

Santana's face softens. She places a hand on Blaine's arm.

"I'm sorry," she says. "I really am."

Blaine lowers his head and Kurt can only tell that he's sobbing by the tell tale shaking of his shoulders. Santana turns her gaze to Kurt. She says nothing, but she eyes him with purpose. It isn't a hard, vengeful look, but she is clearly telling him to fix this.

Because they both know that Blaine won't be able to.

And then she turns around and walks back into the school, leaving them alone.

Kurt looks back to Blaine, and that's when he knows he's at a loss. He doesn't know how to be the strong one, not with all of this. He still doesn't know if he should reach for Blaine and attempt to comfort him, or if that would just make things worse. Blaine won't want anything to do with him now. Because Kurt has *ruined* him. He ruined every good thing that Blaine had. He's ruined Blaine's relationship with Rachel, he's ruined Blaine's popularity and social standing, and he's ruined *them*. He never should have let himself fall into this. It should have been one more night. It should have been one last night. They shouldn't have kissed again or talked again or *anything* again.

Because if it had only been the once, they wouldn't be here right now. The entire school wouldn't know about them and things would be just fine.

Well, things would be just fine for Blaine. Kurt would probably be torturing himself everyday because, even now, he knows that he would have wanted Blaine even more after that first night at Scandal's.

But he has to make this right because Blaine doesn't deserve any of this.

"I'll – I'll tell them that it was me," Kurt says, his voice not nearly as strong as he wants it to be. "I'll tell them that I – that I made you come out with me. And I'll tell them that I got you drunk and that I made you come to the motel with me and that you were too drunk to even tell where you were or who you were with."

Blaine's reddened eyes find his.

"*What?*" he asks.

"They already treat me like I'm some kind of predatory gay," Kurt explains, making himself sick as he even considers this. "To them, I'm the one with the disease. Not you."

"Kurt-"

"It's – it'll be fine," Kurt says, still attempting to convince himself. "It's only a few more months and then we'll graduate and I'll be out of here. None of this will matter after graduation, you know? It – it'll be hard to tell my dad, because I know Finn will get to him first, and he'll think I was acting out because I was – I was lonely or something and he might start looking at me like I'm not his son but I – I'll do whatever it takes to make sure that no one knows the truth about-"

"Kurt," Blaine says again, and at some point he'd placed his hands on Kurt's shoulders, and now he's giving them a firm shake. "*Stop it.*"

"But you-"

"I would *never* let you do something like that," Blaine states, even though he's still crying. "Never. Do you understand?"

"But what are we supposed to do?" Kurt asks, feeling completely helpless. "They know, Blaine. Everyone knows. *Rachel* knows."

"I know, I know," Blaine says, wiping at his splotchy, tear-stained face. "I can't – maybe I should just go home. Maybe we both should."

"I don't...think it's going to be any easier tomorrow," Kurt tells him. "We'd just be postponing the inevitable."

"The way they were – they were looking at me," Blaine whimpers. "It was like I was – like I was going to *infect* them."

"I know," Kurt whispers.

"Is that how it is?" Blaine asks. "Is that how it is for you every day?"

Blaine is looking at him, silently begging him to ease the pain. But Kurt can't do that. This isn't the lie they've been living for the past few months anymore. Blaine has practically been shoved out of the closet and things might actually get really bad now. Kurt can't lie about this because there's no way he can protect Blaine from a world littered with judgmental bigots.

"You learn to ignore it," Kurt says flatly, dropping his eyes to the ground.

"Kurt," Blaine breathes in response, and he sounds heartbroken.

He throws himself at Kurt, clinging desperately as he continues to cry and shiver in fear. Kurt can feel his own sob threaten to escape, but this isn't about him. Everything is about to change for Blaine, whether he likes it or not, and Kurt had promised to be here for him when he came out. It's not exactly how Kurt had envisioned their relationship coming to light, but the secret has been told and there's nothing left to do but try and wade through it and do their level best to keep their heads above water in the process.

The only flaw in all of this, though, is that Kurt has no idea if Blaine will even *want* his help, not after he's already ruined everything else in Blaine's life. It hurts to consider, but he feels like he has to tread carefully now in order to make sure that he doesn't screw anything else up.

"Maybe I should go," Kurt says. "If I'm not here, they might not be so harsh."

"Please don't go," Blaine whispers against his shoulder.

"I just – I've already messed up so much for you," Kurt tries to explain. "I think it'll do more damage if we do anything together."

Blaine sucks in a sharp gasp of air, and he pulls away to stare at Kurt in disbelief.

"You don't – you don't want to be with me?" he asks.

"Of course I do," Kurt assures, cupping Blaine's face with a strong hand. "God, don't even think that I don't want that. But things are going to get really difficult. And I feel like I just make everything worse by being here. I figured you'd want to – you know, part ways for a while so you can figure everything out."

"That is the opposite of what I want," Blaine states firmly, curling his fingers around Kurt's arms.

"But it's been so hard for you to deal with all of this when no one knew," Kurt says. "I don't want to mess anything else up for you."

"I can't do *any* this without you," Blaine says.

"But-"

"I almost broke up with you over the phone the other night," Blaine reveals. "When I was telling you about the talk I had with Finn in the locker room? I almost ended it."

"Then why didn't you?"

"Everything sucked," Blaine attempts to explain. "It felt like my entire world was crumbling down all around me and I thought I – I thought I was losing everything. I didn't know how to handle it. I didn't know why I was holding onto you so tightly and I didn't understand why I didn't let you go so you could find someone else who could do better, someone who could give you everything without having to hide." He pauses, a self-deprecating laugh escaping from his lips. "I figured I'd give myself one more night with you at Scandal's, you know? One last hurrah before I finally had to let you go so you could be happy. But then I woke up in that stupid motel and I felt like shit because I drank so much and that room was gross, but I woke up next to *you*."

Kurt's breath hitches.

“And I started thinking about how we used to say it was just one more night, that we’d only do it one more time because I was cheating at it was wrong, but I think I always knew I couldn’t ever have just one more night with you. And one more night got lost somewhere along the way and I think this weekend turned it into something like forever and if you *leave* me, I will *break*.”

“I won’t,” Kurt says as soon as Blaine stops talking in order to breathe.

“You have to promise.”

“I promise,” Kurt says, leaning in to press a kiss against Blaine’s forehead. “I swear it. God, I swear it.”

“You really thought-”

“I had this really awful feeling that you were going to push me away so you could have time to figure yourself out.”

“I already did that, remember?” Blaine asks, a ghost of a smile returning to his face. “And then Karofsky punched me in the face.”

At that, Kurt bursts into laughter because he most definitely needs something to laugh at right now. He loops his arms around Blaine’s shoulders and presses their foreheads together. Blaine laughs lightly as he sniffles, but Kurt can feel just how rigid his body is. Despite the challenges that face them, he’s relieved to know that Blaine still wants him there. Kurt’s not sure if he could stand on the sidelines and distance himself from Blaine while simultaneously watching him struggle.

“So no breaking things off,” Kurt says.

“No.”

“And we’re – we’re going to do this together.”

“Together,” Blaine agrees, though his voice is weak and his eyes cut to the doors of the school, clearly scared of what lies beyond them.

“It’ll be okay,” Kurt attempts to assure.

"You can't know that," Blaine says.

"No, I can't. But I do know that I'm right here with you and you won't have to do this alone."

"What am I supposed to say to Rachel?" Blaine blurts, staring into Kurt's eyes with barely disguised terror. "What am – where will I sit at lunch? What if no one talks to me at all?"

"The issue with Rachel will just have to be borne," Kurt says. "And you'll sit with me and Mercedes at lunch and I will definitely talk to you. And we'll sit next to each other in Glee. But maybe we shouldn't – um–"

"What?" Blaine prompts nervously. "Shouldn't what? What shouldn't we do?"

"It's just...you haven't really broken up with Rachel, not properly. So maybe we shouldn't, you know, hold hands or act like a couple or anything. Not yet, anyway. After this whole thing blows over, I think it'll be easier, but we shouldn't go out of our way to give anyone a reason to be mean to you."

The words feel strange in Kurt's mouth, even as he says them; usually, he's the kind of person that goes against the grain for the sole purpose of making a statement. But this is about Blaine and his safety and he refuses to rile up the mob when there's a chance that Blaine could get hurt or ostracized completely. They can come after Kurt all they want, but he won't let them destroy someone who's only just figuring out who he is.

"Yeah," Blaine says softly, though his eyes drop when he speaks. "You're probably right."

"But I'll be with you the whole time," Kurt rushes to say. He places his hand over Blaine's heart and wraps his free hand around Blaine's wrist before mimicking the action with Blaine's hand on his own chest. "We're in here, remember? Your favorite place."

With a quick, shaky nod, Blaine presses a swift kiss to Kurt's lips.

They can do this.

-

As it turns out, the majority of their classmates ignore them for the better part of the morning. Kurt and Blaine do their best to not linger in the hallways during passing periods, not willing to incur the wrath of anyone who feels particularly cruel today. They'd been jostled slightly on their way to French class, but Kurt had taken the brunt of it and Blaine barely ended up brushing his shoulder with the wall during the brief altercation. So far, Rachel hasn't made an appearance, though Kurt thinks he saw a swift flash of her hair as she rounded the corner to the girls' restroom. Mercedes had attempted to corner him in pursuit of an explanation, but Kurt had promised to talk to her about the situation in detail later when they weren't at school and trying to steer clear of any further attention.

It isn't until lunch that things take a turn for the worse.

Kurt takes a seat next to Mercedes at their usual table, but Blaine holds his lunch tray in his hands and looks worriedly at the chair at Kurt's side.

"Is it – is it okay if I sit with you?" he asks Mercedes, clearly expecting to be turned away.

"Oh, sit your bony butt down," she says, exasperated. "I'm not *mad* at either of you."

"You're not?" Blaine asks, finally seating himself next to Kurt at the table.

"I wish I'd been more in the loop," she says. "But I get why you guys kept it a secret. I'm not an idiot."

"I never – that's not what I-"

"She *means* that she actually has a soul and can rationalize the fact that I lied to her despite her being my best friend," Kurt says with a roll of his eyes. "You don't need to be so nervous."

"I'm sorry," Blaine says softly, staring down at his lunch tray. "I know, I just – I'm sorry."

"Don't be sorry," Mercedes says kindly. She does, however, point a finger at both of them. "You're so not off the hook, though. After school, we're going for coffee or something and you're both going to explain you asses off until more of this makes sense."

"Yes, ma'am," Kurt says, giving her a tiny salute.

She smiles, obviously satisfied for the moment, and Kurt's heart feels a little lighter when he sees Blaine's soft grin as well.

Five minutes later, Kurt's heart feels weighted and heavy, sinking somewhere around his knees.

Four boys in letterman jackets crowd in front of them on the other side of the table. One of them – Kurt thinks his last name is Rhodes – grabs an empty chair and spins it around before plopping down, uninvited, straddling the chair and draping his arms over the back of it.

“So,” he says with a malicious glint in his eyes as his friends stand behind him. “Is it true?”

His eyes are glued on Blaine's face. Blaine swallows in apprehension around a mouthful of potato chips.

“Is what true?” he asks, and Kurt can practically hear Blaine's pulse skyrocket out of sheer panic.

“Aw, he's trying to play dumb,” Rhodes drawls, the corners of his lips curling into an unpleasant smile that resembles a sneer more than anything. “You know *what*, Anderson. Is it true you're a little homo now? Are you really Hummel's butt buddy?”

Kurt glares, wishing he could set Rhodes on fire with just his gaze.

“I don't think that's any of your business,” Blaine says in a whisper.

“Oh but see, it is my business,” Rhodes states. “Because if you're gonna run off and be a fag now, I think some changes are gonna have to be made at this school. And I think-” his eyes cut to the table where Blaine usually sits, where Quinn sits with her arm around an unusually quiet and stone-still Rachel, “-that I wanna start with her.”

“What-”

“I mean, if you're gonna be sucking dick now, then Berry's little legs are open for business.”

Rhodes receives a high five from one of the boys standing behind him. Blaine's fist clenches around his bottle of water and Kurt thinks he might crush it. On Kurt's part, he can't help but stare back in utter disgust at the boy on the opposite side of the table. Is this guy serious right now?



“Leave her alone,” Blaine says in a growl.

“But you’ve got your little Hummel homo,” Rhodes says. “I can take Berry off your hands if you want, make it real easy for you. Unless, you know, you’re keeping her on the side because she likes to take it up the ass too.”

“Shut your mouth, Greg,” Blaine states.

“I bet she’s a little freak in the sheets, huh? I mean, I know she used to be all into those creepy fucking animal sweaters or whatever, but now she’s got those skirts,” Rhodes continues, licking at his lips in repulsive show of lust. “I could be a real man for her if you’re done with her. Bet she’d take my dick real nice.”

“Rachel Berry happens to be a person,” Kurt interrupts, unable to sit there and listen to such filth. “She isn’t some toy or some – some *thing* you can just take whenever you want. She also happens to have morals and self respect so I think you should back off before I get my brother and his friends involved. Namely Puck and Sam.”

Internally hating the fact that he has to play the brother card, Kurt feels slightly ill to his stomach. He’s never had to name drop any of their more popular acquaintances because, while he’s never been happy or content with the abuse he’s received at some of these guys’ hands, he had resigned himself to dealing with it alone. This, though, is entirely foul. Rachel might not Kurt’s favorite person in the world, but she is just a girl and nobody deserves such disgusting things directed at them, even behind their back. With Blaine suddenly bumped to the bottom of the social heap, he doesn’t have the status to protect Rachel from someone as lecherous as Greg Rhodes. But Finn Hudson would never stand for someone treating one of his friends this way and Kurt knows that for a fact.

“I don’t think anybody asked you,” Rhodes snarls in return.

“I don’t care whether you asked me or not,” Kurt states. “Blaine’s issues are none of your business and neither is Rachel. You’re a pathetic excuse for a man and if you think, for one second, that a woman would ever actually respect you for saying such awful things, then you are one delusional idiot. Now go crawl back into whatever hole in *hell* you slithered out from because no one at this table actually feels like listening to anything that comes out of that revolting orifice you call a mouth.”

"I'll orifice *you*, you little fairy fucking-"

"Do we have a problem here?"

Santana is there, once again at their rescue, and has her biggest bitch glare focused on Rhodes and his band of bastards. Rhodes grunts in defeat, clearly not willing to take on Santana when she looks like she's ready to start knocking out some teeth just for fun.

"No problem." Rhodes says, sliding off the chair and standing, giving a firm tug of his letterman jacket. "Just setting some things straight."

"Well you're obviously at the wrong table for that," she snaps. "Now get the hell away from them before I roundhouse kick you where your balls *should* be."

"Screw you, Lopez," Rhodes mumbles, slinking off with his friends.

"In your dreams," she bites back.

When they're gone, Santana looks back to Blaine and Kurt.

"You two really don't know how to lay low, do you?"

"He's the one that was saying all those – those things about Rachel!" Blaine says in protest.

"I know," she says. "I heard every word. But they're just *trying* to rile you up. Don't you get it? They want to make you mad so that you'll fight back and when you *do*, they'll have some reason to do worse to you. They like to see you angry."

"They also like to see us cower," Kurt interjects. "We can't just be nothing."

"That's exactly what you should do," Santana says. "If you want to make it out of here alive, ignore everything they say. Don't let them get to you in any way. Eventually, they'll realize you're not worth the effort and leave you alone. Because you won't exist to them."

She offers them a hard look before spinning and striding away, ponytail swinging in her wake.

Kurt huffs in frustration. He can't just – just do *nothing* about any of this. Keeping their heads down for a while is one thing. Waiting for the whole scandal to blow over after a week so that people will take less interest in them and their relationship is an entirely different beast from attempting to pretend like they don't exist at all. That has never been on Kurt's agenda. He isn't some bland personality that wants to blend in with the rest. He has always been about making a statement and putting himself out there, in spite of the animosity and the cruelty and the homophobia.

But then he looks at Blaine, whose shoulders are hunched in defeat, and realizes that this isn't just about him anymore. He has to look after Blaine. He has to be what Blaine needs. He has to be that strength and that foundation and he needs to be the person Blaine can come to for help.

He has to keep them safe because Blaine still doesn't know how to handle most of this. Just as he'd realized earlier, they have to do this together. Only now, he knows exactly how difficult this is going to be.

-

The atmosphere in the choir room is tense and so ungodly awkward that even Mr. Schuester appears uncomfortable. Sure, the Glee club has had their fair share of drama; they're teenagers in high school. But this seems to be awkward in epic proportions hitherto unheard of, even for them. Rachel and Blaine sit on opposite sides of the room, with Kurt at Blaine's side, Mercedes seated behind them, and Santana and Brittany seated next to Kurt. There's a divide of empty chairs on the other side of Brittany, and the rest of the club has settled near Rachel, save for Artie who is positioned right in the middle on the floor in his wheelchair.

"So..." Mr. Schuester begins slowly, "I was gonna start off with telling you guys our assignment for the week, but I thought that maybe, uh, some people might need to get some stuff off their chests. By singing about it."

At first, all eyes turn to Rachel, but she remains perfectly still with her head forward and tension clearly evident in her jaw. When she says nothing and refuses to acknowledge their teacher and their classmates, everyone's eyes turn to Blaine.

Blaine lowers his head, ever so slightly, and bites his lips between his teeth.

"No one wants to sing?" Mr. Schue prompts weakly, attempting a half-hearted smile. "Rachel?"

"I have nothing to sing about today, Mr. Schue."

Mr. Schue deflates visibly and glances to Blaine and Kurt one last time before heaving a deep sigh. He shakes his head as if to rid his mind of concern and begins prattling about this week's assignment, another one about overcoming adversity, and Kurt tunes out completely. The rest of the class passes in a blur. All Kurt knows is that the sing a few songs together that Mr. Schue suggests, and then it all comes to an end. Artie wheels out, quick as lightning, with Mike and Tina following right behind him. Santana offers Kurt a helpless shrug before twining pinkies with Brittany and leaving as well. Various others follow, including Mr. Schuester.

Just as Rachel is about to pass through the door with Quinn and Finn, Blaine stands.

"Rachel," he blurts. "I – will you-"

"Believe it or not," she snaps, whirling around to face him, "I am attempting to avoid you because if I don't, I think I'll scream until I feel some semblance of satisfaction. So don't."

"Please, can we *please* talk about this?" he begs.

"What do you want me so say, Blaine?" she erupts, throwing her hands in the air. "What am I supposed to say about all of this?"

The other students have disappeared around the corner of the door frame, leaving only Kurt, Blaine, and Rachel inside the choir room. Kurt remains at Blaine's side, just as he'd promised, but he's actually a little terrified of what might happen now that they're all alone.

"I – I don't know," Blaine admits, clearly grasping at straws. Kurt can tell that he needs to talk to her and get it over with, needs to make her understand, but he has no idea where to start.

Kurt can sympathize.

"Should I start with the fact that you lied to me?" she asks with an enraged, sarcastic bite to her words. "Or maybe we should start with the fact that you've been cheating on me for who knows *how* long. Because I have to wonder how long you've been *sleeping* with him and then kissing me and telling me that you love me. Actually, I think that's a good place to start. Don't you?"

She crosses her thin arms across her chest in defense. Kurt swallows hard, eyes cutting to Blaine and wondering how he plans to approach this.

“It – it hasn’t been that long,” Blaine says, quiet and sad. Kurt knows that Blaine never wanted to hurt Rachel in the midst of all of this. “Just a f-few months.”

“Oh, is that all?” she snaps. “You’ve been with him for a few months and you’ve already shackled up in some gross motel and you’ve been with me for two years and you’ve barely *touched* me?”

“I’m sorry,” Blaine says, tears in his wide, coffee eyes, regret swimming in his gaze. “I never – I didn’t know why I – but I can’t *help* it.”

Rachel’s lips pinch together in a flat line. Her eyes harden in response and she remains quiet for a few, torturous moments before finally speaking.

“I know you can’t help it.”

At that, even Kurt boggles.

“W-What?” Blaine stammers.

“I’m not some ignorant bitch,” she states. “I have two gay dads, if you recall. I understand the fact that you can’t help being gay. You are who you are.”

Blaine can’t seem to find the words to respond, but tears begin streaming in rivulets down his face. Kurt had always known that Rachel would understand the fact that Blaine was gay; for Blaine, however, it seems like a blessing and a breath of relief when Rachel affirms that notion by saying it aloud.

“I’m angry because you lied to me about it,” Rachel declares. “I’m angry because you didn’t trust me enough to tell me that you were questioning or that you were confused. We’ve been together for *two years*, Blaine. You could have talked to me about this. Instead, you both went behind my back – everyone’s backs – and had some secret affair, like we wouldn’t have understood even though everyone at this club knows that Kurt’s gay and none of them have a problem with it.”

Lowering his head, Blaine squeezes his eyes shut as the tears continue to fall.

Kurt, on the other hand, lifts an eyebrow, challenging her choice of words.

He is so not about to let her pin all of this on Blaine.

“I think I’m going to have to cut in for a second,” Kurt says, stepping down to the next row on the risers.

Rachel glares at him, obviously having expected him to keep his mouth shut through the entirety of the proceedings, but he isn’t going to let her off the hook that easily.

“You can say that you’re accepting and open-minded all you want, and I know that having gay parents gives you a leg up on the whole issue, but you can’t stand there and claim that this club is as progressive as that.”

“*Excuse me?*” she sasses, planting her hands on her hips. “The people in this club are the only people at this school that accept you for being who you are. We’re the only ones that have ever shown you any support.”

“Actually,” Kurt says, “the last time I checked, none of you will even talk to me outside of this *room*. Even my own brother prefers not to be seen with me outside of Glee club. And you guys won’t even talk to Mercedes because she’s the only one that talks to *me*.”

“We invited you to the party at my house a few months ago!”

“Blaine invited me to that party,” Kurt reminds, bristling at her words. “You put up with me that night because you were drunk off your ass and felt some misguided need to be polite and supportive because we were in the house where your *gay* parents live. I won’t let you stand there and pretend like you’re ready to wave the rainbow flag every day, no matter who it’s for, and tell Blaine that everyone would have accepted him because they wouldn’t have. He’s seen the way you all treat me. Hell, he did the same thing before he realized he was gay because he thought that’s how he was supposed to treat me just because that’s what you all did. He knew that he’d become some social pariah if he came out. You can say you’re supportive all you want, but you don’t do a damn thing to actually support me or anybody else in this school because you’re too worried about how you’d look to everyone else if you did.”

“I – I am perfectly accepting!” she screeches indignantly.

"You're passively accepting," Kurt says. "You pretend like I don't exist because it's easier to ignore me than it is to actually accept me."

"I would have understood if he talked to me about it!" she shouts. "I'm not like the rest of the people at this school!"

"Then maybe you should act like it," Kurt says. "Blaine didn't talk to you about it because he's seen the way you treat me. How was he supposed to be honest with you when he knew he'd screw up everything you two have built over the past few years? How was he supposed to talk to you when he knew you'd end up ignoring him the same way you ignore me every single day?"

"Well, since it seems like the past two years were a complete lie, I guess it doesn't really matter," she states.

"But it *wasn't* a lie," Blaine cuts in, stepping down the risers and onto the floor. "You're – Rachel, you were my best friend for years. I came to you for everything and we – I loved you, I *did*. I just didn't know that it wasn't...that kind of love."

"Then you should have said something."

"How was I supposed to know?" he asks, shrugging his shoulders. "I didn't even know I was gay. I didn't know that was a possibility for me. I thought that what we shared was real and, you know, authentic. But it just wasn't real in *that* way. I couldn't have known any of that, though, especially when I didn't know how I could feel for another boy."

"Even if you couldn't talk to me about being gay, why didn't you just break up with me instead of cheating on me?" she asks.

Uh oh.

Blaine stutters, tripping over his words, jaw working around aborted sounds and explanations.

This is not going to end well.

"I thought – fuck," he mumbles. With a sigh, he finally admits the truth. "I didn't think you'd let me go because I knew how much you wanted to be popular. So I didn't break things off because I figured you'd fight me and try to convince me to stay, even though I didn't want to."

Kurt looks to Rachel, attempting to gauge her expression. Any second now, he expects she'll turn purple with fury at the accusation. Her eyes widen and her mouth opens, preparing to say something in response, and then it snaps shut.

When her eyes begin to water and her chin begins to quiver, she surprises them both.

"Is that – is *that* what you really think of me?" she asks in a broken tone, arms sliding around her middle. "You think I would – you think I'd keep you in this and try and – and convince you that you straight? You think I'd want to be your *beard* just so I could stay *popular*?"

"I'm sorry," Blaine says quickly, attempting to save himself. "I didn't – I was confused and – and scared and I didn't know what to do. And you were always – you always held on so tight and I didn't-"

"I thought you liked spending time with me," she says with wet eyes. "I thought you loved me, even if I was a little controlling."

"More like a tyrannical dictator," Kurt interrupts.

She glares at him.

"Not helping," Blaine whispers.

"Well I'm not going to let her stand there and blame this all on you," Kurt says, unapologetic. "Look, I'm just going to say this because Blaine will dance around and try and be nice and he'll let you guilt trip him into next week. The fact is that Blaine is gay. And yeah, he screwed up; we *both* screwed up. He should've broken up with you instead of sneaking around behind your back. It was wrong and immoral and whatever else you want to call it. But you can't fault him for being scared or worried about how you and everyone else would have responded to any of this. If he had told you and you had understood and you had let him go with some sort of blessing, someone else would have found out. You would've told someone, probably Quinn, and she would've told someone else and then the whole freaking school would know. He was outed. He didn't *come out*. If he tried to break up with you *without* telling you that he was gay, you would've demanded a reason and he wouldn't have been able to come up with anything good



enough that might actually convince you to let him go. And he isn't at fault for assuming that you might freak out and not let him go because you are who you are. Jesus, you got pissed at him because he didn't want you sitting in his lap one day. You were suffocating him, Rachel. And you were suffocating him when he was already confused and trying to figure himself out so yeah, this all ended badly. For everyone. But he isn't a bad person for leaning on me when I was the only one to show him *real* support and *real* acceptance. If you think it was easy to hide all of this from everyone and pretend like we weren't ridiculously happy with each other, then you're wrong. Do you have any idea how hard it was to watch him kiss you or put his arm around you? Because I was dying inside. But I understood that it wasn't about me. It was about him. So don't you dare make this about *you*. Because now, everyone is going to treat him like he's less than what he is while everyone coos and fusses over you and says *I'm so sorry* and *You deserve better* and *He was never good enough for you* because you're pretty and you're popular and you're heartbroken. Meanwhile, he can't even hold hands with the person that he likes because the person that he likes happens to be a guy. So fuck you, Rachel Berry."

By the end of it, Kurt is breathless and panting and angry. He had no idea he had so much pent up rage that needed venting and okay, maybe that last little quip didn't really need saying, but it's too late to take it back now. Rachel stares back at him, eyes so large that she kind of reminds him of that girl in Jurassic Park whenever she sees the shadows of those dinosaurs and all she wants to do is eat her damn jell-o.

Blaine, on the other hand, has similar wide eyes, though he has his hand covering his mouth to hide his shock.

"On that note," Kurt concludes, grabbing his bag, "I have a coffee date with Mercedes. Blaine, I'll talk to you later. Rachel, I hope you'll actually listen to whatever Blaine has to say to you."

He strides out of the room with his head held high, feeling better than he has all day.