

Hey, New Kid

by

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AU || M

Kurt Hummel is McKinley High's resident bad-ass but the arrival of a new transfer student from Dalton Academy quickly has his life spiraling out of control. Badboy!Kurt AU.

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Chapter One

Kurt smirked, eyes trained on the new transfer student, with his bowties and gelled back hair, leaning over to pick something up off the floor of his locker. He was too put-together for his own good.

Tossing his cigarette on the ground, disregarding the scandalized looks a few students threw him, and crushing it with the heel of his boot, Kurt moved towards the other boy, rolling back his shoulders and loosening his hands with a flick of his wrists.

"Hey, new kid," he said, stopping behind the other boy, who jumped and banged his head of the shelf of his locker as he hurried to straighten up.

Kurt suppressed a snicker, cocking an eyebrow as the boy stood, looking mildly flustered as he rubbed the back of his head. He froze when his gaze fell on Kurt, eyes widening very slightly as he took in his tousled hair, tight jeans and sleek leather jacket.

"Oh," he said, blinking as if to clear his head. "Hello. Who are you?"

"Kurt Hummel," Kurt said, ignoring the hand the other boy extended to him. "You're Blaine right? Blaine Anderson."

The dark-haired boy nodded, the smallest of frowns creasing his brow as he let his hand fall to his side.

"Were you smoking?" he said, a mix of curiosity and disapproval clear in his voice and features.

"Yeah," Kurt said, shrugging as he leaned against the lockers, picking absently at his fingernails. "So?"

"It's very bad for you," Blaine said matter-of-factly."

Kurt snorted. "Thank you, mother," he said, rolling his eyes.

"I'm sure your mother wouldn't be pleased either," Blaine said.

"Well, she's dead so I wouldn't know, would I?" Kurt said in a bored voice, trying not to blanch at the mention of his mother.

"Oh," Blaine said, suddenly quiet. "I'm sorry." Kurt shrugged again.

"It's been a long time," he said, glancing up to see Blaine's almost pitying look. "I don't need your sympathy," he said, a slight edge to his tone. "So you can stop looking at me that way."

Blaine looked taken aback, perhaps even affronted. "Okay then," he said, holding up a hand in surrender. He straightened his books in his arms and shut his locker. "I suppose I'll see you in class?"

Kurt blinked in bewilderment at the dismissal. "Oh," he said, trying to regain his mental footing as he met Blaine's gaze. His eyes somehow caught every throw of light from the florescent bulbs overhead. "Yeah...whatever. See you later."

Blaine gave him a final appraising look. "You really shouldn't smoke," he said before turning and striding off down the hall.

Kurt stared after him, frowning in consideration as the sudden urge to toss out all his cigarettes for Anderson's approval hit him. Now wasn't that intriguing?

After a day of researching (Kurt refused to think of it as 'stalking', despite what Puck said to him when he'd asked the older boy to steal Blaine's file from the office at lunch), Kurt had discovered many things about the boy.

He was apparently in Kurt's Calculus class - which gave Kurt a sudden desire to attend the lesson he hadn't touched in three months - and had transferred from some posh all-boys private school.

That explains the hair, Kurt thought to himself as he watched Blaine leave his final class of the day and hurry down the hallway.

"Hey, Blaine," he called, taking pleasure in the way Blaine's tight t-shirt clung to his chest as he turned to face Kurt.

"What?" he asked sullenly. Kurt got the feeling that the new kid's first day hadn't gone too well; then again, a day at McKinley High never went well.

"You sing?" he asked. It was a pointless question to him - he had already read in Blaine's file that the boy had been the lead of his previous Glee Club, but he didn't want to admit to Blaine the lengths he'd gone to to do his research.

Blaine frowned. "I'm sorry?"

Kurt smiled at the boy's endearing politeness before repeating slowly, "Do you sing?"

"I- Um... Yeah, I do. Why?"

"Glee's today and we need voices. Besides, I'd like an excuse to stare at your ass in those pants for another hour."

Kurt loved the way Blaine flushed at Kurt's words.

"Don't I need to audition?"

"Yeah, so you better think of a song quick. Come on, choir room's this way."

He walked away, Blaine following close behind. The choir room was still deserted when they arrived; the rest of the kids were most likely at their lockers or being held back in class (the latter applying mainly to Puck).

Blaine didn't say a word until Kurt collapsed into one of the hard plastic chairs.

"*You* are in *Glee Club*?" he asked.

"Why the tone of surprise, Anderson?"

Blaine raised an eyebrow as he eyes very obviously stared at Kurt's intentional disheveled style. "Doesn't it hurt your bad boy reputation?" he said sarcastically.

Kurt snorted. "I don't care what other people think of me. I like singing, so I'm here."

Blaine was cut off from replying by the arrival of the other Glee Club members. Most only glanced at Blaine before going back to their conversations, but Puck - after seeing Blaine - pointedly smirked at Kurt and

mouthed 'stalker' as Kurt flipped him off. Blaine, thankfully, was too engrossed with inspecting the other people in the room to notice their silent exchange.

Mr. Schue entered last, pausing when he saw Blaine standing awkwardly by the piano.

"That's Blaine Anderson," Kurt drawled from his seat. "He's auditioning today."

"If that's okay?" Blaine tacked onto the end of Kurt's statement.

Mr. Schuester smiled warmly and nodded. "Of course it's okay, we're always happy to welcome new members."

"Especially when they look as fine as *you*," Santana said. Kurt glared at her.

"Um..."

Mr. Schue hushed Santana as he took a seat at the side of the room. "Just start whenever you're ready."

Blaine smiled uncertainly, took a deep breath and opened his mouth and-

Oh. My. Fucking. God, were the only words Kurt's brain was able to come up with. Because Blaine Anderson - cute, polite, put-together Blaine Anderson - had a voice like sex. He was deep and smooth, confident without being annoying or cocky and- *fuck*, did he just *growl*?

As the song drew to a close, Kurt found himself reduced to a body of craving *want*, no, *need*. He *needed* Blaine Anderson's tongue down his throat ten minutes ago.

There was a brief moment of silence before the room burst into applause and Blaine smiled his adorably happy smile and Kurt was reminded of the other side to Blaine Anderson, but that only led to the memory of Blaine glaring at him in the hall and telling him not to smoke. Blaine was pretty hot when he was being assertive, too...

"I think I speak for all of us when I say welcome to Glee, Blaine!" Mr. Schue said, breaking through Kurt's lustful haze.

Blaine thanked him and walked quickly to the seat next to Kurt's, accepting the praise and compliments the rest of the Glee Club threw at him modestly.

He caught Kurt's eye. "So, what did you think?" he asked; Kurt could just hear a faint hint of cockiness in his voice, like he knew exactly where that song had put Kurt's mind.

Kurt suppressed his inner desire and shrugged coolly. "You're good, but you'll have to do a lot of work to be anywhere near as talented as me."

Blaine laughed. "You'll have to show me what you can do so I know what I'm working towards."

Kurt just tipped his head, mentally planning the performance he was going to put on for Blaine.

While Blaine paid attention to Mr. Schue's description of that week's assignment, Kurt studied his profile, knowing that one way or another, that boy was going to be his.

He didn't focus much on Glee that day—which was odd given that it was usually the *only* thing he cared to put any substantial amount of time into—as he was much too busy focusing on Blaine, studying the way he sat ramrod straight in his seat, hands placed carefully in his lap as he absorbed every word Mr. Schue said. He was like a sponge, it seemed, an incredibly sexy sponge.

When practice was *finally* over, Kurt hurried to snatch up Blaine's bag before the other boy to reach it. Blaine gave him a half curious, half angry look and Kurt simply grinned.

"Just being nice, new kid," he said with a wink. "I'll carry it for you."

Blaine narrowed his eyes, looking vaguely suspicious. "Alright," he said after a moment's scrutiny. "Just...don't get it dirty. It's—"

"Prada," Kurt finished for him. "I know." He caught Blaine's astonished look and grinned. "I've got a bit of an eye for fashion. Don't let the hair and attitude fool you."

Blaine nodded slowly. "Oh, so you're aware you're an asshole?"

Kurt's lips parted in surprise; he quickly shook it off, laughing and shaking his head. "Funny," he said, hitching Blaine's bag higher on his shoulder. "Come on. I swear I won't hurt you or try and convert you or anything."

"Convert me?" Blaine said, frowning as he followed Kurt out of the choir room. Kurt let the other boy get half a step ahead of him so he could chance the occasional peek at his ass.

"To being a badass like me," Kurt said, smirking.

"I didn't realize being so arrogant made you a badass," Blaine said bluntly.

Kurt felt a stab of annoyance as he turned to Blaine. "You've got some nerve," he said. "You barely know me."

"Yes, and *you* barely know *me*," Blaine stated pointedly. "And yet you're trying to get in my pants."

"What?" Kurt said, trying to sound nonchalant and amused even though he could feel a faint flush creeping up his cheeks at Blaine's frankness. "I never said that."

"You told me you wanted me to join Glee Club so you could stare at my ass," Blaine said dispassionately. "If that doesn't scream attempted seduction, I don't know what does. It was very poorly executed, by the way. Your methods of seduction, I mean."

Kurt gaped at him, slack-jawed and disbelieving. He cleared his throat, trying to think of something clever to say in response; his mind was suddenly moving much slower than usual. "Well what do you suggest I do then?" Kurt said as they pushed out through the double doors and out into the parking lot. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a cigarette and his lighter, a force habit at this point.

The filtered end was in his lips as he flicked the lighter to life. He stopped at the sight of Blaine's look of mild disgust.

"Oh, right, sorry," he muttered, stuffing the lighter into his pocket and shoving the cigarette back into the pack. "Forgot you don't like that."

"It's nauseating," Blaine said simply, a reproving frown on his face.

"Right," Kurt said absently. "So, you never answered me. What do I have to do?"

"Are you trying to ask how to seduce me?" Blaine said, sounding faintly amused as they stopped at his car, a sleek black BMW. "That's a little forward of you, don't you think?"

Kurt shrugged, sighing. "I'm a forward person," he said resignedly. "It's a curse. Just like my incredible hair and amazing skin. It's hard sometimes, being this perfect."

"Hmm," Blaine said, looking doubtful. "I'm sure."

"So what do you want?" Kurt said, leaning against Blaine's car casually and shrugging off the expensive leather satchel to pass back to the other boy.

Blaine accepted his bag and pulled out his keys, expression unreadable. "How about you ask me on an actual date," he said, unlocking his car and sliding into the driver's seat.

"Alright," Kurt said, internally triumphant. "Me. You. Movies. This Friday. I'll even buy the popcorn. And I'll even let you grope me in the back row."

Blaine chuckled.

Spurred by this, Kurt continued, "It's the perfect place to see if I can get you to growl like you do when you sing," he said, winking. "Or maybe even scream."

Blaine smiled. "Tell you what," he said, closing his door and rolling down the window so he could continue to talk to Kurt. "When you've pulled your head out of your own ass, we'll talk, okay?"

He turned the key in the ignition, flashed Kurt another winning smile as he shifted the car into gear, and drove off, leaving Kurt staring after him with a jumble of emotions—namely indignation and an increasingly piqued sense of interest—swirling around in his brain.

Chapter Two

“So,” Santana said a week later as she placed her tray of food next to Kurt’s and sat down on the bench, “seeing as you are making *no* progress with oh-so-dapper over there, can it be my turn to try my hand at seduction?”

“He’s *gay*, Satan, you have absolutely *nothing* to offer him - even lying on your back and spreading your legs like you usually do won’t work.”

“*Ouch*,” Santana said. “Be careful today, people, Hummel’s got his claws out.”

It was unnecessary to say that to Santana, he knew her well enough to know that she was only joking, but Anderson become a bit of a sore spot for Kurt. It had been a week and there had been no progress.

At first he had found Blaine’s resistance cute and intriguing (he had *never* been turned down by a gay guy before) but now it was just tiring. It had taken Blaine two days to find his place in Glee Club and since then he had been hanging out with the group - making jokes, getting into heated debates, laughing, smiling, singing, *breathing* and ultimately making Kurt go out of his mind with want.

And then he would blow off every single one of Kurt’s suggestions to hang out.

However Kurt Hummel would rather cut off his hair than admit defeat, so he plotted.

The first order of business was to stop smoking. Around Blaine, that is. Kurt wouldn’t ever give up his precious cigarettes but Blaine didn’t need to know that.

When he caught the small smile on Blaine’s lips when he threw a half-full pack into the bin by Blaine’s locker he thought he’d made a break through, but apparently not.

“So, Blaine, what do you say to you, me, a private booth at Breadstix and an under-the-table handjob?”

“What do you say to you, alone with only your right hand for company.” Blaine smirked and walked away.

“I’d say that I’m left-handed!” Kurt yelled at his retreating back before spinning on his heel and stalking in the opposite direction to Blaine fucking Anderson.

His second attempt to get Blaine involved attending Calculus for the first time in god knows how long.

"You're in this class?" Blaine asked incredulously as Kurt slumped into the seat next to him.

"Yes, pleased to see me?"

"Are you stalking me?" Blaine demanded.

Kurt smirked, thinking of the file labelled 'Blaine Anderson' he had sitting on his desk in his bedroom, filled with Blaine's history.

"No, I'm just very attentive to things that make me horny."

"I'm surprised you don't spend your life staring at a mirror then."

"Fuck you."

"Mister Hummel, nice of you to join us," the teacher said, spotting him lounging at the desk. "You've got a lot of work to catch up on."

Kurt took the work silently and then didn't take a step into the classroom again.

He only had one more thing to try: singing.

Kurt knew his voice was his greatest asset. He had no qualms admitting that he was the best singer in the school - except Blaine, perhaps - and he knew he was going to go far with his voice.

And so, logically, it was the best tool in his arsenal to seduce Blaine. He knew that with the correct song selection - something that oozed sex appeal, like *Moves Like Jagger* - that the boy would be in his arms.

It was with that confidence that he handed the sheet music to Brad after school on Friday, his ass clothed in the tightest jeans he owned as Blaine wandered into the room, chatting with Rachel. He raised his eyebrows at Kurt as he sat down.

"Okay, guys, quiet," Mr. Schue said, "Kurt's going to start us off today."

Kurt grinned and nodded at the band to start.

You wanted control so we waited

I put on a show now I make it

You say I'm a kid, my ego is big

I don't give a shit and it goes like this

He most definitely didn't miss the way Blaine's eyes widened and his mouth fell open as he started the chorus and strutted towards the other boy, holding his gaze firmly as he sang, his hands trailing teasingly up the sides of his legs.

I don't need to control you

Look into my eyes and I'll own you

Blaine swallowed visibly and Kurt grabbed hold of the front of his lavender shirt to pull him to his feet, forcing him to dance.

Around him, the rest of the Glee Club were on their feet and clapping (and in Brittany and Santana's case, grinding) but Kurt only had eyes for Blaine as he spun them round, lowering his voice and growling over a word. He swore he felt Blaine's heart stuttering against his chest.

As he finished, the other burst into applause, but he stayed rooted to the spot in the middle of the choir room, Blaine's body pressed up against his, with one hand clutched in the fabric of the boy's button-up shirt and the other playing with the curls on his neck.

"Well?" Kurt asked huskily.

He saw Blaine's throat working as he swallowed again, his usual cool ease of rejection crashing down in the fragment of a second that their gazes locked. His jaw tightened and he inhaled, air hissing across his teeth and shoulders rising fractionally.

For a split second Kurt thought wildly about kissing him, screw the fact that the entire Glee Club *and* their teacher were in the same room.

But then Blaine was clearing his throat and shrugging out of Kurt's grip, face smooth and unimpressed.

"Not bad," he said, adjusting his shirt and avoiding Kurt's gaze as he returned to his seat. "But next time you should ask someone before you dance like that with them. I never volunteered."

Kurt, still panting from his performance, felt sudden anger bubbling inside him. His nostrils flared, eyes narrowing at the supposedly indifferent boy. A few people were snickering behind their hands and embarrassment hit him, heat that had nothing to do with his dancing flaring across his neck and cheeks.

"Fine," he growled through gritted teeth. "I'm leaving."

Ignoring Mr. Schue's calls for him to return, he stormed out of the choir room into the hall, feeling stupid and humiliated. Why the hell was he trying so hard when it was painfully obvious that Anderson didn't give two fucks about him?

Snarling, he kicked the wall of lockers, yelping as pain erupted across his foot and jumping around awkwardly, spewing random curses and exclamations of discomfort.

"Fucking Blaine Anderson," he grumbled, putting his weight tenderly back on his foot and hissing as pain snapped up his nerves from his toes.

"You curse far too much."

Kurt spun around, irritation simmering to the surface again at the sight of Blaine.

"What the *fuck* do you want?" he said, sure to put as much emphasis on the offending word as possible and feeling a sense of satisfaction at Blaine's small cringe.

"You don't have to try so hard," Blaine said, taking a few steps towards him.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Kurt grunted, folding his arms across his chest defensively.

"You try too hard," Blaine repeated, the gentleness of his voice doing nothing to quell Kurt's anger. "Why don't you just act like yourself?"

"I tried that," Kurt said, glaring and hating his strange predilection for the other boy. "You didn't like that person, remember?"

Blaine smiled. “I don’t really think that’s the *real* you, though,” he said kindly.

“Well you don’t know *jack shit*,” Kurt snapped, now scowling at the ceiling tiles over Blaine’s head.

Blaine released a long, tolerant sigh. “Alright, fine,” he said, sounding disappointed and, perhaps, a little sad. “If you’re going to just keep up this...shell or whatever it is you’re playing at, okay. But if you won’t even let me *try* and help you, leave me out of it. I’m not interested in someone who can’t even be honest to themselves. I used to be that person and I don’t want to deal with it.”

“What do you mean?” Kurt said before he could stop himself, eyes snapping back to Blaine’s, which suddenly looking forlorn, like there were the ghosts of memories coalescing behind them that Kurt could sense without fully picking apart.

“It’s not important,” Blaine said, shaking his head. He blinked and the shadows were gone as quickly as they’d appeared. “I need to get back, they’re waiting for me.” He turned to leave, pausing to glance back at Kurt. “You coming?”

“No,” Kurt said, tightening his arms over his chest.

Something shifted behind Blaine’s eyes as he nodded sadly. He shrugged and shoved his hands in his pockets as he walked away towards the choir room.

Kurt waited for him to disappear before punching the lockers, gritting his teeth at the pain but not making a sound as he shook out his hand and stomped towards the exit, despising Blaine Anderson for seeing him for what he was: a fake hiding behind the walls he’d been working to build for so long that Blaine could see straight through with a single glance. It was infuriating, intriguing, and emasculating all at once.

Climbing onto his Harley, he kicked the bike to life, not bothering—as usual—with his helmet as he slammed onto the gas and peeled out of the parking lot, throat tight and eyes burning.

“Kurt, dinner,” his dad called through the closed door.

Kurt turned his face on the pillow so he could murmur, “Not hungry,” loud enough for his father to hear and hoping that would be the end of it.

Sadly, however, Kurt got his stubbornness from his father, and there was no way he was going to be let off that easily. With a sigh, he buried his face in his pillow again as he heard the door open and his dad shuffle across his room. The mattress by his legs dipped as Burt sat down.

“You want to talk about it?”

“No.”

“It might make you feel better.”

“It won’t.”

“I could be able to do something about it.”

“You can’t.”

“Can you at least tell me the broad topic of what’s getting you down? Is that Schuester guy not giving you solos again?”

“It’s boy trouble,” he said curtly, trying to convey that the conversation was now closed.

Burt didn’t get the message. “Do I need to crack some skulls? Has someone not been treating you right?”

Kurt snorted into the pillow. “No, Dad, nothing like that. Can we please drop this? I want to mope on my own for a little while longer.”

There was a sigh and Kurt felt his father’s weight disappear from the bed. “I’ll leave some leftovers in the fridge, son.”

“Okay.”

He waited until he heard the door click shut before rolling onto his back, staring up at the ceiling.

He *hated* Blaine Anderson for being able to get under his skin so easily. Usually he could just brush off everyone in his life - he wasn’t even dependant on his best friends. And yet Blaine Anderson, a stupid

transfer student, could reduce the normal badass-Kurt who made the world his bitch into a cowardly child who hid in his room when things didn't go his way.

The worst thing was that Kurt couldn't actually find any particular instance when Blaine had been a dick to him without being provoked. Apart from the snippy comebacks when Kurt had been particularly vulgar, Blaine was the model of a perfect gentleman. Even to Kurt.

I'm not interested in someone who can't even be honest to themselves.

Stupid Anderson being... *being spot-on*, Kurt admitted grudgingly as he stared around his bedroom - the only place in the world where Kurt allowed himself to drop the attitude for a second and let his inner feelings show. Where the clothes were neatly folded and the walls were painted in complimenting hues to the carpet and there were Vogue magazines in piles on his desk.

Kurt grimaced and closed his eyes, glad that it was the weekend and he wouldn't have to talk to anyone for two days.

He tried not to think about going back on Monday.

Chapter Three

Thankfully, he managed to avoid his family most of the weekend. They were used to his spells of sulking in his room like this and, after one incident that had resulted in a particularly loud shouting match between him and his father, decided to leave him be after the initial questioning.

Sunday afternoon, however, there was a knock at his door. He recognized it as Finn's and rolled onto his side from his position stretched across the floor, flipping through a magazine he hadn't been paying the slightest attention to.

"What?" he grunted, fixing his expression into his usual one of indifference as Finn tentatively pushed open the door and slipped inside.

"You okay?" Finn said, looking awkward as he twisted his hands together.

"Fan-fucking-tastic," Kurt mumbled, returning to his magazine.

Finn coughed and Kurt released an exaggerated sigh. "What?" he repeated, a little harder this time.

Finn looked faintly nervous, eyes trained on his own shuffling feet. "Did you...um, a bunch of the Glee kids are going bowling," he said, "did you wanna come along?" He glanced up at Kurt at last.

Kurt gave him an apathetic look.

"Er, is that a no?" Finn said slowly.

"Yes," Kurt grunted, once again returning to his magazine.

Finn sighed. "Alright," he said, sounding disheartened. "I thought...that Blaine kid's coming, I thought you might want to see him."

Kurt's neck snapped around. "What?" he snapped, a bubble of something like fear expanding in his chest.

"You seemed to like him," Finn said, shrugging. "He's going to be there. I think he wants to see you. He asked if you were coming."

"Did he now?" Kurt said, anger overtaking his apprehension. Blaine really did have some fucking nerve. Either that or a death wish.

He pushed himself up so swiftly that Finn jumped back, shrinking against the door.

"Well," Kurt said, moving towards his closet and ripping the door open. "We wouldn't want to disappoint the *new kid*, would we?"

"So...you're coming?" Finn said hopefully.

Kurt shot him a quelling look and Finn ducked hurriedly out of the room.

Sifting through the clothes in his wardrobe, Kurt practically tore a shirt off its hanger followed by a pair of dark skinny jeans. He stripped and tugged the other clothes on, pulling on a pair of buckled boots and examining himself in the mirror.

Scoffing, he pushed up the sleeves of his untucked shirt to his elbows, leaving the top two buttons open. He mussed his hair to its usual state, slipping his cigarettes and lighter—which he hid in the bottom of his desk drawer—into his pocket, checking they were thoroughly concealed before leaving to hunt down Finn.

He pounded his fist twice against his step-brother's closed door. "We're leaving," he said, fully aware that Finn was the one driving and he really had no say in the matter.

Despite this, Finn appeared in the doorway in about two seconds flat, still straightening his polo shirt. "Sorry," he mumbled sheepishly.

Kurt grunted, ignoring him as he went downstairs, where his father and step-mother were sitting in the living room talking.

"Feeling better?" his father said, eyeing him closely.

Kurt shrugged noncommittally, slipping on his leather jacket as he waited for Finn.

"You boys going out?" Carole said with a warm smile.

“Bowling,” Finn said excitedly, pulling on his windbreaker. “With the other Glee kids.”

“Just be careful,” Kurt’s father said warningly. “And be *good*,” he added, eyes fixed on Kurt.

Kurt rolled his eyes and shoved his hands in his pockets as he followed Finn out of the house to his truck, climbing into the passenger’s seat.

The moment they’d pulled out of the driveway, Kurt pulled out a cigarette and rolled down the window as he lit it.

“You really should stop that,” Finn said, glancing over at him. “It’s bad for you, bro.”

“I’m well aware,” Kurt said, taking a long drag from the cigarette and closing his eyes as he waited for the nicotine to hit his veins.

“Plus it’s gross,” Finn added. “You smell like an ashtray.”

Kurt glared at him, a lungful of smoke held back. He exhaled slowly through his nose, smirking as Finn wrinkled up his face at the smell.

“Gross,” he muttered, rolling down his own window to try and dispel the grayish cloud.

Kurt laughed softly, returning his gaze to the houses flying by them. He hurried to smoke the cigarette, knowing he would need to try and conceal the smell before they reached the bowling alley.

He didn’t know *why* he still cared about what Blaine thought of him, but he found he was desperate for the other boy’s approval, despite the fact that Kurt loathed him for what he was able to do to him, able to make him feel. It was frustrating beyond belief.

Flicking the used filter out the window and ignoring Finn’s disapproving look, he reached into his coat pocket to pull out a few sticks of cinnamon gum—his preferred method in concealing his cigarette breath—and opened the glovebox, where Finn always kept a bottle of cheap body spray.

Pulling a wry face, he closed his eyes and sprayed himself with it, coughing and gagging a little at the smell.

He kept the window open the rest of the ride, allowing the fresh air to wash as much of the smell away as possible before they pulled up to the bowling alley ten minutes later.

He ran his hand through his hair again as he leapt lightly from the truck onto the pavement, not waiting for Finn as he strode inside.

It was crowded and noisy and smelled of fabric refresher poorly attempting to conceal the slightly stronger scent of feet. Finn entered behind him, both of them glancing around for familiar faces.

“There they are,” Finn said, unnecessarily pointing out the large group at the far end of the alley.

Kurt’s stomach did an odd sort of somersault at the sight of Blaine laughing with the rest of them about something. He was dressed smartly as usual, a dark blue cardigan buttoned over a plaid oxford, with matching bowtie, and a pair of grey slacks. He looked like he’d just stepped out of the latest J. Crew catalog.

Kurt could appreciate the style but, really, he took it a bit overboard.

Finn grabbed his elbow and dragged him towards the group. Kurt glowered at him but gave into the pressure, struggling to keep up with his long strides.

“Hey guys!” Finn said excitedly when they’d reached the others.

They cried out greetings, a few glancing at Kurt with mild surprise. He usually avoided this sort of thing like the plague.

He felt Blaine’s eyes on him and met his gaze defiantly. His expression was unreadable, searching almost. But then Rachel tapped the other boy’s arm and struck up a conversation about something, casting Kurt a reproving look. They weren’t exactly enemies, but Kurt was well aware of her opinions pertaining to his lifestyle.

Puck sidled over to him, nudging him and smirking. “So how’s it going with fancypants?” he muttered, nodding to Blaine.

“It’s not,” Kurt grumbled. “You saw his reaction Friday.”

Puck shrugged. "Thought maybe you'd worked it out when he chased you down afterwards," he said. He paused, scrutinizing Blaine for a moment. "What do you see in him anyways? He's nothing like you."

"Exactly," Kurt mumbled, turning away from Puck and making his way to the counter to rent his shoes.

"I didn't think you would come," Blaine said unexpectedly as he sat down next to Kurt on the long leather couch while they waited for their turns to bowl. "The others said you usually avoid this kind of stuff."

Kurt didn't give him an answer, first because he was trying to play it cool and give him the cold-shoulder, and secondly because he didn't know what to make of the open friendliness in Blaine's voice.

They were silent for a few more moments and when it became clear to Blaine that Kurt wasn't going to talk, he started a new topic.

"Bowling's not really my thing, to be honest. I suck at it and I have to wear two pairs of socks because I'm afraid that the shoes are going to give me some sort of disease."

Kurt pursed his lips and focused on Rachel's awful attempt at bowling. Why was Blaine being nice to him?

"What about you?" Blaine asked.

It was getting uncomfortably hot in the bowling alley with the huge of group of teenagers so Kurt shrugged off his leather jacket to reveal the artistically ripped *Addicted to Love* t-shirt he was wearing underneath.

Blaine sighed. "Why are you ignoring me?"

Kurt gave him a deadpanned stare. "Did you have some kind of fucking memory failure? Friday? In the hall? You made it very clear that you didn't want anything to do with me, and since then I've decided I don't want much to do with you.

"No, Kurt, on Friday I said that I didn't want to fuck you." Oh god, Blaine shouldn't swear when Kurt was trying to be mad at him; the way his smooth voice rasped over the curse words sent shivers up Kurt's spine

“Oh really?” Kurt said unimpressed. “I thought you said something about not wanting to associate with someone like me.”

“You’re putting words in my mouth, Kurt. I just want to know the person underneath all of this,” he gestured at Kurt’s outfit and styled hair. “I have a feeling he might be a nice guy.”

“Oh my god, can you stop with the whole ‘I want to make you a better person’ thing? I’m not fucking unhappy - I love my life, the only thing wrong with it at the moment is you! If you don’t like who I am the fine, just ignore me like I’m trying to do to you.”

“Your turn, Hummel,” Puck said, interrupting their argument.

Kurt’s gaze flickered between the rest of the group - waiting for him to have his go - and Blaine who definitely hadn’t finished their argument.

What made up his mind was the distasteful sneer on Blaine’s lip as he unconsciously fingered the packet of cigarettes in his pocket.

“Fuck it,” he said, grabbing Finn’s keys from the low counter, “I’m going; I don’t know why I even decided to come, this shit is a waste of my time.” He continued his rant as he walked out, the keys digging painfully into his palm as he scrambled in his pocket for his box of cigarettes, not caring that he was still in full view of Blaine. He was done trying to please such a fucking prick; Puck was right, Blaine was too different.

Monday was going to see the return of Kurt Hummel, not the crazy stalker he had been playing for the last week.

When he got home, he stormed up to his room - ignoring his father’s protests as he slammed the door - pushing the brown folder with Blaine’s name into the trash, where it belonged.

Chapter Four

Monday morning came suddenly, sunlight glaring harshly across Kurt's eyes. He groaned and rolled onto his back, scowling at the ceiling as he untangled himself from the blankets wound around his waist.

Screwing up his eyes against the light, he crawled out of bed, stumbling a little as he got up and moved towards his bathroom.

The previous afternoon's events filtered back to him and he scowled, scrubbing roughly at his skin, not even caring that it hurt and reveling in the raw feeling it gave him.

He dressed carefully in a pair of ripped jeans and a torn t-shirt. He put a streak of black eyeliner under his eyes, smudging it skillfully. He didn't wear make-up often, only when he was looking for a hook-up or feeling particularly intrepid.

By the time he got to school, he'd pushed the thought of Blaine Anderson aside, returning to his usual cool demeanor.

He pulled into the parking lot, straightening his sunglasses and lighting a cigarette as he strode towards the school. A few people stared as he passed and he simply smirked, slipping his sunglasses into his pocket and inhaling a lungful of smoke, blowing it out slowly as he walked past a group of younger students, who shrank away as he passed.

Flicking his cigarette away, he pushed into the school, heading towards his locker with his usual strut, head held high. People seemed to sense the return of his old attitude, pulling away to let him pass.

He felt a rush of confidence at their reactions, stopping to open his locker and stuff his coat inside.

"I thought you quit smoking?"

Kurt closed his locker, sneering over at Blaine, who was watching him closely.

"Yeah, that was the point," he said, dragging his hand through his hair. "You were supposed to think that."

"So you pretended to quit to try and impress me?" Blaine said, sounding flattered and confused.

"Don't know what the hell I was thinking," Kurt said, turning away from him and setting off down the hall.

"Listen, Kurt—"

"No, *you* listen," Kurt said, rounding on him. "I'm over you, okay? I don't know why I even tried in the first place. I guess I like a challenge but, seeing as you're not about to put out any time soon, I'm finished."

Blaine looked hurt and disappointed and Kurt drank it up, pushing back the twinge of guilt he felt. Blaine wasn't for him, they were from completely different worlds and trying to combine the two would be like trying to mix oil and water, it simply couldn't be done.

"Now if you'll excuse me," Kurt said, spotting one of his usual hook-ups eyeing him from down the hall. "I'm in the mood for a blowjob and seeing as you're not about to do it..." he let the sentence trail off, smirking at the way Blaine's features tightened.

He strode past him towards the junior watching him hungrily.

"You're pathetic."

Kurt froze at the word.

"Excuse me?" he ground out, fists clenching at his sides.

"You heard me," Blaine spat in a low growl that was much sexier than it should have been given the situation. "You think your problems will just vanish under the cigarettes and the sex and, from what I've heard, alcohol? You're too afraid to act like yourself and so you pull this...stupid act to try and impress people when all they really think is that you're a dirty, crude whore."

The word cracked like lightning from his lips and Kurt whipped around, whole body shaking with hate for the boy glaring defiantly at him.

"Shut up," he hissed. "Shut the fuck up, Anderson, you don't know me or what I've been through so don't you dare try and act like you do. You stand there with your fucking perfect grades and perfect life and preach to me about trying to impress people? Fuck off."

"It's true, isn't it?" Blaine said, ignoring him and sneering cruelly. "I bet you put out for anyone, don't you? You'd probably beg for it. You're a pathetic wh—"

Kurt's fist crashed against the other boy's jaw, pain shooting up his arm. Blaine reeled back, clutching his face and staring wide-eyed at the smear of blood on his fingers when he pulled his hand away.

The hall went silent, people scurrying to flee the scene before Kurt turned his anger on any of them.

"I am *not* a whore," Kurt growled, taking a step towards Blaine, who, surprisingly, stood his ground.

"You certainly act like one," Blaine said, voice muffled behind the hand covering his rapidly swelling split lip. Kurt hadn't hit him hard, but Blaine must have caught his lower lip between his teeth during the blow.

"So I like to have fun, fucking sue me," Kurt said, rage roiling inside him to the point where he thought his blood might start boiling out of him. All that on top of the fact that he was inexplicably turned on by this side of Blaine. He could see his own disgust reflected back at him in the other boy's eyes and—he realized with a jolt that Blaine's pupils were wide and dark, clouded with what was unmistakably lust.

Kurt turned and walked quickly towards the bathroom, heart hammering in his throat.

He resisted the urge to let out a triumphant shout when he heard Blaine's rapid footsteps behind him.

"Hey!" Blaine said, following Kurt into the bathroom. "I'm not finished with you."

Kurt shoved him up against the door as soon as it closed, pinning him with one arm across his chest, his face inches from Blaine's. Blaine looked mildly frightened, but Kurt caught the faint hint of needy anticipation behind his gaze.

"I know why you hate me so much," Kurt breathed, Blaine pulling back from the scent of smoke still lingering on his tongue. "You're afraid to want me, aren't you? Afraid someone like me will just use you up? I bet someone used you, didn't they? And you got close and hurt and you hid behind your pretty uniform and now..."

He could see the truth of his words in Blaine's eyes, sense the way he tensed beneath his grip.

“Or maybe you’re afraid *I’ll* get hurt by someone like you were?” Kurt continued. “Well let me tell you something, Blaine. I *like* being used. I don’t want to be attached or any of that shit. Love is for suckers. I gave up on that a long time ago and I’m perfectly happy the way I am. And I don’t give a shit what anyone says; I might enjoy myself, but I’m not a fucking whore, got it?”

Blaine nodded, chest rising and falling with each sharp, shallow breath he took. His tongue slipped out briefly to wet his lips and Kurt was sure he’d done it subconsciously but it didn’t stop the gesture from sending blood flooding south.

His eyes flickered down to Blaine’s lips and he swallowed hard.

Kurt didn’t pause to gauge Blaine’s reaction as he leaned in and pressed his lips firmly to Blaine’s, his tongue slipping out to demand entrance. Blaine’s hands - that had been uselessly hanging by his sides - lifted to grip at his waist so tight there would probably be bruises but Kurt didn’t care as he bit Blaine’s bottom lip more urgently.

Blaine’s mouth opened slightly as he gasped in more air, and Kurt took full use of this opportunity - immediately pressing Blaine harder against the door as he explored the inside of Blaine’s mouth, swallowing the other boy’s whimpers.

Blaine tasted... clean. And sweet. Not like Kurt’s other hook ups who all had the lingering taste of booze and drugs.

Kurt should have realised from Blaine’s anger and accusations earlier that the boy had a little bit of experience in the area of making out, but it still surprised him when Blaine slid one hand upwards to cup the back of Kurt’s neck, pressing him closer, and his other fingers curling into Kurt’s belt loops so their hips jerked together roughly.

Kurt whined as the relief shot through him, coupled with a wave of lust and Blaine groaned into his mouth and rocked against him.

Blaine’s kissing was rough and sloppy as he continued to buck his hips up into Kurt’s, their teeth crashing together on more than one occasion, but Kurt couldn’t bring himself to care as Blaine’s hand moved from his belt down to his ass.

“Blaine,” he moaned, their lips breaking apart as Kurt’s head fell back. Blaine took the opportunity to attack Kurt’s neck, sucking and nipping the soft juncture of skin that was revealed as Kurt’s top slid down from his shoulder.

Kurt took over as he felt the familiar tightening his stomach, rutting roughly against Blaine, pushing him harder against the unforgiving wooden door.

“Oh, *shit*,” he cursed as he came in his pants, still bucking his hips as the waves of pleasure swept over him.

When he was finished, he rested his forehead on Blaine’s shoulder, panting heavily as he recovered. Blaine stood still his fingers rubbing aimless patterns on Kurt’s back. Once Kurt was sure he could move without falling over, he straightened and took a few steps away from Blaine with his signature smirk stuck on his face.

“Thanks for that, babe,” he said as he reached around to unlock the door. “You’re more talented than I was expecting.”

“What?” Blaine panted incredulously. “You’re *leaving*?”

“Yeah, I’ve got class.”

“But what about...” Blaine gestured to himself, his erection still straining against his pants.

Kurt shrugged. “Have a wank?” he suggested.

“You’re seriously just going to walk out without me coming?”

“That’s not my problem. I told you that I’m over you; this was just a chance for me to get some fucking relief from all the stress you’ve caused this week. Now I’m going, I don’t want to get a detention after all.” He winked.

As he passed Blaine, a hand shot out to grab at his forearm. He stopped, about to yank his arm out of Blaine’s grip when Blaine said, “You’re a complete ass, Hummel. Stay away from me.”

He stormed out of the room before Kurt had a chance to read the expression on his face.

Kurt stood rooted to the spot for a moment, teetering on the edge of decision. Letting out a frustrated sigh, he yanked the door opened and rushed out into the hallway, trying to ignore the awful feeling of come drying in his jeans, which was made infinitely worse by the fact that he wasn't wearing underwear.

"Blaine!" he shouted, running after the other boy. "Blaine...wait!"

"Fuck you," Blaine snapped, ignoring him and continuing down the hall.

"Blaine, hold on," Kurt said, grabbing his elbow.

"Fuck OFF!" Blaine cried, yanking his arm free as he rounded on Kurt.

The look of absolute disgust and rage on the other boy's features was enough the force Kurt to take a step back. The shocking part wasn't the tight line of his jaw, which now had a purplish bruise blooming across it, or the clenched fists, but the furious tears shining in his eyes.

"Whoa," Kurt said. "What—"

"Just leave me the hell alone," Blaine snapped. "God, I told myself you would pull this kind of shit, that you were just a stupid asshole. I don't know why I was deluded enough to think you'd actually give a damn about anything other than yourself."

He worked his jaw, wincing and touching the tender spot carefully.

Kurt reached out in concern but Blaine slapped his hand away.

"Don't touch me," he snapped. "Just...just go. You don't have to worry about anyone finding out about any of this. I'm not telling anyone. I just want to forget it. I suggest you do the same. You've done a pretty thorough job of screwing any chance there was of this." He gestured between the two of them.

Kurt took in a breath, unsure of how to reply to what Blaine had just said. Had he really actually considered having a relationship with Kurt? Something beyond what they'd just done in the bathroom?

He felt a sudden sinking feeling in his chest as Blaine stormed off, muttering and clutching his jaw. He hadn't thought that Blaine had seen him as anything other than an arrogant ass but the look of hurt rejection in his eyes sent him into a downward spiral of dread and confusion.

Chapter Five

By the time Kurt walked into Glee that afternoon he had lost all hope of talking to Blaine; the boy had been absent since the bathroom incident. Kurt had even sat through an hour of Calculus in the hope that Blaine would walk in, but no luck.

He's spent the rest of the day in the parking lot, a pack of cigarettes clutched tightly in his hand as he waited for Glee to start.

As soon as he saw that Blaine wasn't in the choir room, the desire to turn around and walk out was overpowering. Everyone else's eyes latched onto him and an unnerving quiet swept through the group.

He sighed inwardly and chose a seat as far away from the rest as he possibly could, not able to leave until he was certain that Blaine wasn't going to arrive.

He ran a hand through his hair moodily, glaring at the door and hoping the others got the message that talking to him wasn't a good idea. Sadly, Rachel Berry wasn't the type to pick up on the subtleties.

"What's going on between you and Blaine?" she demanded.

"Is it any of your damn business?" he asked without sparing her a glance.

"Well, seeing as Blaine is now one of our strongest singers and we are going to heavily rely on him during Sectionals, Regionals *and* Nationals this year, it is all of our business."

"I'm not going to tell you my life story so you can win a stupid competition."

"Will you tell *me* why I saw Anderson crying in the bathroom?" Puck asked. "Because despite the fact he's not a badass, he's a pretty cool guy and I've started to like him."

Kurt's head jerked up. "He was *crying* in the *bathroom*?"

Puck nodded.

Kurt wasn't sure if it was possible to feel more awful.

Oh, wait, it was. Blaine took that moment to walk through the door, nodding briefly at the others as he took a seat on the other side of the room. Anyone could see the red, puffy eyes and pale face and work out that Blaine had been crying.

Fuck.

The guilt that he had been trying to ignore all day rose up like a wave - which only heightened when he glanced over to see Blaine staring at him, only to look away when their eyes met. Kurt watched Quinn reach over and squeeze Blaine's hand sympathetically.

"Right, let's start now we're all here," Mr. Schue said, apparently oblivious to the tension in the room. "Does anybody have anything they want to sing to begin?"

"Actually," Kurt said, struck by a sudden surge of conviction. "I need to talk to Blaine. Alone. Um...please," he added as an afterthought.

He could feel the others' eyes training on his curiously but he kept his expression blank. He didn't think Blaine would refuse the request given the questions it would raise, the upsurge in gossip it would incite. The odd looks might also have to do with his use of the word "please", which was in no way a customary inclusion in his daily vocabulary.

"Sure," Mr. Schuester said slowly, glancing between the two boys. He caught sight of Blaine's red-rimmed eyes and his brows furrowed in concern. "Is everything alright, Blaine?"

"Fine," Blaine said, voice a little thick though it was steady and his eyes were dry as he stood. "This won't take long."

Kurt felt a small sense of relief at his agreement in conjunction with a jab of apprehension as he followed Blaine, whose steps were stiff and measured, out into the hall. They walked a short distance from the choir room so as not to be overheard—though if the past was any gauge, the rest of the group would have their ears to the doorway to try and eavesdrop.

Blaine stopped and turned to face him, arms folded resolutely across his chest. "Well?" he said sharply.

Kurt cleared his throat, rubbing the back of his neck. "Listen, Blaine, I didn't mean to...I didn't want to upset you or..." he sighed, frowning. "I'm sorry, I guess."

"You're sorry?" Blaine echoed, voice laced with doubt and contempt.

Kurt nodded, guilt surging through him again at the sight of the concealed bruise on Blaine's jaw.

"You...you're good at that," Kurt said offhandedly, gesturing to the spot, his mouth—as it so often did—working independently of his brain.

Blaine looked taken aback by the change of subject for a moment before replying. "I have a lot of practice," he grunted.

Curiosity welled inside Kurt and he found himself asking the next question before he could stop himself. "From what?" he said, cocking his head to the side.

Blaine gave him a long searching look and Kurt was suddenly tempted to wrap his arms around himself protectively. He felt, as he always did beneath the other's scrutiny, like Blaine was examining him under a magnifying glass, seeing straight through the barriers he'd held up for so long.

"My father," Blaine said at last.

The resulting silence of this statement rang through the empty hall. Kurt could suddenly hear his own blood roaring through his veins.

"W-what?" he said when he'd finally regained the ability to speak.

"You heard me," Blaine said, eyes hard and jaw set rigidly. "My father used to hit me after I came out. I went to Dalton so I didn't have to put up with him but my ex-boyfriend took a leaf from his book only he *also* used me for sex. My mom finally got full custody so now I can live here with her and I don't have to deal with their crap anymore." He shook his head, looking down at his crossed arms and small sound of twisted amusement. "Is this what you wanted?" he said, looking up at Kurt with a tight, scornful smile. "You can't stand seeing someone who's actually happy and you feel the need to break them down until they're just as miserable and lonely as you are? Well, congratulations, Kurt. You win."

He tried to push past him but Kurt grabbed his arm to hold him in place.

"Stop," he said gently.

Blaine looked like he was going to resist for a moment but seemed to resign to moment, sighed as he looked over at Kurt, who slackened his grip.

Kurt took a moment to search Blaine's features, trying to ascertain what he could in the brief space of time.

"I'm sorry," he said, praying it sounded genuine. "I really am. I...I didn't kno—"

"No," Blaine said bitterly. "You didn't. You didn't take the time to even *try* to know. All you wanted out of this was exactly what you got. Now just let me go back to trying to be happy for once in my damn life and bother someone else."

He tore his arm free and walked back to the choir room without a backwards glance. Kurt could almost hear the others hurrying back to their seats and was sure Blaine would be getting hit with a tidal wave of sympathy from them all.

There was no way Kurt could go back in, not now. If he thought they'd disliked him before, they would downright hate him after the exchange he'd just had with Blaine. Not interested in dealing with their judgmental and disgusted looks, he didn't follow Blaine. He also thought further attempts to talk to him would only exacerbate the situation at this point.

And so he left, feeling guilty and ashamed and most of all dispirited at the thought that he'd not only hurt Blaine, but destroyed his chances of developing any kind of relationship—friendship or more—with the one person who'd actually been willing to see past his mask and help him.

The worst thing about their confrontation was that it happened on Monday. This meant that instead of being able to take a few days off to recover and plan out how the hell he was going to fix it, Kurt had to go straight back to school.

At least, that is what he would have to do if he gave a shit about his attendance record.

It was easy to fool his dad; all it took was Kurt getting ready in his usual bad mood and throwing a leg over his Harley at around the right time in the morning and his dad was happy. Kurt would forge his signature on an absence note later.

And then he had a day to waste.

Places such as the mall or the park were out of the question due to the possibility of running into someone who knew he should be at school and being far too tacky. He didn't have a car to park and sit in - his bike was his pride and joy and all, but it was hardly suitable for pity parties.

Eventually he pulled up outside a small coffee shop on the outskirts of Lima, which was tucked away down a maze of small side streets meaning the chance of anyone recognising him was slim.

Kurt was also ready to drop to the ground out of exhaustion (due to the fact he hadn't been able to sleep because he had been up all night thinking about how badly he had fucked up) and coffee sounded like a *really* good idea.

He parked his bike and kicked down the stand, dropping the keys into his pocket as he pushed open the glass doors into the warm shop. The aroma of coffee was strong, and Kurt breathed in deeply to appreciate the calming scent. It wasn't often he had a chance to unwind.

"Grande non-fat mocha," he ordered at the counter, ignoring the raised eyebrow of the barista at his age - no matter how Kurt dressed, people never mistook his age.

"You actually are stalking me, aren't you?" a tired, angry voice said from behind him as he waited for his drink. Kurt spun, his eyes widening as he saw Blaine dressed in a baggy hoodie and jeans, flanked by two boys dressed in blazers, both of whom were eyeing him with what could only be described as revulsion.

"Blaine," Kurt squeaked, "I... I honestly... What are you doing here? There's school..."

"I didn't feel like it," he said brusquely as the friend on his right asked rather rudely, "What are *you* doing here?"

"I wanted somewhere to sit and waste a day. I didn't mean to run into you... I know you don't want to see me."

"You're right; he doesn't."

"Wes," Blaine sighed.

Kurt, for the first time in a long time, didn't retaliate. He picked up his coffee from the counter silently and moved out of Blaine's way.

The three boys were silent as they watched him bite his lip and frown.

"I really am sorry, Blaine," he said quietly.

Before Blaine could say anything, his loud-mouth friend (Wes, was it?) cut in. "Just leave him alone, okay? You've already done enough to hurt him."

Okay, Kurt was trying to be as nice as possible, but he could *not* put up with assholes even on his best days.

"Excuse me," he demanded, "but who the fuck are you, and what gives you the right to talk to *me* like that?"

The boy bristled. "I'm Wes. One of Blaine's best friends from his old school; David and I were the ones to help him through all of the other shit he's had to cope with, and we're the ones to help him get over *you*. Don't you *dare* look at me like that and then try to apologise. You know *nothing* about any-"

"Wes," Blaine said quietly, "he gets it."

Kurt certainly did get it.

He got that he had completely messed up whatever steps Blaine had taken in his recovery and that he'd ripped up everything good in other boy's life. He got that Blaine did actually have people outside McKinley to rely on, that Kurt wasn't the only source of company in his life, that it was probably better if Kurt was out of his life.

His hand tightened around the coffee cup in his hand as his eyes watered; why did he *always* have to fuck things up?

"I... I really am sorry, Blaine. I didn't mean to screw up so badly," he said to the floor and practically ran out.

Perhaps his Harley was the perfect place to throw a pity party after all.

He gulped down the scalding coffee, grimacing as he felt his throat and tongue starting to blister and knowing he probably wouldn't be to sing for the rest of the week—if he went back to Glee Club that was.

But he welcomed to burn, savored the pain for the fact that he knew he deserved it.

He needed some kind of punishment for what he'd done and since Blaine was about to sock him in the jaw—a gesture he'd have readily allowed to happen—this seemed sufficient for the time being.

He tossed the half-full cup in the garbage bin outside the shop before heading to his bike, fishing the keys from his pocket and swinging his leg over the seat.

Glancing back at the shop, he saw Blaine sitting with his two friends by the window, head hung as Wes patted him on the back. Almost as if he sensed Kurt's eyes on him, he looked up and met Kurt's gaze, holding it steadily.

Even from the distance, Kurt could see the pain hiding in Blaine's eyes. He wondered just what he'd had to suffer through, how long he'd been tormented before he'd finally escaped the mistreatment from his father and ex.

Blaine's other friend said something and Blaine finally looked away, leaving Kurt staring at the back of his head and feeling, if possible, even worse.

He rested his elbows on the handlebars, gripping his face in his hands for a moment before shoving the key in the ignition and kicking the bike to life. Chancing another glance back, he saw that Blaine was clutching his face in one hand and shaking with what were unmistakably sobs.

Hating himself more than he ever had in his life, Kurt put the bike in gear and twisted on the throttle. The bike leapt forward a little as it started out, the back tire spinning for a moment against the blacktop.

He squeezed the clutch as he left the parking lot, shifting gears once he got onto the main road. Picking up speed, he was up to fifty miles per hour in a matter of seconds. He felt reckless and disconnected, not even flinching as he zoomed through a red light and a truck slammed on its brakes and horn as he flew by.

Sixty. Seventy.

The speedometer climbed higher and high, the engine roaring and spitting and jerking as he kicked into the highest gear.

Eighty.

Trees and houses flew past in a colored blur.

Why did he have to screw up everything he touched? Himself, that was fine. He'd long since accepted he was destined to be the world's worst fuck-up for the rest of his life but now he'd gone and seriously hurt someone he'd actually started to genuinely care about and he hadn't even stopped for a moment to consider what kind of damage he might cause.

Ninety.

The bike wobbled a little as he rounded a corner, fingers white around the handlebars and eyes watering as the wind rushed over them, his hair flying back from his scalp and a loud roaring in his ears as the world whipped by him, each bit indistinguishable from the next.

The speedometer pegged at one-ten, the engine whining loudly in protest of the abuse.

He zipped past cars, weaving in and out of traffic when came to it, occasionally hearing the blare of a horn behind him as he went.

He lost all sense of direction, not knowing or even really caring where he was going. What he really wanted was to talk to Blaine, but he was certain Blaine would never want to give him the time of day again and, honestly, Kurt didn't blame him in the least.

Glancing down, he felt a slight shock as he realised how fast he was going and eased off the throttle. Looking back up, his eyes widened at the sight of the rapidly approached car in front of him, slamming his foot down on the brake.

The brakes locked, the engine stalling suddenly as the bike tried to react and go from ninety to zero in an instant. The whole thing shook and twisted beneath him and he struggled for a split second to steady it, panic flooding his brain, before it jerked sideways and tipped as it spun, pitching him forward.

He felt the swooping sensation in his gut as he went flying, the whole world slowing to a stuttering crawl as he turned over in mid-air, the bike skidding and rolling across the pavement behind him.

His blood felt like ice in his veins as he realised he could very well die when he hit the ground. He suddenly wished he'd worn a helmet.

In that split second he could sense everything and nothing all at once, his own racing pulse, the awful grind of metal against pavement that sent sparks flying, even the rustling of the trees along the side of the road.

Reality crashed back into normal speed as he slammed against the back of the car he'd been trying to stop for. He could feel his own bones breaking like twigs beneath the impact, pain lancing through his body from at least a dozen places.

The back of his skull collided with the bumper and white lights erupted across his vision. He dropped to the pavement, his body crumbling and collapsing, twisted and awkwardly positioned.

He could hear screams and doors slamming briefly before the pain swallowed him up and darkness mercifully blanked it out.

Chapter Six

Kurt wasn't sure where he was, only that it wasn't his bedroom and it was too cold for his liking. He tried to lift his arms to pull the blankets tighter around him, but everything felt heavy and he couldn't force his muscles to respond.

He opened his eyes a crack, but the harsh light made him whimper and close them again.

He was breathless and dizzy, like he wasn't getting enough oxygen, but every time he tried to inhale in felt like someone had plugged up his windpipe.

"Kurt?" he heard someone say above him. "Kurt, can you open your eyes?"

After failing to shake his head in response, Kurt tried to say *no, it hurts* but much like his breath, the words stuck painfully in his throat.

"Kurt, can you try opening your eyes please?"

There were other noises underneath the calm, collected voice. A symphony of beeps and humming that was sort of familiar to Kurt; they sounded like they should belong in a TV hospital drama.

Hospital.

The accident. Fuck. Was Kurt alive? People did *not* survive crashes like that. He felt alive; there was enough pain rocketing through his nerves for him to be alive. But then again, it was equally likely that he had been mistaken all his life about religion and was now in Hell. He was definitely in enough agony for Hell.

"Kurt, please calm down, don't panic. Once you've opened your eyes we'll explain everything to you."

Shit, this was going to kill his dad. He had always told Kurt to wear a helmet and drive responsibly, he hadn't even wanted to buy Kurt the bike in the first place. And now Kurt was either dead or dying and it was all his fault.

"Kurt." That was a familiar voice, one that Kurt could recognise anywhere. Granted, he sounded exhausted, but if his dad was there, it meant that Kurt was alive, right? "Please open your eyes, son. Please."

Everything was blurred at first. Kurt could just make out the shifting silhouettes of two people at the foot of his bed and the grey blur of machines at his sides. Then things started to focus, like his plaster-covered body and the lines of tubes running into the visible patches of skin, and Burt Hummel's relieved expression as he watched his son. The doctor standing next to him nodded with approval as Kurt blinked a couple of times.

Dad, he tried to say, his mouth opening uselessly as no sound came out.

"Kurt, you won't be able to talk for a while," the doctor said. "It was quite a serious crash, and when you were brought in you weren't able to breathe so we've had to insert a tracheotomy tube to help you. Provided your ribs heal without another puncture, we should be able to remove it in a week. As for your other injuries, they were severe but you should recover."

Kurt looked helplessly as his dad, who blinked back tears and said gruffly, "You broke a lot of bones, kid. And you hit your head pretty hard so you couldn't breathe on your own; a machine's doing it for you now."

No wonder he hurt so much.

"God, Kurt, why weren't you wearing a helmet?" Burt choked out uselessly, knowing that he wasn't going to get a response.

Kurt gaze dropped as tears began to fall down his cheeks. Out of the corner of his eye, he could see his dad rest a hand on the cast on his leg.

"You're going to be okay though. You're going to get better."

Kurt wasn't sure if he could believe that right now.

He wanted to ask what was wrong, what all had happened to him. Would he walk again? Was he paralysed or permanently broken?

A thousand different possibilities raced around his brain. He felt his heart kicking into high gear, the beeping picking up to match it as his breath started rasping through the pipe in his throat, hissing harsh and shallow from his aching lungs, his eyes darting over the thick casts covering his body.

"Kurt," his father said, hurrying to his side and gripping the tips of his fingers poking through the cast wrapped around his left arm. "Kurt, you need to calm down, okay?"

The room started spinning around him, colours blurring and smearing together, his pupils dilating as tears slid down his cheeks and trickled under the brace strapped around his neck.

"Doctor, can't you do something?" Kurt's father said, his voice echoing through Kurt's brain.

"I need a Propofol drip and 10 cc's of morphine!" the doctor cried, his hand gripping Kurt's shoulder to hold him down as he started to thrash against the bed, pain exploding over every inch of skin and seeping through his bones.

There were hurried footsteps and shadows falling over him. He felt a sharp pain in his wrist followed by another in his elbow.

Within seconds, the drugs took effect and his whole body sagged, his vision blurring as he was sucked back into unconsciousness.

"You really can't see him right now, I'm sorry. He's not even conscious."

"Please. This is...it's all my fault he's like this. He was upset because of me, I need to apologise."

"I'm sorry...what did you say your name was?"

"Blaine."

The voices seeped across Kurt's subconscious, his ears tuning in at the sound of Blaine's name.

"I'm sorry, Blaine, I really don't think—"

"Please, Mr. Hummel," Blaine said thickly. "Just...five minutes. Please."

A third voice joined the conversation. "Dad, he's fine," Finn said gently.

Kurt heard his father sigh heavily. "Alright," he said. "Five minutes," he added a little sternly.

"Thank you," Blaine said.

Soft footsteps reached Kurt's ears and he turned his head very slightly towards the sound of Blaine's loud sniff.

"Oh, god, Kurt," he said, voice quivering. "This is my fault. I should have just let you talk, I'm so so sorry, Kurt."

He gave another hearty sniff, his hand settling on Kurt's bandaged left arm.

"I wish I could say something else," he said softly. "I don't even know if you can hear me right now."

Kurt forced his body to respond as he slowly opened his eyes, which immediately fell onto Blaine standing next to him, his eyes puffy and his face streaked with tears.

"Kurt," he said, relief clear in his voice. "Thank god. I'm so sorry, Kurt, this is all my fault and I know you can't talk but I hope you don't hate me even though I understand if you do."

Kurt made a small croaking sound in the back of his throat to shut him up. Blaine's jaw snapped closed.

Kurt shook his head half an inch to each side despite the fact that it sent fresh jolts of pain down his spine.

"I don't understand," Blaine said, furrowing his brow and looking helpless. "Are you saying you want me to go?"

Kurt shook his head again, wincing and whimpering at the pain.

"Don't...don't move," Blaine said gently. "Um...how about you blink? One for yes and two for no okay?"

Kurt blinked once.

Blaine smiled hopefully, hurrying to pull a chair up to Kurt's bed and sitting down, hand returning to Kurt's arm.

He squinted thoughtfully for a moment. "Okay," he said at last. "I'll only have a few minutes. So...I know this is my fault—"

Kurt blinked twice quickly.

Blaine shook his head. "Stop, it's my fault and you know it," he said, regret shining in his eyes. "I just needed to tell you how sorry I am. You...you didn't know about what happened to me and...I should have said something instead of blowing you off completely. I should have explained.

"You're not a bad person, Kurt. I can just...I can tell you're not. But I shouldn't have assumed you wanted anyone to come and try and fix you. I guess I could tell you were hiding and...not being yourself. To some extent, at least." He raked his fingers through his loose curls. He was still dressed in the clothes he'd been wearing at The Lima Bean. "I wanted to know what you were really like, I guess." He sighed, shaking his head. "It sounds stupid, I know."

Kurt blinked twice again.

Blaine smiled, tears welling in his eyes again as he looked over Kurt's broken and bandaged body. "I'm so sorry, Kurt," he whispered.

Kurt working his aching jaw and face into a small smile, turning the very corners of his lips up.

Blaine's throat worked as he swallowed, his features softening. His hand lifted to brush the few strands of hair hanging from under Kurt's bandages off his forehead.

He gnawed at the inside of his cheek for a moment. "Would it be okay if...if I came back?" he said hopefully. "To see you again?"

Kurt blinked and Blaine's face lit up, his smile brightening the entire room.

"I'll be back tomorrow," Blaine said, standing up as Kurt's father appeared in the doorway. "After school. Is that okay?"

Kurt blinked again, forcing another small smile.

Blaine squeezed the tips of his fingers gently, flashing him a final bright smile before walking across the room and passing by Kurt's father into the hall.

Kurt's face ached as he smiled a little wider, glancing down at his suddenly tingling fingers and finding himself already counting down the hours until the following afternoon.

Chapter Seven

"Hey, Kurt."

Kurt's looked up at the doorway, his mouth stretching into a small smile as Blaine walked into the room.

He had been forced to stay lying in the bed all day with hardly any movement, alternating between staring at the ceiling - slowly clenching and relaxing his muscles, waiting for a time when he would be able to do it without the accompanying jolt of pain - and napping.

"How are you?" Blaine asked as he took the chair on the other side of the bed to Burt - who had fallen asleep after sitting vigil by Kurt all day.

Kurt raised an eyebrow - *fucking hell that hurt, stop moving your facial muscles, Kurt, Jesus* - at the other boy. Blaine caught on after a moment and blushed.

"Oh, right, I forgot about the..." He waved his hand in the general direction of Kurt's throat, where the tube stuck out from his skin. The wheezing of the machine it was connected to had become a steady, comforting sound for Kurt.

There was silence as Blaine rethought his question.

"Are you feeling better than yesterday?"

One blink for yes.

"Does it still hurt?"

One blink.

Blaine looked down at his lap as he absent-mindedly weaved his fingers through the crocheted blanket laid neatly over Kurt.

"...Are you angry at me?"

Two blinks. Followed by another two blinks. Followed by *another* two blinks. Kurt even attempted to open his mouth to protest more, but the only noise he could get through was a dull whine. Not being able to talk was inconvenient when Blaine was being more infuriating than usual. Did he *really* think for a second that Kurt was angry at him?

"Hey, hey," Blaine soothed, patting his hands uselessly on Kurt's cast-covered arm. "Don't stress yourself, calm down."

Hard to do when you're being an idiot, Blaine, Kurt thought uselessly at him.

"Do you want me to talk about something else?" he asked somewhat awkwardly when the beeping of the heart monitor returned to a steady pulse.

One blink.

And so Blaine did. He started with the simple stuff, like how he was worried about an upcoming history test and what song Rachel was trying to persuade Glee to sing. It was interesting for Kurt to listen: he hadn't worried about school work in *years* and generally blocked out every word that Berry said. He'd almost forgotten how *normal* school was for everyone else.

Then, when Blaine exhausted the topic of school, he broadened the topic to his hobbies (music, mainly, though he loved reading and enjoyed dancing crazily in the privacy of his bedroom where no one could judge him; Kurt's lip twitched into a smile when he admitted that) and he spent a good twenty minutes telling Kurt about the various pets he had tried to own as a child (three hamsters, a rabbit, two guinea pigs and several hundred goldfish) and subsequently lost as it often was with small animals.

By the time Burt woke up, it was half an hour until visiting hours ended and Kurt was watching Blaine work on his math homework, which was hardly the most thrilling thing, though he did get a lot of satisfaction when Blaine bit his tender bottom lip while trying to work out a harder problem. It brought back certain...*pleasurable* memories.

"You should get going," Burt said as he stretched his tired muscles.

Blaine nodded in agreement and stood up, packing his books away. "See you tomorrow?"

One blink.

Burt turned back to Kurt once Blaine had left.

"He seems like a nice kid."

One blink.

The days crawled by, Kurt finding that he was living for the hours when Blaine stopped by, occasionally accompanied by other members of the Glee Club, who seemed to wholeheartedly regret their past mistreatment of Kurt.

Not that he really believed them. Sure, they were sorry he was in the hospital but he highly doubted any of them would have given a damn about him if not for the crash. Well, Puck cared, they'd always been relatively good friends. But Blaine was the only one who really took the time to talk to Kurt, to give up his free time to simply sit in the room with him even when Kurt had no means of contributing to the conversation save the occasional answer via blinking or a roll of his eyes when Blaine started trying to apologise again.

He'd finally stopped by the end of the week when he showed up Friday with his bag bulging with what was unmistakably books.

Kurt cocked an eyebrow at him curiously and Blaine simply grinned. They'd started actually communicating the some extent simply through facial expressions now that Kurt's cuts and bruises were starting to heal.

"I thought I could read to you," Blaine said, setting his bag down as he sat. He bent over to pull out a few book. "Just tell me of you'd be interested in it and we'll narrow it down, okay?"

One blink.

Blaine grinned and held up a copy of *Sense and Sensibility*.

Kurt pulled a wry face and blinked twice.

"My mom suggested it," Blaine said, shrugging and setting the book aside. Next, he held up a worn copy of *Watership Down*. "This is one of my favourites," he said.

Kurt attempted a shrug and blinked once, smiling.

Blaine set it on the nightstand and bent over to pick up a few more books. They continued like this for a few minutes, Blaine holding up books and waiting for Kurt's opinion, two piles growing steadily as he emptied the bag. When he held up a copy of *The Hobbit*, Kurt smirked and shook very faintly with silent laughter, his ribs immediately protesting the action.

"Oh, shut up," Blaine said, scowling and shoving the book back in his bag, the corners of his mouth twitching.

They eventually settled on *Brave New World*, which Blaine swore up and down was no less than brilliant.

Kurt settled in the pillows, smiling as Blaine cracked the book open and cleared his throat.

"Chapter one," he said, glancing up at Kurt with a warm smile. "*A squat grey building of only thirty-four stories. Over the main entrance the words, Central London Hatchery and Conditioning Centre...*"

Kurt let his words wash over him, the sound soft and soothing, almost musical to his ears. He smiled when Blaine created his own voices for the different characters, occasionally glancing up to catch Kurt's reactions to different passages.

He thought he could probably listen to Blaine read forever and never get tired of the sound, how he adjusted the quality of his voice to suit the situation and made the pages come to life. Kurt had never been one for reading before but this was something he thought he could get used to.

Then it hit him that maybe Blaine wouldn't *want* to hang around him once he was better, that he was only doing it because he still felt like he was to blame for what had happened. The thought made his heart sink in his chest.

"I'll read more tomorrow, okay?" Blaine said when he'd reached a good stopping point a few minutes before visiting hours ended.

Kurt blinked, looking away from him as his eyes suddenly burned at the possibility that Blaine didn't really enjoy the time they'd been spending together. Before everything between them had started, Kurt would have scoffed at the idea of enjoying someone reading to him but now, he couldn't stand the thought of everything ending once he recovered.

"What's wrong?" Blaine said, pausing in the process of packing up his books and giving Kurt a concerned look.

Kurt blinked twice and shook his head very slightly.

"Kurt?" Blaine said, straightening and laying his hand on Kurt's arm that wasn't wrapped in a cast. The touch brought a thick lump to Kurt's throat and he blinked rapidly, though he was unable to stop the tears from spilling down his cheeks. *Dammit*, he did *not* cry, what was *wrong* with him?

Blaine's face fell and he hurried to grab a tissue from the nightstand to wipe the tears away. Kurt recoiled, hating showing this weakness and not being able to do anything to stop it.

"Kurt, it's okay," Blaine soothed, very gently wiping Kurt's cheeks. "I don't care if you cry, I'm not going to think any less of you. Is it the pain? Do you need more medicine?"

Two blinks.

Blaine frowned in thought. "Did I do something wrong?"

Two blinks again.

"Do you still want me to come back tomorrow?" Blaine said timidly.

Kurt blinked once and gave him a pleading look.

Blaine gave him a steady searching look and Kurt tried to relay what he was thinking, thankful beyond belief that the tube would be gone Sunday so he could start to heal his vocal chords again.

"Kurt, I'm not leaving," Blaine said softly. "I mean, I have to leave but, I'm not...I still want to be your friend when this is over."

Kurt's jaw tightened painfully at the word "friend". He didn't know what he wanted anymore but there was a large chunk of him—and not just the bit between his legs that has once controlled a lot of him—that wanted something other than friendship.

Blaine's fingers slipped between his own and Kurt's eyes snapped back to the other boy, who smiled.

"Who knows," Blaine said, shrugging. "Maybe there's still a chance for the private school prep and McKinley's resident badboy."

Kurt smiled, rolling his eyes even as relief flooded through him.

"Kurt?"

Kurt looked back at Blaine, who looked faintly anxious.

"Can I...kiss you?" Blaine said, stroking his thumb across Kurt's hand.

A pause.

One blink.

Blaine smiled, leaning over and gently pressing his lips to Kurt's. Kurt responded immediately, moving his lips against Blaine's despite the pain in his jaw.

This time around, Kurt took the time to enjoy just how soft Blaine's lips were and how easily they slid against his own.

Blaine pulled back after a few seconds, smiling softly.

There were several seconds' silence in which they smiled sheepishly at each other before the clock on Kurt's nightstand flipped to seven and Blaine sighed.

"I gotta go," he said, reluctantly swinging his bag over his shoulder. "I'll see you tomorrow, yeah?"

Kurt smiled and gave the tiniest of nods. Blaine grinned back, moving to the door and pausing briefly to glance back at him before leaving.

Kurt sighed, the air hissing through the tube in his throat, a small, triumphant smile playing on his lips and his heart monitor beeping a little faster than normal beside his bed.

Blaine had to skip their meeting on Saturday (Kurt didn't get an explanation, and apparently his curious expressions weren't enough of a hint to Blaine that he wanted one) and when he arrived on Monday afternoon, Kurt was sitting up in bed for the first time, a large smile on his face.

"Kurt!" he yelled happily, chucking his bag filled with books onto the floor next to the bed. "Your tube's gone."

Kurt grinned wider and nodded.

"Can you talk now?"

Kurt blinked twice, but pointed towards the whiteboard and pen that was resting on his lap and wiggled the fingers on his right hand which were not encased in a plaster cast. He had messily scrawled a large '*10 days*' before Blaine had arrived, knowing it would be one of his first questions.

"You've still got ten *whole* days of silence?" Blaine asked, horrified. "That... that *sucks*."

Kurt shrugged and resisted the urge to fiddle with the white gauze wrapped around his neck. It rubbed and irritated his skin, and at first he had had to have a nurse keep an extra close eye on him and slap away his hand whenever he picked at the bandage.

"Where's your dad?" Blaine asked curiously. It was an expected question; Burt Hummel was a practically immovable installation of Kurt's hospital room and Blaine had only been in there for a few minutes at a time without Burt's presence, though he was often asleep in the corner of the room.

Kurt wiped the whiteboard clean and picked up the pen unsteadily with his hand, shakily penning *FOOD* in his most legible handwriting.

"Oh." Blaine stared at the board and the corner of his mouth perked into a smile. "You realise that one of the first things I discovered about you was that you're left handed." Kurt raised an eyebrow and Blaine

helpfully added, "It was one of your comebacks when I told you to acquaint yourself with your right hand and stop stalking me."

Kurt nodded knowingly as he remembered the failed attempts at seducing Blaine. They weren't embarrassing memories any more, especially considering their kiss.

He hadn't been granted another one. Mainly due to the fact his father was always in the room and Blaine had a good sense of self-preservation and so didn't attempt anything more than a goodbye peck on the cheek.

However before he requested a kiss, Kurt had other issues to clear up.

WHERE WERE YOU YESTERDAY?

Blaine leaned forward to decipher the words before averting his gaze in obvious discomfort. "I... Um... I was at, well, counseling."

WHAT?

"I go to counseling on Saturdays. You know, just to help with the nightmares and things."

Oh. Well, that conversation suddenly got really awkward. Especially because the last time they had discussed Blaine's personal problems, it had involved crying and swearing and yelling.

Before Kurt or Blaine could attempt to break the silence and start a new conversation, Burt re-entered the room with a steaming cup of coffee in his hand. He greeted with Blaine with a nod and sat in the other chair.

Well, fuck, there go the chances for Kurt to steal another kiss.

Blaine cleared his throat. "So, do you want me to keep reading Brave New World?"

Kurt sighed and nodded as he attempted to get more comfortable on the hospital bed.

Over the next week, Kurt got to see less and less of Blaine as Sectionals were fast approaching and much of his time was dedicated to Glee practice. Plus, he'd put off a lot of his homework and other responsibilities to spend all his time with Kurt.

"I've kind of been making my mom do everything at home," he said guiltily the following Friday, his English homework sitting in his lap. "She said it was fine because she knows how much I wanted to see you but I feel bad, you know?"

Kurt picked his whiteboard and pen, scrawling across it sloppily with his right hand. His handwriting had been improving over the past few days but he was in no way well-practiced with it yet.

You really wanted to see me that bad?

Blaine tilted his head to read the words, smiling and blushing very faintly. He shrugged. "You're not all that bad to hang around with when you can't talk," he said, smirking.

Ass. Kurt wrote, grinning as Blaine laughed. He took the moment to admire just how good Blaine looked, his sweater hugging the firm muscles of his arms and his hair loose from the usual copious amounts of gel. Apparently he'd woken up late that morning as he'd had to stay up to finish his homework after spending most of the evening with Kurt.

He'd become unbelievably frustrated by the fact that nothing more had happened between them. Sure, he loved talking to Blaine, but dammit, he'd been in that hospital bed for almost two weeks and only gotten one kiss besides the short pecks on the cheek Blaine gave him when he left. He'd quickly discovered just how incredibly annoying it was to have a boner when half your body was in a cast.

Blaine's laughter died down, a warm smile still lingering on his lips as he reached out to gently take Kurt's hand.

"I heard your dad talking to Finn the other day," he said, looking sheepish. "About...about you being held back."

Kurt shrugged. With all the time he'd missed from school—not to mention the remaining minimum of two weeks he'd remain in the hospital plus the months he'd be spending at home for his bones to heal, there was simply no way he'd be able to pass his senior year. His father had talked to the school about it and

they'd decided to let him come back after winter break to try and work on his core classes but there still wasn't any way he'd be able to graduate the following June.

"At least you'll get another shot at going to Nationals," Blaine said with a sad smile. "I think I've convinced everyone to let you back in once you're better. You might not be able to do Regionals but Nationals is in Vegas this year! Can you imagine how crazy that's going to be?"

Kurt smiled at his enthusiasm, rolling his eyes.

Blaine squeezed his hand gently, glancing over at the door, which was cracked open, and at the chair usually occupied by Burt, who was back working at the shop now that Kurt was stable and on the road to recovery.

"You know, I miss you at school," Blaine said, frowning faintly. "Dealing with Rachel yammering and everyone arguing half the time...it was a lot more fun when you were there to make fun of them."

Kurt pulled a look of mock modesty and Blaine chuckled.

"Seriously though," he said, voice softening. "I miss you. Life's a lot more exciting with you around. Even when you can't talk."

Kurt wished he *could* talk, if only to tell Blaine to shut his mouth and attach it to his own. He thought that might spoil the moment though so he simply smiled.

Blaine gave him a steady look, shifting his chair closer. Kurt's eyes widened as he realized what was about to—at least, he hoped—happen.

Blaine swallowed, leaning forward and closing his eyes. Kurt's own eyes slid closed as their lips connected. It took all of his self-control not to immediately shove his tongue down Blaine's throat, allowing the other boy to take control.

Thankfully, Blaine's tongue flicked out across Kurt's lower lip and Kurt opened his mouth readily to accept it, groaning as Blaine dipped his tongue hesitantly over his teeth. Kurt wasn't sure why he was being so careful given what they'd done in the McKinley bathroom but he supposed they'd sort of started over since the accident.

Blaine angled his head to the side, deepening the kiss as the hand not gripping Kurt's brushed across Kurt's cheek gently. Kurt felt himself starting to grow hard from the dizzying sensation the kiss was giving him. He put a little more hunger behind the kiss, silently praying Blaine would get the hint and wondering if he'd be daring enough to give him a handjob in the practically public room.

He shivered with anticipation when Blaine's hand pulled away from his own, gliding over his stomach and trailing across his rib cage delicately. They broke apart as their air ran out, gasping and holding each other's gazes silently as Blaine's hand moved closer to Kurt's half-hard cock.

"Kurt, I brought your din—oh, hey, Blaine."

Blaine practically flew back into his seat, hands snatching back to lay in his lap on top of his books as Finn walked through the doorway clutching a paper bag.

Kurt gave Finn such a ferocious glare that he took a step back, looking nervous.

"Dude, what's wrong?" he said timidly. "I was just bringing you your dinner. I know you hate the hospital food."

Kurt shook his head, refusing to look at him as he set the paper bag carefully on the table where he could reach it before scurrying out of the room with a faintly scared backwards glance.

Huffing, Kurt looked at Blaine, who was laughing silently, shaking and pinching the bridge of his nose between his fingers.

Kurt glowered at him and snatched up his board, scribbling across it and not even caring that it was barely legible as he held it up, Blaine letting out a shout of laughter at what he'd written.

Fuck you, I'm horny.

Chapter Eight

"I ran into your dad as he was leaving," Blaine said as he settled next to Kurt. "He's very nice."

Kurt smirked and uncapped the pen.

He wouldn't be if he knew what we did together.

"But we've only kissed!" Blaine protested. "Well, apart from that one time in the bathroom, but that doesn't count. Besides, you're obviously the corrupting influence in this dynamic."

You almost gave me a handjob four days ago, Kurt complained on the whiteboard.

Blaine blushed slightly but ignored the message, leaning down to grab a book from his bag. "We've almost finished this one, you know."

You're such a prude, Anderson.

"What? Why?" Blaine asked.

We're ALONE all evening and we're READING?

"What would you rather do?"

Can you put your hand where it was before Finn walked in?

"But... the book," Blaine protested meekly.

Hand. In. My. Pants. Kurt scrawled, glaring at Blaine - he hadn't completely forgiven him for leaving him alone, horny and with *Finn* after the attempted handjob.

Blaine flushed under Kurt's stare and bit his lip, but - to Kurt's utmost relief - his hand slowly pushed down the pale blue blanket that covered Kurt's bandaged body. Before he actually neared Kurt's half hard cock, Blaine cupped his cheek and pulled his face upwards so he could press his soft lips against Kurt's. The familiar soothing smell of soap washed over Kurt and he found himself relaxing into the kiss, despite the slight strain on his tired muscles, as Blaine's fingers traced the skin just above Kurt's leg cast.

Kurt sighed heavily through his nose as his tongue pushed into Blaine's mouth.

"I missed this, you know," Blaine murmured against his mouth. "I missed *you*."

Less talking, Kurt groaned inside his head. He reached down to grip Blaine's wrist and sharply pull his hand up so he could feel Kurt's arousal through the thin boxers he was wearing.

Blaine's hand slipped inside the fabric as their tongues met, swallowing Kurt's gasps as his hand tightened around Kurt's dick. The kiss became sloppier - with too much teeth and not enough tongue - as Kurt stopped concentrating on the way their lips moved, instead focusing on the sinful way Blaine was twisting his hand while his little finger dragged along the vein on the underside of his cock.

Blaine tightened his fist in response to Kurt's desperate, breathy whimpers and knelt against the mattress so he had a better angle to attack Kurt's mouth, gently biting Kurt's lower lip as his hand moved.

Kurt felt his hips try to useless buck up into Blaine's fist as the familiar tightening sensation started in his abdomen, but his injuries kept him tethered to bed. He kissed Blaine furiously, trying to get across his need. Blaine seemed to understand as he moved faster; Kurt couldn't his head lolling back against the pillows as-

"*Blaine*," Kurt groaned roughly as he came over his chest and Blaine's hand.

Blaine froze, his hand still down Kurt's pants as his eyes widening to a comical size as he stared at Kurt in shock.

"*You spoke*."

Kurt cleared his throat, still painful from the tube he'd had stuck in it for a week. "Hey," he croaked, grinning as Blaine beamed at him.

"Who knew all it would take was you getting off?" he said as he pulled his hand free from Kurt's pants, pulling a wry face.

Kurt laughed, clutching his throat at the burn and throb the action brought to his unused vocal chords.

"Whoa, careful," Blaine said as he moved towards the little bathroom off Kurt's room. Kurt heard the sink running for a moment before Blaine returned, hands clean and clutching a few damp paper towels. "I'll call your dad in a second, okay? I don't think it's a good idea for him to show up with you covered in come."

Kurt shook with silent laughter, shaking his head as Blaine wiped his chest and clothes as clean as possible, chucking as Kurt squirmed at the touch.

"You're ticklish," Blaine said offhandedly, tossing the paper towels in the garbage and pulling out his phone. "I'll remember that."

Kurt flicked him off though he was grinning as well. The idea of his voice *finally* coming back made the next two weeks he was going to have to spend in the hospital much more bearable. He scrawled his father's cell phone number on his whiteboard and settled back as he watched Blaine pull out his phone to dial it.

"Hello, Mr. Hummel?" Blaine said, smiling at Kurt, his phone pressed to his ear. "Yeah, it's Blaine, Kurt's...friend. Yeah, I just wanted to let you know he's started talking again. Yeah...yeah." He laughed. "No, he hasn't started mouthing off to anyone yet. Give him time."

Kurt scowled at him and Blaine simply grinned.

"Alright," Blaine said, nodding as he moved absently around the room. "Yeah, I'll tell him. You're welcome, sir." He pulled the phone away and ended the call. "He wasn't even at the shop yet," he said, slipping his phone back in his pocket. "He's turning around now."

"Finn?" Kurt said quietly, voice still barely audible and painfully scratchy.

"I can call him if you'd like?" Blaine said, pulling his phone back out. "Where would he be?"

"Shop," Kurt said, picking up his whiteboard again to write out Finn's cell number. "Text, not call," he added creakily.

Blaine smiled as he tapped out a quick text to Finn before setting his phone on the table and returning to his seat next to Kurt. "This is great," he said excitedly. "Now I won't have to keep trying to think of things to talk about. And once you're vocal chords start strengthening up again, we can start getting you singing again. I'd be happy to help you loosen up when the time comes."

Kurt smirked. "Sounds awesome," he croaked, Blaine giving him a reproofing look when he realized why he was grinning.

"You think too much about sex, you know that?" he said, frowning faintly.

Kurt shrugged. "I like it," he said, coughing lightly to clear his throat. "Don't you?"

Blaine flushed faintly and looked away, rubbing the back of his neck and shifting in his seat.

"Oh my god," Kurt said, eyes widening. "You're a virgin, aren't you?"

Blaine sighed, clearing his throat and looking embarrassed. "I...yeah, I guess," he said, frowning again. "I mean, I've done...stuff like what we did in the bathroom and here and...more than that but never...you know, 'sex'."

"But...your ex," Kurt said, frowning.

"He used me for sexual stuff I guess is a more appropriate way of putting it," Blaine said, now looking truly uncomfortable. "When he kept trying to push me to have sex after pushing me to do everything else, I finally broke it off. He didn't stop harassing me right away but...eventually I think he just...gave up, moved on to torture someone else." He coughed again. "So...yeah, I'm a virgin."

Kurt nodded slowly, pursing his lips as he considered the new information. He turned back to Blaine, who looked anxious and discomfited. "We'll fix that," he said, winking.

Blaine looked like he wasn't sure if he wasn't to laugh or reprimand him, relief washing over his features when his phone buzzed with a reply from Finn. "He's got a few things to wrap up at the shop and then he'll leave," he said, avoiding Kurt's eye and making a show of fiddling with the zipper on his sweatshirt.

Kurt was sorely tempted to try and continue the topic but didn't want to ruin his chances of being the one to change Blaine's current status as a virgin. He could also see just how much his ex had affected him and didn't much feel like opening that can of worms at the moment.

"Tell me about the Glee Club," Kurt croaked softly. "Sectionals are in month, right?"

Blaine nodded, looking grateful for the change of topic, and launched into a discussion of everything they'd been doing in Glee for the past few weeks. It made Kurt miss it even more, even Rachel, than he already did. He didn't like to think about the fact that he wouldn't be able to sing at Sectionals or, most likely, Regionals as he didn't think he'd be well enough to dance at the time—the doctors had told him the cast on his left leg would be on for the longest at fourteen weeks as he'd broken all three major bones *and* shattered his kneecap, not to mention the time he'd have in physical therapy after all his casts were off.

"You should come," Blaine said once he'd finished his spiel about the performances they'd be doing. "To Sectionals, I mean. I mean, you don't *have* to but it'd be nice, you know...if you wanted."

"Are you saying *you* want me there?" Kurt said, smirking.

Blaine gave him a dead-panned look.

"Alright," Kurt said, laughing and coughing painfully. "I'll go."

"Maybe I can convince Mr. Schue to let you ride on the bus with us," Blaine said thoughtfully.

"Does that mean I can get a handjob in the back seat?" Kurt said, smirking as Blaine scowled at him.

Kurt had forgotten how Blaine acted when there were other people around. It hadn't been such a big deal before, when their only interruptions had been from Burt, a few nurses and occasionally Finn, but when the Glee Club arrived after school had finished the day after Kurt had regained his voice, he was suddenly reminded of how *innocent* Blaine could be when he didn't have his hands on Kurt's dick.

"Dude, I didn't mention it before because we weren't sure whether you were going to die or not, but dodging all those cars while you were riding down the highway at a hundred miles an hour must have been *badass*," Puck was saying as Kurt subtly watched Blaine sit awkwardly in the corner of the room, allowing the rest of the Glee Club to crowd around his bedside.

"Hmmm... It was until I crashed and almost died," Kurt croaked quietly; his voice was still sore from the tube, though the ice chips that the nurses had been feeding him at every possible opportunity were soothing the burn slightly.

Puck shrugged. "Yeah, you're okay though so it's cool."

He held up his hand for a fist-bump, which Kurt returned half-heartedly, wincing slightly as Puck punched him a little harder than was necessary and sent spikes of jarring pain up his arm.

Blaine noticed Kurt's frown and stood up from his chair in the corner. "Hey! He's in hospital with several broken bones, Puck. Be gentle!"

Puck retracted his hand, looking slightly guilty while the rest of Glee Club shot curious looks between Blaine and Kurt, who were smiling softly at each other.

Blaine shifted awkwardly on his feet at the sudden attention and said, "I'm going to get some coffee... Do you want any, Kurt?"

Kurt nodded. "Grande-"

"Non-fat mocha, I know." Blaine gave him a parting grin before walking out of the room.

The rest of the Glee Club were considerate enough to wait until the door to Kurt's room had shut before bombarding him with questions.

"What's going on with you two?"

"Are you fucking?"

"Are you two dating? Because he leaves Glee early every day to come and see you."

"You are fucking, aren't you? I can tell these things."

"Santana, gross! Have you kissed though?"

"Shut up, Berry, this is *Kurt*. He doesn't do any of that romantic shit."

"Do you want me to answer any of these questions or am I just here to look hot?" Kurt asked wryly before the two girls could start arguing properly. They both promptly shut up. "I've got no clue what we are;

Blaine and I haven't discussed it but he'll probably want to label us as 'boyfriends' seeing as he gave me a handjob yesterday."

Rachel's mouth fell open; Santana merely grinned.

"Well don't you look smug about that, Hummel," she teased. "But good on you. Maybe having a consistent lay might cheer you up a bit."

"Does Burt know?" Finn asked, slightly pale (either at the thought of gay sex or the fact it was step-brother having gay sex).

"Yes, Finn, of *course* I told my dad that a boy I'm not even dating gave me a handjob in hospital. Because I really *want* Blaine to be murdered brutally," Kurt said sarcastically as the door slid open again.

"Sorry?" Blaine said, carrying two cups of coffee. "Why do you want me to die?"

Kurt reached forward, his fingers uselessly grabbing at the empty air until Blaine pushed the Styrofoam cup into it. Kurt swallowed the warm liquid with a sigh; he'd been allowed to drink since this morning and was reveling in the simple pleasures of *tasting* things again.

Puck was explaining things to Blaine while Kurt drank in small sips. "Your boy over there has an extremely protective daddy, who won't be too pleased at your *activities*."

"Kurt!" Blaine yelped, blushing a furious red. "You told them?"

"They wanted to know. You're not ashamed, are you?"

Blaine somehow flushed even darker as he muttered, "No, of course not."

Kurt smirked as one of the girls (probably Brittany) cooed at the cuteness.

"Exactly. Besides, I want to boast at what an amazing handjob I got yesterday, while all the other guys didn't get anything; take it as a compliment."

The blushing, shy side of Blaine was strangely endearing to Kurt. He hadn't even entertained the thought that Blaine might want to keep their personal life private; his time spent in hospital had made him forget how secretive Blaine was around other people.

"And Finn," Kurt said in a mildly threatening tone, "if you mention *anything* my dad, I will castrate you. I like Blaine with all his body parts and I would appreciate it to stay that way. Got it?"

"Yeah," Finn said, retreating a few steps under Kurt's glare.

"So," Kurt said more amiably, "shall we talk about something else other than my glorious sex life?"

"When are you coming back?" Brittany said with a hopeful look. "To Glee Club?"

Kurt half-glanced at Blaine. "Not for a while," he said. "I got the shit kicked out of me by that car. I probably won't be able to do Regionals either."

A few of them exchanged downcast looks.

"Well, I for one think this time off will be good for you," Rachel said curtly. "I think we can all agree you needed a bit of an attitude adjustment."

Kurt gave her a hard, sour look, Puck rolling his eyes and Santana looking aghast at Rachel's words.

"What?" Rachel said, shrinking a little under the gazes. "It's true! He only showed up to half the rehearsals and he had a filthy mouth! Not to mention he smoked all the time."

"Well, you won't have to worry about that anymore," Kurt snapped. "It's hard to smoke when you've got a tube shoved down your throat for a week because you can't breathe on your own." His throat stung and prickled at the harsh tone but he ignored it. "Why don't you just shut your damn mouth and let me be excited I'm not dead?"

The room went silent, a few of them shuffling awkwardly on their feet as Rachel flushed under Kurt's glare. He'd been through hell for the first week or so trying to go without nicotine, breaking into a cold sweat and wanting to scream and yell at everyone he saw for the first few times he was awake.

The only thing that had kept him from going crazy was the fact that he was hopped up on morphine half the time, which they'd been slowly weaning him off of for the past week. But he had to admit, even though he'd had to go cold turkey, it was nice not have the need for a cigarette hit him every few hours. The absence of the cravings made him a lot less irritable and cranky throughout the day.

"Maybe you guys should go," Blaine said, breaking the tension as he moved to Kurt's side. "He's going to get his meds soon anyway."

Kurt frowned but didn't say anything as they filed out, muttering goodbyes and telling Blaine they'd see him the following afternoon at Glee rehearsal.

"Sorry about that," Finn said from the doorway, rubbing the back of his neck. "She's glad you're getting better, Kurt, she really is, she's just..."

"Rachel," Kurt said, Finn nodding and smiling sheepishly. "It's fine, Finn, really. I'll see you later."

"See you," Finn said, flashing Blaine a small smile before departing, leaving Kurt and Blaine alone at last.

Blaine sighed as he sat down in his usual seat next to Kurt's bed, pinching the bridge of his nose in a tired gesture.

"Why did you tell them that?" Kurt said, still frowning. "You know I don't get my meds for two hours."

"Yes, well, I didn't need you ripping Rachel's head off," Blaine said, looking up and cocking an eyebrow.

"Hmm, good point," Kurt said fairly. "You know me well, Anderson."

Blaine grinned, reaching out to take his hand. "So...I think it's time we talked," he said with a steady look.

Kurt sighed with an air of reluctance. "Can't we just have amazing sex and leave it at that?" he said. Blaine pursed his lips. "No? Damn... Alright, fine, talk on."

Blaine's brow contracted. "I'm serious, Kurt," he said. "We need to figure out what this—" he gestured between the two of them, "Is."

Kurt rubbed his eyes with his thumb and index finger. "What do you want it to be, Blaine? I mean...I like you. You're fun to be around and you give one hell of a handjob but I think we both know I'm not going to just...up and change because of the accident."

Blaine nodded. "I know," he said heavily. "I never expected you to."

"Really?" Kurt said, taken aback.

"No," Blaine said with a small smile. "I know you're still not...completely yourself but I know not everything you show is just some mask."

"I don't look at you like some poor, damaged child, Kurt, but I can see that you have been hurt and I hope...someday, you're comfortable telling me what happened just like I hope I can tell you what happened to me some time. But I can tell that some of what you do, the sex and the smoking and drinking, probably started out as a way to deal with things and it got out of hand at one point and you stopped trying to reel it back because it was just easier hiding behind it all, right?"

Kurt stared at him for a moment and nodded slowly. "Fuck, you're good at this," he mumbled.

Blaine laughed. "Comes from years of talking to therapists," he said, squeezing Kurt's hand gently.

"So...what, are we together or what?" Kurt said, pulling his hand away to scratch under the edge of his bandages.

"If you're comfortable with saying it, yeah," Blaine said, pulling Kurt's hand away from his neck to stop him scratching with a reproving look.

"Yeah, sure," Kurt said, shrugging even though the thought did excite him. "I mean...I'm not into all that romance and crap but...cool."

Blaine grinned, almost like he could sense that Kurt was simply trying to play it off. "Cool," he repeated.

Chapter Nine

"I just want to go home," Kurt groaned, squirming a little in his hospital bed. Another week had passed since he and Blaine had officially agreed to be 'together' and he'd grown completely fed up with being stuck in one place.

"You're leaving at the end of the week," Blaine soothed, stroking his hand gently. "And the doctor said your ribs are pretty much healed up so that's good. And you might have a smaller cast on your arm when you come to Sectionals."

"So fucking optimistic," Kurt grumbled, scowling at the bandages still covering a large portion of his body.

"I have to be," Blaine said. "You refuse to take the part."

Kurt rolled his eyes and mumbled wordlessly. "Just tell me Rachel's not getting all the damn solos," he said, looking over at Blaine, who was working on a history assignment.

"Nah," he said, not looking up. "We settled on the guys doing *Good Life* switching off on the choruses and Artie doing the rap part, Santana's starting *Set Fire to the Rain* before the group joins in and then I have a solo."

"They gave *you* a solo?" Kurt said, torn between being shocked, impressed, and annoyed. He'd only been featured once in a competition performance and it was only for a few lines the previous year.

"Yeah," Blaine said, looking up at his tone. "Why? Is that bad?"

"No," Kurt said hastily. "No, it's...fine."

Blaine watched him unblinkingly for a moment. "I had to beg for it," he said. "If you're annoyed that I got one, I mean. Like, I literally begged the group to let me sing it."

"What are you singing?" Kurt said, now vaguely curious.

"It's a secret," Blaine said, returning to his homework.

"Well fuck you too," Kurt grumbled, mood shifting back to sullen immediately.

Blaine chuckled softly. "Chill out," he said. "It's a secret because it's a surprise for you."

"Shit, you're not singing some sappy love song to me, are you?" Kurt said, pulling a face.

"No," Blaine said, shaking his head and grinning. "I mean, it's sort of a ballad but it's not...you'll see."

Kurt scowled at him for a moment but gave up when he realised he wasn't getting anything else out of him. "I'm bored," he said moodily.

"So read something," Blaine said, nodding to the books on Kurt's bedside table.

"I'd rather be getting off," Kurt said grumpily. Blaine had yet to do anything else since he'd given Kurt a handjob over a week ago and he was starting to get restless again.

"I said no," Blaine said, frowning as he erased something. "I've got a ton of homework to do."

"Well then why did you even bother coming?" Kurt complained.

Blaine sighed and looked up at him. "Are you really going to pull this?" he said wearily. "I'm seriously behind on my work. I came to see you because I thought you'd want to spend time with me but if you're going to act like this, I'm leaving."

Kurt opened his mouth angrily to retort, feeling chastised, but closed it at the calming look in Blaine's eyes. "No," he mumbled, "I'm fine...sorry."

"It's okay," Blaine said, squeezing his hand. "I know you're bored and lonely a lot here. You'll be home soon and Finn said you're dad's setting up everything in the basement for you and I can come by after school to watch movies and stuff."

"And by 'stuff' you mean you with your hand down my pants, right?" Kurt said with a smirk.

Blaine rolled his eyes. "If you're lucky," he said. "And you should think of others more."

"And what, pray tell, do you mean by that?" Kurt said, still grinning.

"I don't remember your offering to put your hand down *my* pants," Blaine said, lifting an eyebrow.

"I don't think anyone's hand should be down anyone's pants."

Their gazes snapped to the door, where Burt Hummel was standing, a stern look on his face and a Styrofoam cup clutched in his hand.

"Fuck," Kurt mumbled, Blaine pulling his hand away quickly and blushing, avoiding Burt's gaze.

"Blaine—"

"I'll go," Blaine said hurriedly before Burt could finish, shoving his books into his bag haphazardly. He gave Kurt an apologetic look, dithering for a moment on the spot as though he was trying decide if he'd be allowed to kiss him or not. He chose not to risk it and practically ran from the room, squeezing past Kurt's father with his gaze on the ground.

Kurt tried to look innocent, smiling as his father took a few steps into the room, watching him closely. "Hey, Dad," he said.

Burt cleared his throat and Kurt fell silent, shrinking a little against his pillows. He'd managed to separate his two lives easily enough. His father didn't know about his smoking or drinking or the fact that he'd been sexually active for over a year, and Kurt was definitely *not* expecting him to find out about his love life like this.

"So," he said, setting down the coffee he'd brought for Kurt. "Care to tell me anything?"

Kurt smiled cautiously. "Surprise," he said, trying to sound less frightened than he was; no matter how fearless he was at school, his father was still easily threatening, especially with the look he was currently wearing. Kurt's smile faded slowly.

"You two...together?" Burt said, looking a little awkward but decidedly resolute.

"Uh...yeah," Kurt said, fiddling with the hem of his sleeve.

"How long?" Burt said with a sniff.

"Er...a few weeks, I guess," Kurt mumbled, chancing a quick glance at him.

Burt nodded slowly. "Well...I'm glad you found someone who seems to have his act together," he said. "But I think you know that if he's going to be visiting you, here or at the house, that the door stays open and I'll be checking on you regularly, got it? I'm happy for you, kid, but...there are rules."

Kurt rolled his eyes and sighed heavily. "Yes, sir," he grumbled, slouching sulkily.

"Hey," Burt said sternly. "Don't get all moody again. You're leaving in a few days and I promise Blaine can come visit you. I'm just asking you to respect my rules, got it?"

"Fine," Kurt said, still scowling at his lap.

"Cheer up," Burt said, patting his arm gently before passing him his mocha. "We're going to get you out of here soon and you'll have plenty to do at the house, okay?"

Kurt looked up at him, feeling a sudden rush of affection as he thought about everything he'd put up with from him in the past. He smiled genuinely. "Yeah," he said. "Thanks, Dad."

"No problem," Burt said, moving to sit in his usual chair and pulling out a magazine. "You just let me know if I need to crack any skulls, okay?"

Kurt rolled his eyes, grinning and laughing softly.

"Can we fucking *go* already?" Kurt complained as they waited by the desk in reception. Blaine and Finn were casually leaning against the wall while Burt filled out paper work; all three of them were towering above Kurt in his hospital-loaned wheelchair.

"Language," Burt said sternly as he signed his name on another dotted line.

Kurt sighed and tilted his head back in exasperation, unable to kick or hit something out of annoyance due to his still bruised and broken state. He really hated not being allowed to express himself through violence, and so to have his dad monitoring his language was enough to make Kurt tear his hair out.

Blaine, probably sensing Kurt's frustration, pushed away from the wall to run his palms across his boyfriend's shoulders.

"We'll be out of here soon," he whispered into Kurt's ear, letting his lips linger on the skin for a moment more than necessary.

"Thank fu- *God*," Kurt amended as his dad turned to glare at him.

Blaine chuckled at Kurt's obedience.

"Now why don't you listen to me like that?" he asked light-heartedly. "It would've saved us more than one argument."

"Because you like me when I'm feisty?"

Blaine chuckled and kissed the corner of Kurt's lips. "Can't argue with that."

"Fags," Kurt heard someone in the waiting room grunt in disgust and his head whipped to the side, ready to tear down the homophobe but - to his utmost annoyance - he found himself being rolled quickly away from the seated people.

"Blaine, what are you doing?" he asked. "Didn't you *hear* what that guy said?"

Blaine didn't slow down. "Yes."

"So why aren't you letting me put him in his place?" he hissed.

"Because you're in a wheelchair and there is really *nothing* threatening about you when you're wrapped up in bandages and wearing Finn's superman pyjamas," Blaine answered smoothly. "Besides, it was one, close-minded, middle-aged man in Ohio; that's definitely not something to get stressed about."

"If I wasn't in this stupid thing then-"

"-You would be marching up to him and beating the crap out of him, regardless of any possible injury to yourself. I know."

Burt and Finn caught up to them when they reached the car, meaning Kurt had to settle for grumpily muttering in response, "There *wouldn't* be any possible injury."

Burt ignored the conversation he had walked into in favour of opening the car door and positioning Kurt's chair on the ground next to it.

"Right... Blaine, Finn, can you help him get up please?"

Kurt smirked at his choice of words and took the first opportunity when his dad was out of hearing to say to Blaine, "*You* know I don't need *any* help getting up."

Blaine looked across at Finn mortified as the tall boy blushed bright red and made a noise of discomfort as he shifted from foot to foot.

"So, yeah, if you get into the backseat and then I pick him up and slide him across, will that work?" Finn asked awkwardly, trying to move the conversation on.

Blaine nodded and slid into the backseat, waiting with his hands ready. Kurt grimaced as Finn carefully bent over to wrap his arms carefully around him, already hating being treated like some kind of fucking invalid. Which he technically was, but he didn't need to be reminded of it.

He remembered why he had been complaining about this so mightily when Finn picked him up slightly *too* enthusiastically and his foot knocked against the open car door, pain spiking up his leg. His muscles tensed as he waited for the pain to go, Finn babbling apologies next to his ear as he attempted to get him into the car with no other knocks. By the time Blaine's arms had replaced Finn's, Kurt was shaking with pain from two more examples of Finn's clumsiness and being held too tightly by his step-brother in compensation.

"Fuck, fuck, fuck," he repeated like a mantra as the ache slowly - *really* fucking slowly - resided, leaving him bathed in a cool sweat and trying to catch his breath. It was only then that he became aware of Blaine's soft lips in his hair, murmuring comforting words while he waited for Kurt to recover. Kurt sighed and rested his cheek against Blaine's chest.

"That Neanderthal is *not* touching me again. Next time, you're picking me up, okay?"

"If you insist," Blaine said with a small grin. He slipped an arm around Kurt's shoulders and kissed his hair. "Sorry, sorry, keep forgetting you're not into that sort of thing," he said hurriedly as Kurt gave him a dead-panned look.

"It's all too sappy for my taste," Kurt muttered as Finn climbed into the front seat as his father shifted the car into drive, pulling slowly out of the parking lot.

"Good riddance," Kurt grumbled, flicking the hospital off through the window. "I never want to go back there again. Ever. It's boring as hell and the food tastes like shi- crap." He glanced at his father to make sure he hadn't heard him before settling his head back on Blaine's chest again. "Two weeks until Sectionals. You guys ready?"

Blaine sighed, shifting so he could tighten his arm around Kurt's shoulders. "Well...yeah, I guess so."

Kurt caught his hesitation and sighed. "What's wrong?" he said. He still wasn't used to the whole 'caring' thing. Truth be told, Blaine was his first 'real' relationship and he hadn't quite adjusted to the change yet.

"I'm just not looking forward to competing against my friends from Dalton," Blaine said, frowning.

"Why, are they better than us?" Kurt said. Blaine had spent some of Kurt's many hours of silence talking about the all boy's private school and their a cappella choir. Kurt personally thought it sounded like a dead bore, but Blaine seemed to have enjoyed it so he kept his opinion to himself with difficulty.

"Well, no," Blaine said. "I mean, they're great but...okay, I don't know, maybe they are, I just don't want to compete against my friends, you know? It sucks."

"Right," Kurt said, adjusting his arm into a more comfortable position. He gave Blaine a pointed look. "But you're not going to like, screw up on purpose or anything right?"

"What?" Blaine said, looking offended. "No, of course not! I'm completely loyal to the New Directions."

"Hey, just checking," Kurt said, holding up his healed right arm in defense. "I told you about the Rachel-Jesse fiasco, so...calm down."

Blaine sighed. "I'm not there to spy or make you lose," he said as they pulled down the street to Kurt's house. "Trust me, I want to win, too. And you know why I'm there, too, and it's got nothing to do with Glee Club."

"Alright, alright," Kurt said. "Chill, I'm just checking."

His father pulled the car into their driveway, stopping Blaine from retorting as he turned in his seat to face them.

“Blaine, Finn will get his chair, can you help me lower him down into it?” he said as Finn hopped out of his seat onto the pavement and moved to the back of the car where Kurt’s wheelchair was stashed.

“Sure, Mr. Hummel,” Blaine said politely, Kurt rolling his eyes beside him.

Blaine leaned over him to open the door, yelping when Kurt reached up with his right hand to grab his crotch.

“Kurt!” Blaine hissed as he pushed the door out and Kurt’s father came around the side of the car.

“What?” Kurt said with a tone of mock innocence and curiosity.

“You’re awful,” Blaine mumbled, Kurt simply smirking.

Finn wheeled the chair around to the open door and Blaine gently slid his one arm under Kurt’s thighs, the other wrapping around his back as Burt held Kurt from other side, the two of them carefully pulling Kurt from the car and settling him in the chair.

Kurt relaxed when he was safely seating, breathing out a sigh of relief when he remained unscathed.

Blaine hopped out beside him as Finn gathered Kurt’s bag and his father wheeled him up the sidewalk to the makeshift ramp they’d built across the stairs.

Carole was waiting inside, looking excited and anxious when her eyes fell on Kurt. She’d visited him a few times in the hospital but had been putting in a lot of extra hours to give Burt time off to spend with Kurt so he hadn’t seen much of her over the past few weeks.

“Hi, sweetie,” she said, moving to Kurt’s side and bending over to give him an awkward hug. “How are you feeling?”

“I’ve been better,” Kurt said airily.

She smiled and stood back so Burt could wheel him into the living room, where there were a few pizza boxes and other snacks as well as a stack of Kurt's favourite movies.

Kurt raised an eyebrow and looked over his shoulder at his father.

"We thought you might like to spend the rest of the day up here relaxing," Carole said from where she was standing in the doorway with Finn.

"We got excused from Glee practice," Finn said. "Me and Blaine. So we're just going to watch movies and eat and some of the others are stopping by after practice tomorrow to see you."

"We've got to get back to work," Burt said, lightly squeezing Kurt's shoulder. "Do you want me to put you on the couch or do you want to stay in your chair?"

"Couch," Kurt said, smiling at what they'd put together for him. He waited as his father lifted him from his chair and placed him carefully on the couch, tossing a blanket over his legs.

"Alright," Burt said as he moved towards the door. "You boys be good and call if you need anything okay? Finn, you know what to do if he needs to use the bathroom right?"

"Dad!" Kurt said angrily.

Blaine covered his mouth to hide his laughter and Kurt flashed him a glare.

"Just double-checking," Burt said, holding up his hands in surrender. "Calm down."

Kurt grumbled angrily as they exchanged goodbyes, glowering at his bandaged leg. It was bad enough he could barely move but he'd only just started being able to actually use a regular bathroom again, despising the fact that he needed someone to help him everywhere. He'd taken the need to piss sitting down as handing over his final man card.

Blaine sat next to him, pulling over the stack of movies as Finn opened one of the pizza boxes and started eating. "What do you want to watch?" he said, holding up the choices. "Also, I never would have taken you for a fan of Disney movies."

"Give me that," Kurt snapped, snatching away the copy of *Toy Story* Blaine was holding. "It happened to be my favourite movie as a kid, you asshole."

Blaine grinned. "Hey, I didn't say there was anything *wrong* with it," he said, laughing. "I like their movies, too."

Kurt ignored him, tucking the DVD under his unbandaged thigh and sifting through the other movies Blaine was holding. They settled on *Grease*, Kurt leaning against Blaine's shoulder as they watched, reluctantly allowing Blaine to feed him after he dropped a slice of pizza in his lap with his fumbling right hand, letting out a slew of curse words that would have made a sailor blush when the scalding cheese hit his skin.

"This is nice," Blaine said a few hours later when they were on their third movie, Finn long since fast asleep in the recliner.

"It'll be better once I've regained the use of all my limbs," Kurt muttered, opening his mouth for Blaine to set the end of the straw sticking out of his drink on his tongue. He took a sip and gave him a mumbled thanks.

"Just try not to go completely crazy," Blaine said, setting the glass back on the table. "It's going to be very boring here all alone but I swear I'll visit you as much as I can. But we're going to be busy with rehearsal so, don't bite my head off if I don't come all that often."

"Oh, I could make you come all the time," Kurt murmured, trailing his fingers up Blaine's thigh with a suggestive look.

"Haha, very funny," Blaine said, stopping his hand by taking it in his own.

"What, you won't even let me get *you* off?" Kurt said in disbelief. "Fuck, Anderson, you're no fun at all."

"I don't want you pulling something or hurting yourself," Blaine said, giving him a stern look. "I'm just looking out for you because I know you won't do it yourself."

Kurt softened momentarily at this, smiling gently and returning Blaine's grip on his hand. He shook his head and blinked, tugging his hand away. "Well, just let me know when you want to have some *fun*," he said, trying to sound annoyed.

Blaine laughed faintly and took his hand back. "Calm down," he said when Kurt tried to pull back with a scowl. "I swear, I won't tell anyone you actually *care* about something, okay?"

Kurt tried to laugh it off even though he was internally freaking out at the fact that Blaine was right, he *did* care. When he'd gotten flustered and excited in the hospital, he'd blamed it on being on about a dozen different drugs but now...this was *not* him, Kurt Hummel didn't get tongue-tied and nervous about this sort of thing.

What the *fuck* was happening to him?

Chapter Ten

When Kurt woke up, they were still sprawled across the sofa (well, Blaine was sprawled while Kurt lay neatly in the same position he had been placed in due to the fucking casts) but Blaine had shifted slightly while he was sleeping so his head was resting of Kurt's shoulder as he drooled.

The trouble with being so immobile he couldn't even reach the remote was that it left Kurt a lot of time to think.

Mostly about Blaine.

It had been a long time since Kurt had cared about anyone as much as he cared about Blaine and, apart from his father, Kurt had never cared about someone who didn't break his heart.

Kurt wasn't completely sure if he could stand being hurt that badly again; the last time it had happened was the first (and only) time Kurt had tried hard drugs. Thankfully, he managed to regain enough of his common sense the next day to stop himself doing anything else stupid, but he wasn't sure what would happen if Blaine broke him.

But there wasn't any way for him to safeguard against the eventuality of Blaine breaking his heart, apart from leaving him first.

Blaine snorted quietly in his sleep and burrowed his face into Kurt's shoulder. Kurt rolled his eyes at how touchy the boy was in his sleep, but didn't shrug him off like he would Finn.

He liked being with Blaine - he liked the talking and laughing and the infrequent yet mind-blowing sex - but at the same time he hated knowing that it couldn't last, because no one could last when Kurt got involved.

Especially someone like Blaine. Blaine was nothing like him. He was tough, yes, but they were worlds apart.

If not for Glee they would travel in completely different circles. Blaine didn't party or drink or smoke and he certainly wasn't one to dive straight into sex if his recent behaviour was any indication.

Kurt sighed, looking over at the other boy and wondering of the only reason this was working at all was the fact that they were only together outside of school at the moment. What would happen in January when Kurt was able to start back for the new term? He didn't walk down hallways holding someone else's hand or go on dates or any of that romantic crap. It simply wasn't his style and Blaine KNEW that.

Sure he might be fine with it now but Kurt was positive he'd eventually grow tired of it and find someone who would do that sort of thing. And by that time, Kurt would be in way too deep.

On the other hand, he'd put up with him so far. He'd called him out a few times but only when Kurt had gone over the top and acted like even more of an ass than usual. And he enjoyed being around Blaine. As much as he hated to admit it, the give and take, the fact that Blaine wouldn't put up with his shit when he went too far, appealed to him somehow.

He rubbed his eyes and blinked sleepily. He didn't know what he wanted anymore, but he knew the one thing he *didn't* want was to get his heart broken. He'd dealt with that before and he wasn't about to let himself get in too deep again only to get hurt.

Blaine shifted, groaning faintly and yawning as his eyes cracked open. He blinked blearily and smiled as he realised Kurt was watching him.

"Creep," he mumbled, sitting up and stretching, making a sound of satisfaction as his back cracked. He frowned and made a face as he wiped his hand across his mouth. "Did you get any sleep or have you just been watching me drool on you?"

Kurt forced a laugh. "Well, I didn't want to disturb you, Sleeping Beauty, and I wasn't all that tired," he lied.

Blaine smiled and tilted his head up to kiss him gently. "Well, let me get your pills, okay?" he said, pushing himself to his feet. "You're already half an hour overdo and that'll knock you right out."

Kurt made a noise of assent, admiring Blaine's ass as he walked out to the kitchen to fetch Kurt's medication. He returned a minute later with a few pills as a glass of water.

"Here you go," he said, sitting next to him. "Open up."

Kurt cocked an eyebrow but opened his mouth so Blaine could drop the pills in, taking a gulp of water to force them down and pulling a face. "Fucking horse pills," he mumbled as he felt the pills moving down his esophagus.

"You know they'll make you feel better though," Blaine said, setting the glass on the table.

"I'd rather *you* make you feel better," Kurt said pointedly.

Blaine chuckled. "Horndog," he muttered, leaning over to kiss him, tracing his fingers up his side.

Kurt kissed him back hungrily, reaching up to grab his shirt and force him closer, shoving his tongue into his mouth and groaning.

Blaine pulled back, gasping. "Finn's right there," he breathed, glancing at where Finn was still sleeping. ¶ "Fuck, Anderson, stop stalling," Kurt growled. "Give me *something* already."

Blaine swallowed, eyes darting anxiously to Finn again. "Just...stay quiet," he whispered.

Kurt grinned and moved his hand down to cup the front of Blaine's jeans, earning a faint moan. "It's not me I'm worried about," he mumbled.

He rubbed at the growing bulge beneath his fingers, latching his lips onto Blaine's neck, sucking a purple bruise onto the spot as he unbuttoned Blaine's jeans and slipped his hand into his boxers.

Blaine whimpered, pushing up into Kurt's hand and moving his own to grip Kurt's cock through his sweats.

Internally, Kurt thought it was a little funny what they were doing, jerking each other off like this in Kurt's living room, but given Kurt's current state, there wasn't much else they *could* do.

"Just wait," Kurt breathed in Blaine's ear, working his hand skillfully around Blaine's cock. "When I can walk again, I'm going to make sure you *can't* for a week."

Blaine let out a strangled laugh. "We'll see about that," he choked. ¶ Kurt smirked at how easily he could get him to fall apart, refusing to admit that Blaine was able to affect him just as much.

Blaine turned to catch him in another kiss, teeth clacking together and tongues swirling around each other's mouth.

Kurt twisted his wrist, rubbing pre-come over the head of Blaine's cock with his thumb, taking harsh breaths through his nose as he felt his orgasm building inside him. He needed Blaine to come first though, needed to know that he could make him fall apart at the seams.

Blaine's fingers tightened around his cock, stilling as he came across Kurt's hand, Kurt swallowing his soft gasps as he shook with his own orgasm a few seconds later.

"Fuck," Kurt groaned, falling back to his former position, dropping his head back in the cushion and closing his eyes, panting lightly.

"Yeah," Blaine choked, pulling his hand free and collapsing against Kurt's shoulder.

"Knew I could get you off first," Kurt said, smirking.

Blaine rolled his eyes and leaned forward to grab a few napkins off the table, cleaning them both off carefully before zipping up his jeans and resting against Kurt's side again.

"I can't believe I just did that," he said, shaking his head. "Your brother is *right there*. He could have woken up at any time."

"Yes, but he *didn't*," Kurt said. "And that was fucking hot. You're not too bad at that, you know."

"Oh, you're too kind. Truly a romantic," Blaine said sarcastically. "Just don't think this is a regular thing."

"What, the handjob or the exhibitionism?" Kurt said curiously.

"Both," Blaine said, absently tracing his fingertips up and down Kurt's arm. "I like the pace we're going and I don't want to screw this up."

Kurt frowned. He didn't know how to respond to that, mostly for the fact that he was afraid of doing just that. Because he screwed everything up eventually. And if he didn't, there was still the very real possibility of Blaine getting sick of him and breaking his heart if he let himself get too attached.

"You okay?" Blaine said softly.

"Huh?" Kurt said, snapping from his thoughts. "Yeah, yeah, I'm fine." He coughed. "My meds are kicking in, I think I'm going to get some sleep."

"Alright," Blaine said, kissing the side of his neck before standing up. "I'm going to run to the bathroom and then get my homework. But I'll be here if you need anything, okay?"

Kurt nodded, avoiding his gaze as he left. He shifted into a more comfortable position, wincing at the pain in his leg and arm as he allowed the medication to take effect and carry him to sleep if only to save himself from his own thoughts.

"I had the *weirdest* dream," Finn was saying as Kurt gradually pulled himself out of unconsciousness. He kept his eyes closed because that was *not* a conversation he wanted to get involved with; Blaine could deal with it.

"Oh, really? What, um... what happened?"

Kurt could feel Blaine fidget uncomfortably, knowing that his boyfriend would be trying his best to look as innocent as possible.

"I dunno, I can't really remember much of it... I think some people were in pain or something, because there was lots of moaning and whimpering and stuff. And then I remember something about someone making sure someone else couldn't walk."

"Uh huh," Blaine mumbled quietly.

Kurt tried to hide his grin by turning his face into Blaine's chest as he heard Finn push himself to his feet.

"I watched Saw a few night ago, so it was probably, like, nightmares from that. Anyway, dude, I'm going to go upstairs and play a few rounds of Halo."

"Bastard," Blaine said as soon as Finn was out of the room, "I *know* you're awake and I can't believe you made me deal with that on my own."

Kurt burst into laughter as he opened his eyes and pulled his face away. "Like Finn would ever connect the dots and realise what his nightmare actually was. Besides, if he had figured it out, I didn't want to be awake through the awkwardness."

Blaine glared at him. "We are *not* doing anything again while Finn - or anyone, for that matter - is in the room. I'm not into exhibitionism."

"Really?" Kurt quirked an eyebrow. "Because you seemed pretty into last night. At least, you did when you were coming all over my hands while jerking me off."

Blaine blushed and didn't say anything.

"I mean, Finn was sitting only five feet away from us, but you were still moaning like a slut, albeit quietly."

"Shut up," Blaine mumbled, his face roughly the same colour as a fire truck. "You were enjoying it just as much as me, Hummel."

"Never said I wasn't, I'm just not the one whose sex noises make them sound like they're in pain according to Finn. Now get me my pills."

"...You are possibly the bitchiest and bossiest person on this entire planet."

"*Pills*, Anderson. Now."

"What if I say no?"

Kurt glared at Blaine, who relaxed back into the couch cushions defiantly, crossing his arms over his chest. He didn't move; even under as Kurt gave him the most evil glare he could muster.

"Fine," Kurt muttered, putting his free hand on the couch to push himself to his feet. He managed to balance on the casts for a moment before Blaine shot up out of his seat and pushed him back down onto the sofa.

"I was *joking*, Kurt! You can't just fucking do things like that when you're meant to be resting, for god's sake. Are you okay? Is there any pain? Do we need to take you back to the hospital?"

“Blaine, chill, I’m fine.”

It wasn’t totally a lie; there hadn’t been any sudden pain when he had stood up, but the dull ache radiating through his legs reminded him of the reason the doctors had instructed him not to put any weight on his broken bones until they were healed. But Blaine didn’t need to know that, he didn’t want the other boy to treat him like any more of an invalid, it was humiliating enough already to have to rely on other people so heavily. In no way did Kurt understand the concept of dependence.

“I’ll go get your pills,” Blaine said guiltily, walking to the kitchen leaving Kurt alone on the couch, glaring at the cast-covered limbs.

He just had to get through a few more weeks being completely fucking useless, and then would be able to walk again.

The door opened and Kurt turned, expecting to see Blaine return with the pills, but instead was greeted by the sight of his hulking step-brother.

“Hey Kurt!” Finn greeted cheerfully when he saw he was awake. “Did I tell you about my dream?”

Kurt let his head fall back against the sofa cushions with a *thump* when he realised that he couldn’t walk away from - or punch - Finn like he usually did.

This *sucked*.

Chapter Eleven

"You're healing well, Kurt. I'd say we can get you on crutches soon if this keeps up, but only when absolutely necessary. You still have a few months left in that cast."

Kurt made a noise of discontent, glaring down at his casts as he had been for the past month and a half. He couldn't believe he still had eight weeks left until his leg was healed, and that was just to take the cast off. He would still have to use crutches until he'd gained enough strength to walk on his own again. From what the doctors had said, his muscle mass would be drastically decreased after fourteen weeks.

They'd at least taken the cast off his left arm, replacing the one on his upper arm with a smaller one and wrapping the whole thing in a sling. He still wasn't supposed to try and do anything with it for a few more weeks as his bones were apparently still 'tender' but the fact that his skin could breathe again was a huge relief.

He could clearly see the change in his arm in the six weeks it had been out of use. It looked distinctly smaller and he'd nearly puked at the smell when they'd cut off the cast.

"So, do you have any questions for me, Kurt?" the doctor said, giving him a warm smile.

Kurt suppressed a glare. "No, ma'am," he mumbled. "Thank you."

"Of course, dear," she said, patting his right arm gently. "Now...I don't know if you've talked to your father about this at all or if he knows you smoked before the accident. You're eighteen so I have to talk to you about it, not him. But if you start smoking again, it's going to take a lot longer for your bones to heal. Not to mention, you could get seriously sick."

Kurt rolled his eyes, lowering himself carefully into his wheelchair. "Thanks, I'll keep that in mind," he muttered as she rolled him out into the hallway to where his father and Blaine were waiting.

"Everything doing okay, kiddo?" Burt said, shaking the doctor's hand briefly as Blaine took over for her pushing Kurt's chair.

"Fine," Kurt grunted. "Can we go?"

"In a minute," Burt said. "I've got to sign some paperwork for the insurance and then we'll go. Why do you and Blaine wait downstairs?"

Kurt sighed moodily, slouching in his chair as much as his casts would allow.

"What's wrong?" Blaine said, wheeling him towards the elevator.

"This place sucks," Kurt said, glaring around at the white walls. "I hate it here. I just want to go."

"We're leaving, don't worry," Blaine said, pressing the down button and pushing Kurt into the elevator as the doors slid open. "And I'm driving you straight to McKinley so we can head to Sectionals."

"Finn already there?" Kurt said.

"Yeah," Blaine replied, hands moving from Kurt's chair to rub his shoulder gently. "I just talked to him. He said everyone's warming up and ready to go."

"Awesome," Kurt said sarcastically. He was still bitter about the fact that he wasn't going to be performing at the competition.

"Hey," Blaine said, bending over to kiss his neck. "Don't be so angry. You'll have Nationals at least."

"I guess," Kurt sighed as the doors opened again and Blaine wheeled him out through the lobby.

Someone held the door open for them and Blaine gave them a bright thank you as he pushed Kurt out into the chill November air. Kurt shivered, dressed in only a pair of sweats with one leg cut to accommodate his cast and a thin t-shirt.

"I'm sorry," Blaine said, pausing for a moment to take off his coat and lay it across Kurt's chest. "There's a blanket in the car, I completely forgot about it."

Kurt shrugged indifferently, trying to ignore the clean scent of soap and cologne wafting from Blaine's coat that made his pulse tick a few beats faster. "I'm fine."

"Yeah, okay," Blaine said doubtfully as they reached his car.

"Are you sure I can get in there with my casts?" Kurt said, eyeing the small BMW doubtfully.

"I have the seat pushed all the way back," Blaine said as he opened the passenger door, slipping his jacket back on as Kurt passed it to him. "I checked to make sure there was room. It'll be a squeeze, but you'll fit."

Kurt smirked at his phrasing and Blaine rolled his eyes as he helped him up carefully, one arm around his waist as Kurt hobbled the few short steps and lowered himself into the seat. He winced as he lifted his leg into the car.

Blaine pulled a blanket from the backseat and draped it across his lap, tucking it around him carefully and pressing a kiss to his temple before shutting the door. Kurt had come to accept the fact that Blaine was a very affectionate person. Though it had annoyed him to no end when they'd first started dating it, he was actually starting to enjoy the attention to a certain extent as long as they weren't in public. Not that he'd ever admit it.

"All set?" Blaine said as he climbed into his own seat and started the car, turning down the radio and flicking the heater on.

"Yeah," Kurt said, tugging the blanket further up his chest. He paused, glancing over at Blaine as he put the car in gear and pulled slowly out of the parking lot. "Thanks."

Blaine frowned. "For...what?" he said, turning to him as they waiting at the stop sign.

"You've been, er...a good...boyfriend," Kurt said. God, that sounded awkward. He still wasn't used to referring to Blaine as his boyfriend yet. The word felt foreign on his tongue.

Blaine smiled and reached across the console to pat his leg gently. "Of course," he said. "You're alright, too, I guess."

"Fuck you," Kurt with a scowl as Blaine laughed beside him.

"They're good," Blaine noted as he pushed Kurt backstage, the sounds of the Warblers drifting from the stage.

Kurt snorted. "You'll probably beat them. I mean, if I was onstage then you would *definitely* beat them, but I guess you'll have to make do without me."

Blaine tore his eyes away from the show choir on stage, smiling slightly down at Kurt. "It won't be as fun performing without you."

Kurt rolled his eyes. "Stop with the sappiness, Anderson, you've never even performed with me before. Besides, you've got a *solo* so I'm pretty sure it'll be fun for you."

Blaine's reply was cut off by the raucous applause from the audience as the Warblers finished, bowed and started walking off stage. Kurt stiffened as he caught sight of Wes and David – who were both glaring at him as they made their way over to Blaine.

"Hey guys!" Blaine greeted cheerfully (when was the boy ever *not* cheerful?).

"Hey," Wes said civilly, his eyes darting down at Kurt every couple of seconds with very obvious suspicion and dislike. "How are you, Blaine?"

"Good. Really nervous for the competition though. Especially after seeing how good you guys were."

David, attempting to diffuse the mounting tension between Kurt and Wes, jumped in with, "Yeah. We had to admit to ourselves that Christian was really the only person who could fill your shoes, though it took Wes about a month to say anything but criticisms to him."

Kurt felt Blaine shift awkwardly behind him. "Yeah... He was good. You, erm, you made a good choice with him."

"Who's Christian?" Kurt demanded, tired of being left out of the conversation even though the intense hatred in Wes' eyes seemed to only grow when he opened his mouth.

"Oh... He's my... ex."

Kurt tilted his head back so he could stare up at Blaine, who was fidgeting nervously with one of the handles of Kurt's wheelchair, avoiding eye contact.

"Your ex who beat you up and used you for sex?" Kurt demanded. "*That* ex?"

Blaine hesitated before nodding.

"And you're complimenting his *singing* voice?" He glared at Wes and David. "And you two gave me a whole lecture the first time we met about hurting Blaine and now you're giving his tormentor the solos? Did it not occur to you what a *dickish* thing that was to do?"

Wes bristled at the accusation as David took Blaine's lead and avoided looking at Kurt.

"Kurt, it's okay, I don't mind," Blaine soothed. "It's... it's cool."

"We *did* ask Blaine about Christian before we even considered letting him sing," Wes defended. "Unlike *you*, we actually care about his feelings."

"*Excuse* me?" Kurt hissed, wishing that he could get out of the stupid wheelchair and stand at his full height; being talked down to by *Wes* was humiliating. "You don't have any idea of what Blaine and I have been through in the past few months and you have *no* right to accuse me of anything anymore."

"You broke his heart once, what's stopping you from doing it again?"

"Wes, shut up," Blaine snapped suddenly. "How many times do I have to tell you that Kurt's not like that around me. Can you just grow up and accept our relationship and be happy for me?"

Wes closed his mouth, shooting a Blaine a guilty look. David was the one to mention that they should probably be going for their post-performance discussion; Blaine still hugged both of them goodbye.

Kurt kept silent until Blaine sighed and said, "I'm not going to talk to him or anything, Kurt. I just want to move on with my life."

"Whatever. Just stay away from him until I'm well enough to beat him up, okay?"

Blaine laughed. "Your romantic gestures astound me. Anyway, I better go to the greenroom to prepare. Do you want to come?"

Kurt shook his head. "I'll stay here and watch whatever crap is going on next; it'll be more entertaining than listening to Berry's monologues."

Blaine nodded and pushed Kurt slightly closer to the wings so he had a better view before bending over to kiss him gently, pushing Kurt away when he tried to slip his tongue into Blaine's mouth.

"If I let you continue," he explained when Kurt glared, "you'll get carried away and give me a hickey."

"You look hotter with them," Kurt shrugged.

Blaine laughed and kissed him again. "I'll maybe let you give me one later."

"Oh, you don't get a choice, Anderson."

Shaking his head, Blaine gave him a final kiss, allowing Kurt to hold him there for a few seconds before pulling away and walking off in the direction Wes and David had left in.

Kurt watched the next group—a high school from near Dayton that made him seriously contemplate stabbing himself in the ears—perform from the wings, pulling a face and wincing as the soloist tried to hit a note well out of her range.

"Christ, can she even *hear* herself?" he muttered when they strode off the opposite side of the stage to smattered, polite applause.

Someone chuckled softly behind him and he turned in his seat to see the Warblers' soloist, Blaine's ex Christian, standing behind him, his tie loosened around his neck and a few buttons undone on his shirt. He leaned against the wall with a casual air, hand in his pocket as he eyed Kurt.

"So you're Blaine's new boyfriend?" he said with a faint smirk. He had a thick English accent, clear and refined and annoying as hell. "He always did have a bit of a thing for taller blokes. Never thought he'd go for a cripple though."

"For your information, I crashed my motorcycle, fuck-head," Kurt snapped, wishing he had use of his legs as he knew he couldn't look very threatening in a wheelchair with his leg in a cast and his arm in a sling.

Christian smiled indulgently, sweeping a hand through his dark hair. "Now aren't you fun?" he said. He straightened up and walked over to him. "Just so you know, Blaine's not the perfect little private school boy he looks like he is. He just *loves* sucking cock. Begs for it, actually. But I'm sure you know about that if you've been together for more than a week."

Kurt growled, hands fisting and sending pain shooting up his still tender left arm. "Shut up," he snapped. "I know what you did to him, you asshole."

Christian chuckled again. "Oh, no, my dear boy, you don't know the half of what I did to him. Or what he did to me."

His eyes roved briefly over Kurt's body, a faint sneer on his face. "Enjoy what you can get, Kurt," he said, patting Kurt's leg and smirking at his grunt of pain. "He's not going to shag you no matter what you say to him."

He strode away, the dark of backstage swallowing him up as he left Kurt to shake in anger, leg and arm still aching as the house lights dimmed for the third time.

Gentle piano started playing from behind the curtain, the spotlight lighting up the door at the back of the auditorium. Santana stepped through the curtain, clutching a microphone and dressed in a knee-length, red halter dress, her hair pulled up in a bun with waves falling down around her face.

*I let it fall, my heart,
And as it fell you rose to claim it
It was dark and I was over
Until you kissed my lips and you saved me*

Kurt smiled as she walked the aisle. He's always love the slight rasping growl of her voice, though he'd never say it to her face.

*My hands, they're strong
But my knees were far too weak
To stand in your arms
Without falling to your feet*

The rest of the New Directions filed in from the other side of the stage, singing a soft harmony as Santana climbed the steps, her black heels clicking lightly as moved to center stage.

*But there's a side to you
That I never knew, never knew.
All the things you'd say*

*They were never true, never true,
And the games you play
You would always win, always win.*

Santana stepped back as the rest of the group joined in for the chorus, the boys dressed in black slacks and shirts with skinny red ties, all the girls dressed in the same red dress Santana was wearing. Kurt was slightly surprised by their outfits. Usually, Mr. Schue's wardrobe choices made him want to vomit.

*But I set fire to the rain,
Watched it pour as I touched your face,
Well, it burned while I cried
'Cause I heard it screaming out your name, your name*

Tina stepped forward with a microphone as the second verse started, singing alongside Santana as the others moved back again, singing the harmony.

*When I lay with you
I could stay there
Close my eyes
Feel you here forever
You and me together
Nothing gets better*

Kurt's eyes trained on Blaine, who was on the far side of stage beside Mercedes. He smiled when he glanced his way and winked, though he couldn't stop his mind from going back to what Christian had said about him.

*'Cause there's a side to you
That I never knew, never knew,
All the things you'd say,
They were never true, never true,
And the games you play
You would always win, always win.*

Kurt couldn't help the sting of jealousy he felt as he watched them performing together. As much as he denied it, he loved being in Glee Club and having to sit on the sidelines and watch them looking like they were having the time of their lives after he'd just had to sit through Christian bashing Blaine was not mood-lifting.

*But I set fire to the rain,
Watched it pour as I touched your face,
Well, it burned while I cried
'Cause I heard it screaming out your name, your name*

*I set fire to the rain,
And I threw us into the flames
Well, it felt something died
'Cause I knew that was the last time, the last time, oh, oh*

Kurt shivered at the tone of Santana's voice. She was truly in her element, belting her heart out in the middle of the stage. He'd always thought she deserved more solos but had never said anything for the fact that it meant even fewer for him. He felt another pang of jealousy.

*Let it burn
Let it burn
Let it burn*

Wild applause broke out across the auditorium, though it stopped immediately as the music started up again, Puck wheeling Artie up to take Santana's place as they broke into a cleaned-up edit of Kayne's *Good Life*.

Kurt wasn't a huge fan of the style of music but even he was tapping his uninjured foot along with the music, stifling a laugh as he watched Blaine dancing in the background with the girls as Finn, Puck, and the new exchange student, Rory—Kurt's replacement—switched off on the verses, Artie performing the rap parts as usual as Mike and Brittany did a complex series of dance moves to the side.

More applause broke the silence as they finished, the lights lowering even further as everyone but Blaine moved back into the shadows.

Kurt watched curiously as violin and cello music started up, Blaine glancing briefly in his direction before he started singing.

*I need another story
Something to get off my chest
My life gets kinda boring
Need something that I can confess*

Kurt blinked in surprise at the song, swallowing at the emotion clear in Blaine's voice. He'd heard him sing before but there was so much more depth behind it that before.

*'Til all my sleeves are stained red
From all the truth that I've said
Come by it honestly I swear
Thought you saw me wink, no
I've been on the brink, so*

*Tell me what you want to hear
Something that'll like those ears
I'm sick of all the insincere
So I'm gonna give all my secrets away*

*This time
Don't need another perfect line
Don't care if critics ever jump in line
I'm gonna give all my secrets away*

The lights lifted slightly to shine on the rest of the group as they sang a low harmony. Blaine looked over at Kurt as he started singing the next verse, the look in his eyes catching Kurt's breath in his throat.

*My God
Amazing that we got this far
It's like we're chasing all those stars
Who's driving shiny big black cars*

Blaine smiled very faintly before looking away from Kurt and turning back to the audience, who looked just as captivated as Kurt felt, though he knew he was the only one who really knew what Blaine was saying.

And every day I see the news, all the problems that we could solve

And when a situation rises, just write it into an album

Singing straight too cold

I don't really like my flow, no, so

Tell me what you want to hear

Something that'll like those ears

I'm sick of all the insincere

So I'm gonna give all my secrets away

Kurt pushed away what Christian had said. He knew he'd just been trying to get under his skin, but watching Blaine sing like this, for him, *to* him...well, Christian could fuck off and die for all he cared. Blaine didn't care about him anymore.

This time

Don't need another perfect line

Don't care if critics ever jump in line

I'm gonna give all my secrets away

All my secrets away

All my secrets away

Kurt smiled as the crowd erupted into applause and cheers as the music faded for a final time, Blaine all smiles as the rest of the group ran forward to pull him into a crushing hug, laughing and talking over each other excitedly.

Blaine disentangled himself from the others and jogged over to Kurt, beaming.

"What did you think?" he said breathlessly.

Kurt reached up to grab the end of his tie and pull him down into a hungry kiss, their teeth clacking together painfully, though he didn't care. He didn't care that they were in plain sight of the rest of the Glee Club or that Blaine was still visible to the audience; he wanted to make his opinions very clear.

Blaine gasped as Kurt pulled back, looked dazed and dumb-struck by Kurt's forwardness when the others could see them.

"So you liked it?" he said, blinking and shaking his head to clear it.

Kurt smirked. "Let's just say you're definitely getting an amazing handjob after that."

Blaine laughed. He sighed, smiling fondly down at him. "Come on," he said, jerking his head towards the back of the stage. "We can wait back with the Warblers until it's time to announce the winners. I don't feel like spying with Rachel."

"Like they even need to think about who won," Kurt scoffed. "You guys were fucking *phenomenal*."

"Oh, it wasn't *that* good," Blaine said, the blush clear in his voice.

"Are you kidding me?" Kurt said, swiveling as best he could to gawp at him. "You sounded like sex, Blaine. Pure sex. And you were singing a ballad so...tell me how that works out."

Blaine grinned, laughing quietly as they reached the area offstage where a crowd of boys in Dalton uniforms were standing. They greeted Blaine enthusiastically, congratulating him on his performance even as a few of them cast Kurt wary and disapproving looks.

Blaine hugged a few of them and thanked them happily before returning to Kurt's side. He leaned over to put his lips next to his ear. "I'm going to run to the bathroom, okay?" he whispered. "I'll be right back. Play nice."

"No promises," Kurt said, returning the glare Wes was giving him.

"Okay then *try* to play nice," Blaine said, rolling his eyes as he bent down to kiss him. Kurt caught Christian watching from the other end of the room, eyebrow raised, and grabbed the back of Blaine's head, pulling him closer to deepen the kiss and tracing his lips with his tongue.

Blaine reciprocated for a few seconds before pulling away, his lips red and slightly swollen. "Whoa, maybe later," he muttered. "We've got the bus ride home for that."

Kurt gave him a hungry look, smirking as he shivered and licked his lips.

"Yeah...later," Blaine mumbled, nodding as he turned and walked towards the bathroom.

Kurt tried to keep an eye on Blaine as he walked away, but he found his view blocked in a matter of seconds by a wall of boys in blue blazers. He crossed his arms (as well as he could with a sling) and attempted to look intimidating (which was rather hard in a wheelchair) as he glared up at the Warblers towering over him, Wes standing front and centre.

"Can I help you boys?" he asked drily.

"We want you to stay away from Blaine," a blond one said without preamble.

"Well, it's a pleasure to meet you too," Kurt said sarcastically. "Now, if you will please fuck off, because I doubt this conversation is going to be interesting to me in any respect."

Wes shared an indecipherable look with the boy to his right. If Kurt had to guess, it looked like an 'I told you so' expression.

"Blaine's a good guy, and we don't want to see him get hurt and *you* are *not* what he needs," a different guy said, back up with nodding from the rest of them

"Okay, listen up, fuckwits. I am not with any of *you*, I am with Blaine and it was at *Blaine's* insistence that we got together – he's a grown up boy and can make his own decisions. He doesn't need you lot acting like a bunch of grandmothers watching his every step."

Kurt's argument was cut short as he saw Christian make a move towards the bathroom out of the corner of his eye. Kurt Hummel didn't trust anyone as a general rule, and he trusted Christian the even less than he trusted a live bomb. The only problem was that he was still stuck in a wheelchair, which generally required *two* hands to wheel.

Then Christian glanced over his shoulder and smirked *directly* at Kurt before pushing the door open and disappearing, obviously challenging him to stop whatever he was about to do.

"Now piss off," he said quickly to the Warblers, wriggling his hurt arm out of the sling to grip one of the wheels. "I have other places to be."

He thought they weren't going to move as he started pushing himself forward, but apparently their manners still did exist when it came to Kurt (though it was probably only because of the chair) and they grudgingly made a path for him.

Using his sore arm hurt like a bitch. And not the throbbing ache he'd been getting used to over the past weeks, but a burning, stabbing agony that shot up his nerves and tried to convince his brain that if he didn't get his arm back in his sling the bone was going to snap in half like a twig.

He kept up a constant string of swears under his breath as he wheeled himself slowly across the (ridiculously large) backstage area to the door to the bathroom. By the time he reached that door, he was pretty sure he was about to pass out from the pain, and he wouldn't be surprised if the doctors decided to put him in a cast again because he'd probably fucked up his healing process greatly.

He kicked his leg out to push the toilet door open as he struggled to propel himself across the last few feet of ground.

He heard the two talking before he saw them.

"-think about it. I never really got over you, Blaine... And I've been to counselling after what I did to you. I know I fucked up."

"Christian, no, I..."

"Why, Blaine? Because of that twink you're 'dating'? It's obvious he's just using you – he'll leave you once you bore him. All the Warblers know it too."

"Don't talk about Kurt like that," Blaine snapped suddenly.

"It's hardly as if you two are going to *last*."

"Oh, like *you* would know anything about a healthy relationship," Kurt managed to pant out as he wheeled himself into the room, trying not to wince too much at the pain that was threatening to make him puke. Hey, at least he was in a bathroom with toilets nearby.

"Kurt!" Blaine was immediately by his side, gently pulling his arm off the wheel and laying it in his lap. "Are you *mad*?! You got that cast off a few *hours* ago; you can't be using it for *anything*."

Kurt ignored Blaine's fussing in favour of glaring at Christian, who had finally lost that smug grin. Besides, the whole of his side was starting to go numb so it was easier to concentrate on forming sentences without the need to throw up.

"Listen, dick, Blaine is *my* boyfriend. I don't care that everybody in this fucking universe doesn't seem to want us to be together, we *are* together and it's going to stay that way. And like he would ever get back together with you; thankfully he's developed taste since your break up."

Blaine was looking at him with a slightly stunned expression while Christian's mouth twitched up into an obviously strained smile.

"And you listen to me, Hummel, you are a waste of space, good for nothing *child* who is going to lose Blaine because of your own stupidity. And when you come crawling back to him on your knees, he's not going to want you anymore."

"Christian, leave," Blaine said before Kurt could throw some more insults into the conversation. "I don't want you in my life, okay? I don't like you – and I *never* will after what you did to me. I want Kurt and I'm going to want him for a long time still."

Apparently Blaine's words meant something more to Christian than Kurt's did, as his gaze snapped up to meet Blaine's, the smile gradually falling from his lips.

"Whatever," he snarled, stalking to the door. He paused as he reached Blaine and said, "Call me when you realise you need me, Blaine."

Kurt opened his mouth angrily but Blaine covered it with his hand, glaring at Christian as he left. Kurt stuck his tongue out to lick Blaine's palm and he drew it back quickly, frowning.

"Oh, come on, Kurt, don't be mad at me," he said, wiping his hand on his shirt. "I don't want you working yourself up anymore. Speaking of which, let me look at your arm."

He knelt down, holding Kurt's throbbing arm and looking over it, prodding very lightly. "You're a real idiot sometimes, you know that?" he said, shaking his head and looking up at him.

"Yeah, yeah, I know," Kurt said, rolling his eyes. He caught the concern in Blaine's gaze and felt a twinge of guilt, sighing. "Sorry," he mumbled as Blaine carefully put his arm back into the sling.

"Just...be careful, okay?" Blaine said with a small smile. "I don't want you hurting yourself. You're really good at it, though."

"Tell me about it," Kurt muttered.

Blaine place his hand over top of Kurt's right one, brushing it with his thumb and gazing up at him fondly. Kurt met his look for a moment before dropping his eyes to his lap.

"What's wrong?" Blaine said quietly.

Kurt cleared his throat, brow furrowed. "Did you...were you ever in love with him? With Christian?"

The fact that he didn't answer immediately was enough confirmation for Kurt. There was sinking sensation in his stomach and he clenched his jaw tightly, hating that he cared at all.

"That was a long time ago, Kurt," Blaine said, squeezing his hand. "That's...it's the only reason I stayed with him after what he did to me. But I don't love him anymore. I'm with you, Kurt. I don't want to go back to Christian and I never will."

Kurt shrugged. "Whatever," he grunted, trying to sound indifferent. "It's not a big deal." He attempted to pull his hand away to turn his chair around but Blaine held him there.

"Kurt, stop," he said wearily. "Please."

Kurt scowled but stopped trying to pull away.

"You don't need to be ashamed of the fact that you care," Blaine said. "It's not going to make you weaker. I don't know everything you went through before we met but that's over now. Just like me and Christian are over. I get that you've been hurt and I don't know who did it to you and I'm okay with that for now because I know it's over...but I'm not going to do that to you, Kurt."

The corners of Kurt's eyes prickled and he wished more than anything he could just believe it and that he *didn't* care so much.

A buzzer sounded over the speaker and they both looked up at it.

"Come on," Blaine said, smiling as he stood. "You can watch from backstage."

He made to step behind Kurt but Kurt grabbed his hand and gave him a steady look. Blaine seemed to understand because he bent down and kissed him, allowing Kurt to angle his head and deepened the kiss, sucking in and letting out a heavy breath through his nose before Blaine pulled back again.

"You okay?" Blaine said, brushing his hand over Kurt's cheek.

Kurt nodded. "Yeah. I'm good."

Blaine straightened and wheeled him carefully out of the bathroom, kissing him on the cheek as he left him in the wings before hurrying out onto the stage where the rest of the New Directions were waiting between the Warblers and the other group.

Anger bubbled inside him as he saw Christian eyeing Blaine as he passed. He sneered over at Kurt and Kurt flipped him off with a furious glare.

The crowd quieted and the announcer introduced the judges in the crowd before declaring the school from Dayton as the ones in third place.

"No surprises there," Kurt mumbled as he watched Rachel clutching at Blaine and Finn's hands, looking anxious. He suppressed a laugh when Blaine winced and flashed him a pleading look.

"And in first place—" the announcer—a middle-aged man with a thick mustache and off-kilter toupee—said dramatically, opening the envelope and pulling out the slip of paper inside— "The New Directions!"

Kurt rolled his eyes as Rachel went completely berserk as usual, Mr. Schue accepting the first place trophy with a smile before shaking Christian's hand.

Blaine winked in Kurt's direction, beaming as the others jumped around excitedly, Santana throwing an arm around his shoulders and proclaiming loudly that the two of them were to thank for the win.

The Warblers made their way offstage looking dejected, filing past Kurt and giving him matching looks of disapproval and disgust, which he readily returned.

Christian was the last in line, glancing back at Blaine being hugged by an ecstatic Rachel and smirking.

"Enjoy it while you can, Hummel," he said, turning back to Kurt. "The Warblers may not like me much either but they're not going to stand idly by while you're with Blaine. You'll screw it up soon enough and they'll jump on the chance to break you up the moment Blaine comes crying to them."

"Oh, fuck off," Kurt snapped viciously. "Get over yourself, you shithead. Blaine's not taking you back. Deal with it."

Christian smiled coldly at him for a moment before continuing past him to join the other Warblers.

Blaine came excitedly over to him a few seconds later, grinning and obviously unaware of his interaction with Christian. "Come on," he said, pushing Kurt off the stage and after the rest of the New Directions as they headed towards the back door of the building, chattering happily, to where the bus was parked.

"Told you you'd win," Kurt said smugly as they waited for Artie to be raised into the bus before Kurt could be wheeled onto the lift.

"Yeah, yeah," Blaine said, the grin evident in his voice. "But unlike you, I'm not cocky."

Kurt smirked as Blaine pushed him onto the life. "I just know I'm fucking amazing," he said. "I also know you agree."

Blaine sighed, though Kurt caught his mouth twitch upward. He helped Kurt onto the bus and out of his chair so he could sit next to him. Kurt winced as pain jolted up his leg, grunting when he sat down harder than intended and gripping his leg.

"Are you okay?" Blaine said worriedly.

"Fine," Kurt ground out when he spotted Puck and Santana watching him before exchanging dubious looks. He shifted into a more comfortable position, glancing outside at the evening light, small snow flurries swirling around on the chill air.

Blaine's hand slipped into his own and Kurt tensed, eyes flicking to Santana and Puck again, who caught Blaine's gesture with raised eyebrows, Puck shaking his head and Santana pursing her lips.

"So, uh, what was that earlier about continuing what we started on the bus?" Kurt said, leaning close to Blaine and whispering low in his ear, moving their clasped hands towards his groin.

Blaine glanced around at the others, all chatting and discussing where they should stop for dinner on the two hour ride back to McKinley, before digging the blanket that Kurt had used on the ride to the school from under the seat.

He draped it over their legs, adjusting it to thoroughly over them both and scooting closer to Kurt. Kurt huffed when Mr. Schue stood at the front of the bus to congratulate them all on the win.

"But we can't slack now," he said. "We've got Regionals to prepare for next. The holidays are coming soon but after that we really need to buckle down and get to work again. But great job, guys, really. Special congratulations to Blaine and Santana on their amazing solos."

The others clapped and cheered, flashing the two of them grins as Mr. Schue tapped the bus driver on the shoulder and took his seat, the light outside fading quickly as dusk settled in.

Kurt shivered as Blaine kneaded his thigh, resting his head against his shoulder and kissing the side of his neck.

"You know I'm not getting you off on a crowded bus, right?" he murmured.

Kurt glowered at him. "Then why did you even start?" he mumbled, keeping his voice low as the bus started up and pulled out of the parking lot, everyone else launching into a rather sloppy performance of *Don't Stop Believing*—sloppy because they were all too busy laughing as Britney tried to explain the significance of the song to a confused Rory and failing miserably.

"Because," Blaine said, pressing another kiss lower down on his neck. "I'm spending the night at your house. I talking to your dad at the hospital and he said it was fine since I'm bringing you home and Finn is staying at Puck's tonight. I have to sleep upstairs but...we can not watch a movie in the basement first."

"I like the way you think, Anderson," Kurt said with a smirk. "Can we still make-out though?"

Blaine hummed against his neck so the sound vibrating across his skin. "Mmm, there's a reason you're dating me, remember?"

"Yeah," Kurt said. "They sex so far is amazing."

Blaine chuckled and moved his hand to clasp Kurt's against his leg. "You'd still stick around without the sex though," he said, his thumb brushing over Kurt's hand.

"Eh," Kurt said with a shrug of the shoulder Blaine's head wasn't on. "Maybe."

He could practically hear Blaine's grin. "Okay," he said, amusement clear in his voice.

Kurt remained silent, tilting his head against the cool, snow flecked glass, smiling faintly because he knew that *Blaine* knew he'd never admit it out loud, but he was right.

Chapter Twelve

Burt opened the door for them when they arrived home late in the evening after being forced to Breadstix with Mercedes and Rachel – who Blaine had struck up a friendship with though Kurt found her insanely tiresome – and he took over the job of wheeling Kurt from Blaine, causing Kurt to frown unhappily because that meant he couldn't go downstairs to 'watch a film' with Blaine immediately.

"How did it go?" he asked as he settled Kurt in the living room.

"We won," Blaine said happily, perching on the armchair next to Kurt, apparently not at all annoyed by his cockblocking father.

"Congratulations," Burt said with a genuine smile. "Did you have a good time, son?"

"It was okay," Kurt shrugged. "Their vocals would have been better if I was involved, but our competition was so shi- bad," he ignored Blaine's smirk at his change of language, "that wasn't exactly hard for us to win."

"Good to know you had fun," Burt said, seeing through his son's sarcasm.

"Anything to get out of this damn house," Kurt muttered under his breath.

"What are you two going to do to celebrate?"

Kurt had to hide his smirk as he answered; knowing that there was no way Burt would let them watch a film unsupervised if he had any reason to suspect funny business. "We were just planning to put on a movie in the basement and relax." *And fuck*, his mind tacked on to the end.

He kept his face as innocent as possible, knowing Blaine was doing the same beside him, as Burt inspected them before nodding gruffly. "Do you need any help getting him downstairs?"

"No, I should be fine, there aren't that many stairs and I'm used to carrying him around now," Blaine joked.

Kurt frowned but kept his mouth shut as Burt let up on the inquisition and wheeled him to the top of the basement stairs, opening the door for Blaine as he carefully slid an arm under Kurt's legs, the other

wrapping around his back as he plucked Kurt out of the chair and carried him down the stairs with a constant stream of questions checking that he wasn't in any pain.

Burt carried the chair down, in case they needed to use it later, as Blaine arranged Kurt on the sofa before nodding at the two boys and leaving.

Blaine moved over to the television and put in a DVD that Kurt didn't really care about before shuffling back on his knees.

"Are you sure you're comfortable?" he asked.

Kurt sighed and kicked him with his good leg. "Yes, for the eightieth time, I am fine; my arm doesn't even hurt anymore."

Blaine shut his mouth with a sigh as the opening credits of the film began; he was spread out on the floor, leaning against the foot of the sofa, his head resting against Kurt's shoulder.

There was a light tap at the door and Carole stuck her head round, smiling at the two boys. "Burt and I are going to bed now; do you need anything, Kurt?"

"I'm good, Carole. Anyway, Blaine's here to do whatever I need."

Apparently Carole didn't hear the double meaning to his words as she smiled and bid them goodnight, shutting the door after her.

Kurt waited until he heard two sets of feet traversing the stairs before shifting down on the couch so his lips were only a few inches from Blaine's head which was facing forward, staring at the screen intently.

"You're not actually watching the movie are you?" he asked. "Because I thought we were here for more rewarding things..."

"Are you sure it's not going to hurt you?"

"Blaine, I'm not some porcelain bird; you promised me a handjob so get your ass up here."

Blaine grinned, and scrambled up onto the couch, straddling Kurt's waist, careful to avoid putting any weight on his injured limbs. The movie was still playing in the corner, casting a flickering blue glow across the side of Blaine's face as his lips hovered tantalisingly close to Kurt's, his mouth turned up into a small smile as his eyes obviously raked over Kurt's features.

Tired of the build-up, Kurt pushed himself up on his elbow, pressing his lips to Blaine's with a slight moan because he'd been wanting to do that for hours.

Blaine kissed back enthusiastically, his tongue immediately sliding against Kurt's as he braced his hands on either side of Kurt's head, still careful not to put any weight on Kurt.

Kurt tried to push his hips off the bed as they kissed to gain some friction, but he ended up bucking uselessly into the empty air. Blaine broke away from the kiss to look down at him, a slight frown on his face.

"If you ask me if I'm okay, I won't hesitate to punch you again," Kurt warned. "I am fine. Now would you please give me some form of release before I scream?"

The doubt disappeared from Blaine's eyes as he pressed his lips back against Kurt's, slowly lowering his whole body so it was aligned with Kurt's, their chests pressed against one another's so Kurt could feel every gasp for air that Blaine took.

"Shit, move your arm," Kurt yelled as Blaine accidentally rested a little too much weight on Kurt's injured left shoulder.

"Sorry, sorry," Blaine apologised immediately, shifting so he was leaning on Kurt's better side. "Are you sure we should be doing this?"

Kurt groaned in frustration and thrust his hips up, his thigh brushing against Blaine's erection causing the boy to moan.

"Yes, we should be doing this, just be a bit more fucking careful." He bucked upwards again, his breath hitching at the friction on his clothed erection.

"Fuck," Blaine breathed and reciprocated, able to keep up the rocking motion far more successfully than Kurt. He dipped his head to kiss along Kurt's jawline up to his mouth, nibbling Kurt's bottom lip.

It was awkward; Blaine's pants kept catching on the rough plaster cast on Kurt's legs (until Kurt got tired of the constant snagging and roughly unbuttoned Blaine's pants one handed) and he had to balance on one hand due to Kurt's injured arm, but eventually he fell into a rhythm.

He felt dizzy and light-headed with each roll of Blaine's hips against him, his skin tingling and heat curling tantalizingly in his gut, words catching in his throat as he tried to stay silent. Blaine panted against his neck, hands finding purchase in the couch cushions as he tried to keep as much of his weight off of Kurt as possible.

The pale light of the television shone across Blaine's skin, catching the sweat starting to bead on his arms as he propped himself up to try and gain better friction. His hair had started coming free from his gel and Kurt had the sudden urge to run his fingers through it.

"Next time, no gel," he said in a hoarse whisper. "I want to be able to grab your hair without getting my fingers covered in that crap."

Blaine laughed, though it came out choked and rough as he ground his hips down smoothly.

"Fuck," Kurt growled, gritting his teeth and digging his fingers into the cushion. He was close already—not surprising given how few times he'd gotten off in the past two months—and he could feel a moan building in his throat. "Kiss me," he grunted.

"What?"

"Kiss. Me. *Now*."

Blaine looked confused for a moment but lowered himself down on his arms to press his lips against Kurt's, groaning gently as Kurt lifted his hand to grip the back of his neck, licking hungrily at Blaine's tongue and sucking on his bottom lip.

Blaine shifted and moved his hips in a rough sort of circle as he pressed down and Kurt moaned into his mouth as he came, fingernails scratching bluntly over Blaine's neck, his left arm starting to ache from the awkward position it was in.

He kissed Blaine sloppily, tongue and lips moving loosely around his mouth as Blaine continues to rock his hips down, his pace becoming less timed and careful. Kurt grunted in pain as Blaine leg collided with his own as he jerked down roughly a final time, hips stuttering as he gasped into Kurt's mouth.

He rolled off him, squeezing onto the couch next to him and nestling his head in the crook of Kurt's neck, hot breath hitting his heated skin, his fingers playing across Kurt's ribcage as he slid them up and down his side.

They lay in silence for a few moments, catching their breath and enjoy the afterglow.

"I should probably get us cleaned up," Blaine mumbled, lips grazing over Kurt's neck.

"Yeah...yeah, good idea," Kurt said, nodding absently, sudden drowsiness starting to sink in as Blaine got awkwardly to his feet, stumbling a little.

Kurt stifled a yawn. It was already late—thanks to them deciding to go to Breadstixs at nine o'clock—and that in combination with the emotional and physical stress he'd put himself through that day was not helping him stay awake.

Blaine returned from the bathroom after a few minutes wearing a fresh pair of sweatpants and an old t-shirt rather than his performance clothes, clutching a pair of sweats that had been altered for Kurt's cast in one hand, a damp rag in the other.

"I got my bag out of my car," he explained as he sat down on the sofa next to Kurt, struggling a little with pulling off his sweatpants and briefs, blushing faintly at the sight of him naked and trying to avert his eyes.

"You know, you're allowed to look at my cock," Kurt said, smirking. "You've had your hands on it enough. Let's just hope the next step is your mouth."

Blaine laughed but Kurt saw his blush deepen as he cleaned him off hurriedly and put on the clean sweatpants, tossing the rag and Kurt's other clothes in the corner.

"Can you stand? I want to pull out the sofa bed for you."

"Yeah," Kurt said, wincing as he pushed himself into a sitting position and Blaine helped him to his feet.

"Just stay right there, okay?" Blaine said as he hurried to strip the cushions from the sofa and pull out the fold-out mattress.

"Wasn't planning on going anywhere," Kurt mumbled, shifting on his feet and grimacing as a fresh wave of pain shot up his leg.

"Here," Blaine said gently, helping him lie down on the sheets and propping his foot up on a pillow for him. "How's that?"

Kurt smiled. "Fine," he said, shaking his head as Blaine adjusted the pillow under his head. "You know, you worry too much."

"I just want to make sure you're comfortable," Blaine said, laying a blanket over him and kissing him on the cheek.

"Okay, thanks, *mother*," Kurt muttered, rolling his eyes.

Laughing quietly, Blaine crawled under the covers next to him, picking up the remote from where it had fallen on the floor and adjusting the volume so it was at a comfortable level.

"Are you—"

"Blaine, what did I say? If you ask me if I'm alright one more time I'm pushing you on the floor. Just get your ass over here next to me and watch the movie."

He caught Blaine's grin and adjusted his arm so he could lie next to him, head resting against Kurt's shoulder.

"Just so you know, this will not be a regular thing," Kurt said gruffly. "I'm not a cuddler. I'm just in a really good mood because that was pretty awesome frottage."

"Yeah, okay," Blaine said, yawning and draping his arm over Kurt's chest.

"I'm serious," Kurt said, looking over at him.

"Mhmm." Blaine snuggled closer to him, closing his eyes and smiling.

Kurt narrowed his eyes at him for a moment. "You know, you're not supposed to sleep down here. My dad will get pissed."

"I'll go up before I fall asleep," Blaine mumbled. "I promise. Wouldn't want to ruin your reputation for not cuddling anyway."

Kurt saw him grin and resisted the urge to retort; he was simply too tired. Sighing, he rested his head against Blaine's, wishing he didn't enjoy the warmth and proximity as much as he did as the low sound of the television lulled him to sleep.

"I'm so sorry, Mr. Hummel, I must have fallen asleep watching the movie."

"It's...it's alright, I guess just...don't let it happen again. And Carole says breakfast is ready if you're hungry."

"Thank you, sir, I'll help Kurt up as soon as he's awake."

"M'awake," Kurt murmured as he heard his father's retreating footsteps. He noticed that he didn't close the basement door, though. "He does *not* trust you."

"Me?" Blaine said incredulously as Kurt rubbed his eyes and yawned. "What did I do?"

"Talked about putting your hand down my pants in the hospital," Kurt said, smirking.

"But...but *you* were the one who brought it up!" Blaine spluttered. "I was perfectly innocent until you came along."

Kurt gave him a dead-panned stare. "Innocent? Really?"

"Well...more innocent than you, anyway," Blaine amended as he threw the blankets off and got out of bed, stretching his arms above his head and yawning hugely.

"Yeah, but my father *thinks* I'm innocent," Kurt said, propping himself up on his elbow.

"How though?" Blaine said, looking confused. "How does he now know any of what you've done?"

"He knows a little bit of it," Kurt said with a shrug. "He knows about my one ex but that's it. I'm very good at keeping my two lives separate."

"What ex are you talking about?" Blaine said, brows furrowing.

Kurt chewed on the inside of his cheek. "Er...it's..." he coughed.

"You don't have to tell me," Blaine said gently, sitting next to him and brushing his hair off his forehead. "I can wait until you're ready."

Kurt smiled gratefully, Blaine running his finger through the hair hanging over his ear. There was a beat of silence, Blaine smiling tenderly at him, his other sliding over the bed to rest on top of Kurt's.

Kurt cleared his throat quickly and pushed himself up, fussing with his shirt and keeping his eyes fixedly away from Blaine's. He thought he heard Blaine sigh but ignored it, fixing his hair and trying to swing his leg around to stand up.

"Here," Blaine said, tone a little flat and tired. "Let me help." He wrapped his arm around Kurt's waist and helped him to his feet before sliding his other arm under his knees to lift him up, grunting softly.

Kurt hated having to be carried around like this. It made him feel weak and powerless. That, along with the fact that Blaine could affect him so easily annoyed him to no end.

Blaine set him down on the couch in the living room—where Finn was already sitting in the armchair eating eggs and toast—adjusting his shirt and sweats for him. "Do you need anything?" he said, voice still dull and perhaps vaguely irritated.

"No," Kurt said quietly. "I'm...I'm fine."

"I'll just get your food then," Blaine said, leaving before Kurt had a chance to say anything else.

Sighing, Kurt let his head fall back against the cushions.

"What's wrong?" Finn said around a mouthful of food.

"Nothing," Kurt grunted, lifting his head to pull a face at him. "And don't talk with your mouth full, it's fucking gross."

Finn closed his mouth to chew, shrugging and returning to watching the football game on the television.

Blaine returned with two plates of food, sitting down next to Kurt but leaving ample space between them. "Here," he said, shoving Kurt's plate into his hands.

Kurt lifted an eyebrow. "Thanks," he said slowly, picking up his fork and picking at his eggs. They ate in a strained silence, Finn occasionally commenting on the football game. Finn got up to get more food after a few minutes and Kurt turned to Blaine, setting his plate on his lap.

"Is something wrong?" he said, half-glancing at the kitchen to be sure Finn wasn't coming back.

Blaine finished chewing his toast, frowning. He swallowed and set his plate on the table as he turned to him. "Are you embarrassed by me?" he said.

"What? No, of course not. You're fucking hot."

"That's not what I mean, Kurt, and you know it," Blaine said, sounding annoyed. "Are you embarrassed by me? By the way I act around you? Because it really seems like you don't want to be around me half the time. I get that you're not affectionate and you have a...reputation to keep or whatever, but I don't want to be treated like crap just because you're afraid of people knowing seeing you showing that you care about me."

Kurt opened his mouth, thought for a moment, and closed it again silently. He cleared his throat and lowered his head, feeling ashamed and aggravated. "Sorry," he mumbled. "I...I'm not used to it...to *this*...I'm not embarrassed by you, Blaine. I swear, I just...I guess I'm still learning."

"I know," Blaine said, his voice thankfully returning to the gentleness it held before. "I understand and I know it's going to take time. I don't expect you to become a different person, Kurt. I just wanted to be honest with you. I want to know I'm not the only one who cares about this relationship."

"You're not," Kurt mumbled, falling silent as Finn walked back into the room and took his seat again, not realising what he'd walked in on.

Blaine smiled reassuringly and took his hand, squeezing it very gently before picking up his plate again.

Kurt watched him eat for a moment before looking down at his own breakfast. He suddenly wasn't very hungry anymore. Though he had to admit he *did* feel bad for putting Blaine through his apparent disconnect from their relationship, he also knew that he *wasn't* ready to be sweet and affectionate around Blaine. Even if Blaine swore up and down he was alright with it for the time being, he was sure he would be so relaxed about it if they got serious.

The thought of it made him suddenly panicky. What if Blaine wanted something more, a *real* relationship, not just what they were doing now? Kurt hadn't been in a serious relationship for over a year, and that was *certainly* not an experience he wanted to revisit any time soon. He'd been through more than he cared to remember after what had happened and while he didn't think Blaine would ever do to him what had happened, he hadn't thought his ex would have either.

He didn't know what he wanted. He cared about Blaine but, at the same time, was scared about the fact that he *did* care so much. It was frightening and intimidating and he was somehow sure that he'd find a way to screw it up at some point, just like he always did.

Chapter Thirteen

"I actually think I would have preferred staying in the house to doing this," Kurt said as he stared at the tackily decorated mall.

"*You* were the one who ordered me to take you somewhere," Blaine said as he pushed Kurt's chair through the crowds of people doing Christmas shopping.

"That's because I was going mad being stuck in that house, but *this* is worse."

"What's wrong with it?" Blaine asked, sounded slightly offended.

"It's all... *festive*. I hate Christmas; everybody is so chirpy and fucking *merry*."

He twisted around to see why Blaine didn't reply immediately. He was staring at Kurt as if he had personally made it his job to murder every puppy in the vicinity.

"What?" he asked.

"You *hate* Christmas?" Blaine asked. "What's *wrong* with you? Christmas is my favourite time of the year!"

"Oh god, please don't tell me I'm dating someone who wears reindeer sweaters and decorates everything in fucking fairy lights."

"You, Kurt Hummel, are a Grinch," Blaine said seriously as he wheeled Kurt into the food court. "There is nothing wrong with enjoying and celebrating Christmas, especially when it makes so many people happy."

"It's tacky, the music is *awful*" – as if to emphasise the point, '*All I Want For Christmas*' suddenly burst from the speakers in the mall, crackling with feedback, causing everyone in the vicinity to wince and cover their ears – "and no one is *really* happy, everyone is just stressed out of their tiny little minds. It's a shit time of the year."

Blaine managed to find them an empty table tucked in the corner of the food court, rolling his eyes at Kurt.

"Whatever," he said. "I'll *make* you enjoy Christmas this year."

"Sounds painful... But I guess I can survive it if there are blowjobs involved."

Blaine snorted. "It's about sex for you. Do you want anything to eat?"

"Just a sandwich," Kurt said as he watched a man walk past munching on a burger that was leaking grease.

"Okay." Blaine smiled, kissing Kurt on the top of his head before joining the long queue.

"Well wasn't that just *adorable*," a voice said behind him. Kurt twisted in his seat to see Puck and Santana standing there, arms crossed as they stared at him.

"What are you two doing here?" he asked. "You hate this stupid season just as much as I do, *and* you both have complete use of your legs."

"We're Christmas shoplifting," Santana said, smirking and lifting her bulging handbag as they both dropped heavily into nearby chairs.

"Want to come, Hummel? We could hide so much in that chair..." Puck leaned closer, his eyes lighting up at the prospect.

Kurt shrugged. "Sorry guys, Blaine's going to be back soon and I don't feel like having to deal with his judgmental glares... What?" he asked when he saw the critical looks traded between Santana and Puck.

"You're going soft, Hummel." Puck leaned in, crossing his arms. "Seriously, since you started dating Anderson, you're not up to do *anything* fun."

"Puck, I've been stuck in a wheelchair since I started dating Blaine, how exactly did you expect me to be 'fun'?"

"You would have been totally up for shoplifting in a wheelchair a few months ago," Puck pointed out. "It would have been the only reason you would have been caught dead in this shithole."

"He speaks the truth, Kurt; I have, like, no reasons to want to be in your company anymore – you didn't come to the party last weekend."

"Guys, what part of 'I'm in a fucking *wheelchair*' don't you understand? I can't go to parties or do anything that I want to because of this stupid thing; I can't get out of the house without my dad following my every footstep or sending Blaine out with me. Would you stop jumping down my throat about it? You know I'll be up for everything when I can walk."

Santana shook her head sadly as they both got to their feet, picking up the stolen goods at their feet. "You're missing the obvious that if you ditched the boyfriend, you'd be able to do everything with us."

"I'm not dumping Blaine just to go out partying with you, I can actually stand his company in long doses."

Puck snorted humourlessly. "You've actually got *feelings* for him? Damn, Hummel, you're more of a lost cause than I thought. Come on, Lopez, we can probably hit a few more shops before security gets suspicious."

"Later sadsack," Santana called over her shoulder.

Kurt glared after them, battling with the indecision of whether to follow them and prove that he was just as much fun as he had been before the accident and Blaine. But the more sensible part of him knew that he would barely be able to make it out of the food court before Blaine caught up with him and asked where he was going. He couldn't help but resent the presence of his boyfriend when he realised that.

A tray hit the table in front of him, causing Kurt to jump.

"Hey, I got you a BLT, is that okay?" Blaine asked, smiling as he sat in Puck's recently vacated seat.

Kurt shrugged noncommittally. "Yeah, fine."

Blaine cast him a curious look, but Kurt was too busy frowning at his sandwich to pay attention to him.

"Everything okay?" Blaine said as he unwrapped Kurt's sandwich for him.

"Hmm? Oh, yeah, great," Kurt said, taking a bite so he wasn't required to talk.

Blaine smiled and laid his hand on top of Kurt's free one where it rested on the table, arm momentarily free from the sling so he could exercise it.

Kurt's fingers twitched and he glanced around nervously but didn't pull away. Blaine seemed to take it as progress and patted his hand gently before turning to his own lunch.

"So," he said, taking a sip of his soda. "Anywhere in particular you wanted to go?"

"Can't we just go to a movie and grope each other in the back row?" Kurt said hopefully. Blaine gave him a dead-panned look. "No? Damn. I dunno, I'm just trying not to get sick over all the chintzy shit everywhere."

"You can't really hate Christmas *that* much," Blaine said, giving him a doubtful look.

"I do," Kurt retorted, taking a bite of his sandwich and chewing slowly.

"But...but it's so much *fun*!" Blaine said exasperatedly. "The lights and the snow and Christmas songs and decorating the tree and baking cookies!"

"Pain in the ass to untangle, cold, annoying, needles everywhere, and Finn eats them all," Kurt ticked off on his fingers.

Blaine sighed and shook his head as he returned to his food. "I think you're just determined to hate everything."

"I don't hate you," Kurt pointed out.

"And I'm just so flattered for it," Blaine said.

"Sarcasm does not become you," Kurt said, reaching across the table to steal a French fry from him.

"I thought you just wanted a sandwich?" Blaine said even as he pushed the fries closer to Kurt so he wouldn't have to stretch for them. "But, by all means, steal my food."

"I will," Kurt said, smirking as he popped another fry into his mouth.

"I should just leave you here, you thief."

"You wouldn't be able to live with the guilt. Abandoning a poor, crippled boy alone three weeks before Christmas?" He clucked his tongue disapprovingly.

"The fact that you're an asshole will lessen the guilt," Blaine said, still grinning.

"Fuck you, Anderson, I'm perfect and you know it," Kurt said smugly.

"Mhmm," Blaine said, suppressing a laugh as Kurt lifted his sandwich and half the contents fell from the back of the bread onto the wrapper.

Kurt flashed him a warning glare.

"I didn't say a word," Blaine said, amusement clear in his voice.

"Bastard," Kurt mumbled as he attempted to reassemble his sandwich, Blaine shaking with silent laughter next to him.

Kurt made it a point to take as many of Blaine's fries as he could just to get make at him, though Blaine simply smiled fondly at him, occasionally catching his wrist to kiss his fingertips when he did it.

The infuriating part was that Blaine *never* seemed to get flustered or annoyed by any of it. He was so used to being able to get a rise out of anyone and Blaine was so fucking *calm* all the time, he hadn't quite gotten used to it yet.

"So where to?" Blaine said when they'd finished eating, wheeling Kurt through the bustling shoppers and kissing the top of his head.

"Doesn't matter," Kurt said, flicking off a woman who threw them a disgusted look. "It's all going to be over-crowded and over-priced."

Blaine sighed. "Can't you at least *try* to enjoy yourself?"

"Fine," Kurt grunted, feeling chastened. He plastered a wide smile on his face. "'Etter?" he said through gritted teeth.

"You look demented," Blaine said flatly as he pushed Kurt into Macy's, where the mannequins were dressed in thick sweaters, fur-lined boots, and long scarves, artificial trees sparkling with yellowish lights in the display windows.

"Ugh, it's all so fake and...ugh, it's awful," Kurt said, pulling a face. "Just an excuse to buy shit you don't need for people you don't like."

"Does that mean you don't want my present?" Blaine said, pausing to look at a selection of scarves.

Kurt swiveled in his seat to gape at him. "You bought me a present?" he said incredulously.

"Don't people who are dating generally buy each other things for Christmas?" Blaine didn't look up as he said it, frowning as he compared two scarves.

"Well...I guess," Kurt muttered, turning back to look at nothing in particular across the store.

"If you don't want it, I can take it back," Blaine said, setting one scarf down but keeping a dark green one in his hand. "I just thought—"

"No, no it's fine," Kurt said hastily. "I guess...I'm just not used to it. I'm...still getting adjusted to you."

Blaine smiled and bent over to kiss him. "I'm going to pay for this really quick," he said, holding up the scarf. "You want to just chill here for a minute?"

"Yeah, might as well," Kurt sighed.

Blaine pecked him on the cheek before heading to the registers.

Kurt heard a small scoffing noise and looked up to see Puck and Santana standing at a nearby displaying, giving him a disapproving look.

Kurt narrowed his eyes at them. "What?" he snapped.

"You are so whipped," Santana said, hand on her hip.

"Seriously, Kurt, you need to get away from Anderson before you start wearing matching outfits and join the honour role." Puck picked through a rack of jewelry as he said it, tossing a few things aside absently.

"Shut up," Kurt snapped, glancing over at Blaine, who was passing his debit card to a giggling cashier. "You two don't even *know* him."

"Don't we?" Santana said, pursing her lips. "We spend all day with him at school, Kurt. He hangs around *Berry* most of the time."

"Hey," Puck said. "To be fair, she's not too bad...when she's not talking."

Santana rolled her eyes dramatically. "She's *lame*, Puck. And so is Anderson. He's bringing you down, Kurt."

"No, that would be *this*," Kurt said, rapping his knuckles on his cast.

"So once you're out of that you'll be back to partying?" Santana said, picking absently at her fingernails.

"I told you I would," Kurt said angrily.

"And Anderson?" Puck said curiously.

"What does it matter?" Kurt said. "Just because we're dating doesn't mean he's tethered to my side!"

"Hmm," Santana hummed, lifting an eyebrow. "Is that so?" Her eyes flicked to the side and Kurt turned to see Blaine walking back towards them, clutching his bag.

"Oh, hey, guys!" he said brightly, laying his hands on Kurt's shoulders and giving them a warm smile. "What's up?"

"Just...shopping," Santana said even as Kurt saw Puck slip the bracelet he was holding into his pocket with a glance around to check that no one was watching.

Blaine's eyes widened and he opened his mouth to say something.

"Leave it," Kurt mumbled, grabbing his hand.

"What? But, Kurt, he just—"

"Just leave it," Kurt hissed slowly. "It's not a big deal."

"Sure you don't want to join, Kurt?" Santana said with a smirk. "We've been missing our little outings together."

Kurt gave her a furious glare, Blaine looking confused for a moment before realisation came over his features.

"No?" Santana said, plucking up a pair of earrings and examining them. She made to peel off the price sticker, Puck blocking her from the camera.

"Put it back," Blaine said sharply.

Santana paused, looking up with a small smirk on his lips. "Excuse me?"

"Put it back," Blaine repeated. "I'll tell security."

Kurt sighed and avoided Puck and Santana's gazes.

"Well okay then," Santana said. "Puck, put the bracelet back."

Puck scoffed but did as she told him, tossing the thin gold band back on the display.

"I'll just go pay for these," Santana said, dangling the earrings gently. She walked over to Kurt and bent down, laying her hands on the arms of his wheelchair.

"Glad to see you're feeling better," she said sleekly before straightening up and walking away with Puck, glancing over her shoulder with a sly grin.

A few seconds of silence filled with a quiet rendition of *Santa Baby* playing on the speakers in the background.

"Did you use to shoplift?" Blaine said stiffly.

Kurt sighed, knowing it wouldn't do any good to lie. "Yeah," he mumbled.

"Did you...have you since we met?"

Kurt coughed and cleared his throat. "Er...once or twice...but, but not since we've been dating."

"Well obviously," Blaine said bitterly. "I've been pushing you around in a wheelchair since we started dating."

The silence stretched between them. No one had ever made Kurt actually feel *ashamed* of himself for his wrongdoings before. In fact, he usually found their shock and reprimand empowering, if anything. And yet, here was Blaine, so easily making him feel like absolute shit for everything without even trying.

"I'm sorry," Kurt said quietly, genuinely meaning it this time.

Blaine didn't reply, simply grabbed the handles of his chair and turned him around. He reached into his bag and tossed a soft, grey-blue cashmere hat into Kurt's lap. "Here," he grunted. "I saw it at the register and thought it matched your eyes. Though I paid for it so you might not want it."

Kurt touched the soft fabric lightly, feeling, if possible, even worse. "I—thanks," he mumbled. "I'm sorry, Blaine, I really am. I swear I haven't done it in months."

"Just like you stopped smoking when we met, huh?"

Kurt hung his head as they passed through the security sensor. A loud, blaring beep went off and the light on the sensor flashed brightly.

Blaine stopped suddenly, blinking in surprise as people turned to look at them. His eyes narrowed as he looked down at Kurt incredulously, jaw tight.

"Blaine, I *swear* I didn't take anything!" Kurt said as one of the cashiers strode over to them.

Blaine looked down at his lap, a disgusted look coming over his face as he bent down and reached between Kurt's thigh and the side of the chair, holding up a sterling silver necklace as he straightened.

"B-but I didn't take it!" Kurt insisted. "I swear I..." he stopped. "Santana..."

"What?"

"Santana must have put it there, Blaine! I *swear* I didn't take it. What use would I have for a necklace anyway?" He tried to laugh it off but Blaine simply shook his head, taking a step back from him as the cashier and a security guard approached them.

"I think you need to come with us," the guard said as Blaine passed the necklace to the cashier, Kurt's eyes widening at the sight of the two hundred dollar price tag.

"It wasn't me!" Kurt cried. "Come on, I'm in a *wheelchair*! Blaine, help me out!"

Blaine took in his pleading face, glanced up at the waiting security guard and cashier and took a step towards them.

"I took it," he said.

"What? Blaine, no, San—"

Blaine shot him a quelling look and Kurt fell silent.

"Come with me, son," the guard said, laying a hand on Blaine's shoulder and steering him out of the store, Blaine glancing back at Kurt with a disappointed look.

Kurt gaped after him.

"Do you need help, sir?" the cashier said.

"Fuck off," Kurt snapped, ignoring the pain in his arm as he wheeled himself awkwardly out of the store, glancing around and turning towards the security office. He knew its location well; he'd been there once or twice when he was still learning how to lift nearly two years before.

Pain needled up his bones like splinters, tears stinging in his eyes as he struggled through the crowd, coming to a stop outside the hall leading back to the office. He slumped in his chair, cold sweat beading on his brow as he slipped his arm back in the sling, allowing the pain to slowly recede.

After a minute or two, he pulled out his phone, flicking through his contacts and sending Santana a text, fumbling with the keyboard one-handedly.

What the hell is your problem, Lopez? Blaine just got arrested because you two have some sick problem with me being happy. Fuck off.

He couldn't believe she would do this to him just because she didn't like that he was with Blaine. To say that he was pissed off was an understatement. He was *livid*.

His phone beeped in his lap and he held it up to read the message from Santana.

Wow, he took the rap for you? Maybe he's the whipped one. Chill out, Hummel, we're just trying to show you that he's not right for you. You need someone cool. Like Mark.

Kurt stomach twisted at the sight of the name and he hurried to reply as quickly as possible.

Yeah, Mark was really fucking great, Santana. You know how he took me to parties all the time and got me drunk and everything else he did when I was fifteen. Really fucking awesome boyfriend.

He threw his phone in his lap, seething and shaking at the thought of his ex and everything he'd done to him. He'd done a good job of pushing all the memories for over a year and a half but now, with the accident and Blaine and all the sudden changes in his lifestyle that had originally come to be *because* of his ex, everything that had happened was starting to filter steadily back into his brain. And for Santana to bring up the topic like *this* infuriated him.

His phone beeped again and he checked it with quivering fingers.

You're just pissed he left. You know you were happier with him.

Kurt growled as he tapped out a reply.

Because I didn't know any better. You can't honestly think he was better than Blaine. You're being a bitch, Lopez.

She replied a few seconds later.

I'm being your friend. You'll thank me later if he dumps you. And if he doesn't...you'll regret it. Trust me.

Kurt didn't send another message, simply shoved his phone moodily into his pocket and huffed as he waited.

He waited for nearly half an hour, tempted to text Blaine but not wanting to get him into more trouble. A few people gawked at him as they passed, the solitary boy in a wheelchair. One older lady asked if he needed help finding his parents.

"I'm *injured*, not mentally challenged," Kurt snapped aggressively, glaring at her.

She looked affronted and hurried away without a backwards glance. Kurt glowered after her, mumbling angrily, when the door to the office opened and Blaine stepped out with the security guard, both of them laughing.

"Alright, Blaine, well you tell your mother I said hello, okay?" the guard said, clapping him on the shoulder.

"Will do, sir," Blaine replied with a bright smile. "And thank you."

"No, thank *you*," the guard—Officer Howards—said seriously. "We'll be sure to keep an eye out for those two. Now why don't you get back to your friend, I've held you up long enough."

Blaine grinned and shook his hand, thanking him again before walking towards Kurt.

"What the hell happened?" Kurt said, glancing at the guard as he walked into his office again. "Blaine, how—mmph!"

Blaine leaned over, gripping his face and kissing him for a full five seconds, leaving Kurt slightly dazed as he broke away.

"Sorry I didn't believe you," he murmured. "I'm...I'm not happy that you used to do it but I should have trusted you. You've obviously changed since we met."

"Yeah," Kurt said breathlessly, licking his lips and savoring the taste of Blaine lingering there. "So...you're off the hook?"

"We watched the security footage," Blaine said as he wheeled Kurt through the crowd. "They were *very* good at hiding their faces but you could see the necklace there before they passed and then it was gone. We didn't get into the store for ten more minutes. I didn't say I knew who it was though...didn't want to make them angry..."

"You know, you're pretty smart," Kurt said off-handedly.

"You flatter me," Blaine said, Kurt glancing back to catch him grinning. Blaine looked down at him. "Why don't we head back to the house? Your dad and Carole left the tree undecorated."

Kurt groaned loudly.

"Oh, come on, grumpy," Blaine said with a laugh. "It'll be fun. Carole made cookies the other day right? We can have those and hot chocolate and watch the snow."

"Christ, what are we, a fucking Norman Rockwell Christmas card?" Kurt said with a wry expression.

Blaine laughed again, stopping at the entrance to check Kurt's coat, ignoring his scowl.

"You know, you're the only person I know who absolutely hates being taken care of," he said, sounding amused as he pulled Kurt's hat onto his head for him. It was, irritatingly so, incredibly comfortable. "There you go."

He smiled and gave him another short kiss.

"Get out, fags! No one wants to see that!"

They snapped around to see two men around their age sneering in their direction and high-fiving each other.

"Your dad didn't complain last night!" Kurt retorted loudly, smirking as their gazes hardened and they walked off, Blaine snorting quietly.

"You're going to insult the wrong person some day," he said, pulling out his new scarf and wrapping it around his neck loosely.

Kurt shrugged as Blaine pushed him out into the chill December air, fat snowflakes drifting down from the bleak, grey sky. "Once I'm out of this chair, I'll be able to defend myself. Ever been bitch-slapped by a pair of crutches?"

"No," Blaine said slowly, laughing.

"Me neither," Kurt said. "But I bet it hurts like hell."

Blaine shook his head, stopping at his BMW and pulling open the door to help Kurt in. "Well, you're getting crutches in a week but I don't recommend 'bitch-slapping' anyone with them."

"I can't be stopped, Anderson," Kurt said. "I'm like a wild animal."

Blaine snorted as he shut the door, loading Kurt's chair into the trunk before climbing into the driver's seat. "Right," he said, starting the car. "You're the three-legged zebra that gets eaten on *Animal Planet*."

"Ass," Kurt muttered as they pulled out of the crowded lot.

Blaine grinned and flicked on the heat and radio, making an excited noise as *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas* started playing. He looked over at Kurt, who realised what he was going to do about two seconds before he did it.

"Don't you—"

"Have yourself a merry little Christmas."

"Stop it."

"Let your heart be light."

"Blaine."

"From now on, our troubles will be out of sight."

"Pull the car over."

"Have yourself a merry little Christmas."

"I swear to Christ, Blaine."

"Make the Yule-tide gay."

"Only if it means a blowjob."

"From now on, our troubles will be miles away."

"I'm not singing so stop trying to make me."

"Here we are as in olden days."

"You're just a riot," Kurt said dully.

"Oh, come on, loosen up," Blaine said, reaching over to rub his hip above his cast. "You big Grinch."

Kurt cracked a reluctant smile as Blaine started singing along again.

"Through the years, we all will be together."

Kurt sighed and, feeling like a complete idiot, sang with him.

"If the Fates allow. Hang a shining star upon the highest bough."

Blaine beamed at him, their voices melding together surprisingly well as they drove down the snow-dampened highway.

"And have yourself a merry little Christmas now."

"I hope you know I'm never doing that again," Kurt said as he hobbled up the sidewalk towards the front door, Blaine's arm securely around his waist and his chair already waiting inside.

"You can't deny that was fun," Blaine said as he helped him up the stairs, avoiding a patch of dark ice. "You enjoyed it and you know it."

"Road head would have been better," Kurt said, shambling across the threshold ahead of him.

Blaine sighed, the same look of amusement on his face he always wore when Kurt behaved that way.

"Okay," he said when he'd settled Kurt in his chair by the tall evergreen in the living room and draped a blanket over his legs. "You wait here and I'll be right back."

"Don't know where I'd go but okay," Kurt muttered, slipping off his hat and coat before settling back and frowning at the boxes of lights and glass bulbs by the tree.

He had his reasons for hating Christmas, beyond the blatant commercialization of the holiday, that is. Christmas of his sophomore year was the first time he'd gotten truly drunk and ended up spending the morning afterwards hugging a toilet bowl and puking up the entire contents of his stomach.

Another wave of memories hit him hard and he tried to push them aside as Blaine walked back into the room, grinning and clutching a tray with two mugs of hot chocolate and a plate of cookies.

"Here you go," he said, passing Kurt a mug and a cookie cheerfully.

"Has anyone ever told you you're too fucking chipper?" Kurt said, dunking his cookie in his cocoa and taking a bite.

"You," Blaine said with a laugh, sipping at his cocoa before setting it down and opening the box of lights next to the tree.

Kurt lifted his uninjured foot to rub his toes up Blaine's leg, giving him an innocent look when he peered back at him.

"What?" he said. "You can't bend over like that and expect me not to do *something*."

Blaine rolled his eyes and returned to rooting through the box. "I guess I should count myself lucky you're in that chair," he said. "If you weren't, I'd probably be half-naked by now."

"No, you'd be fully naked with my fingers up your—"

"Kurt!" Blaine blushed furiously as he straightened up, trying to occupy himself with untangling a string of lights.

Kurt simply smirked, sipping his drink as he watched him wrap strands of white lights around the tree from the bottom up, giving Kurt a very nice, prolonged view of his ass.

"You're helping me with these," Blaine said, gently shaking the box of ornaments.

"No, I'm not," Kurt said shaking his head.

"You are," Blaine retorted, taking his mug and setting it on the table, ignoring his protests and wheeling him closer to the tree. "You're going to have fun."

"Or else what?" Kurt said dully, reluctantly plucking a blue bulb from the box and placing it on one of the branches.

"Or else we aren't making out on the couch after we're finished," Blaine said, smirking as Kurt perked up at his words. "And no more handjobs."

"You can't withhold sex from me," Kurt said incredulously. "That's not fair!"

Blaine peered through the branches at him, grinning. "I can do whatever I want, Hummel. All I have to do is go upstairs."

Kurt flicked him off and he laughed, straightening up to hang a few more bulbs on the tree, quietly singing *White Christmas* under his breath. Kurt sighed and continued decorating, straining a little to hear Blaine singing. He *did* have an amazing voice, smooth and mellow and warm.

Blaine came around the side of the tree when he'd finished decorating the back, standing beside Kurt and stretching up to get the spots he couldn't reach from his chair.

Kurt finished hanging the bulbs sitting in his lap and wrapped his arms around Blaine's waist, giving him a faintly challenging look when he turned to him.

"Yes?" Blaine said with a mock air of curiosity.

"You know what," Kurt said. "We're finished."

"There's another whole box," Blaine said, pointing to the cardboard box in the corner.

"It's fine," Kurt said impatiently. "Enough talking. Your tongue, my mouth, thirty seconds ago."

Blaine smiled with a mixture of fondness and amusement. "You know I think it's adorable when you act like that?" he said, brushing his hand through Kurt's hair.

"Adorable wasn't *really* what I was going for," Kurt said with a frown.

"Well, it is," Blaine said, sitting on the arm of his chair. "Adorable I mean. It's a defense mechanism and it's sweet. You could just *ask* me to kiss you, though. I wouldn't say no."

"I don't ask, though," Kurt said, tightening his arms and running one hand down Blaine's stomach towards his groin. "I take."

Blaine cocked an eyebrow. "Very romantic of you."

"Ugh, just shut up and kiss me," Kurt groaned irritably.

Blaine gave him a pointed look.

"*Fine*," Kurt said, huffing. "Will you kiss me?"

"Yes," Blaine said, smirking as he twisted in his seat and leaned back to catch Kurt's lips against his own.

Kurt sighed at the softness and faint taste of cocoa and sugar cookies. He slipped his tongue across Blaine's lips, resisting the urge to pull him into his lap, knowing it would put him in a lot of pain.

Blaine opened his mouth very slightly and brushed his tongue against Kurt's, gently tugging on his lower lip as he pulled back.

"Still hate Christmas?" he said quietly, resting his forehead against Kurt's.

"I'm warming up to it," Kurt mumbled, Blaine grinning against his lips as he pulled him into another kiss.

Chapter Fourteen

"Kurt."

"Say it again."

"*Kurt.*"

"I told you'd fall for me when we met."

Blaine opened his eyes and flashed him a glare, though the effect was lessened by the small groan that followed when Kurt twisted his hand wrapped around Blaine's cock. He had to admit, even though he *hated* Christmas, Blaine was making it a lot more tolerable. And now that school was out for break, they were able to spend a lot more time together. They were currently stretched on the couch together, Finn, Burt, and Carole having left to do some last minute shopping, Kurt's hand down Blaine's pants and his leg propped up on a pillow as they lay on their sides, facing each other.

"You really shouldn't be so cocky," Blaine mumbled against his lips, kissing the corner of his mouth. "You were the one saying *my* name ten minutes ago."

Kurt smirked and kissed his bottom lip, speeding the movement of his hand up.

"So this is a competition now?"

"Maybe," Blaine murmured, breath hitching a little. He groaned softly and brushed his lips over Kurt's, not really kissing him, just letting their mouths slid smoothly together. "You seem to like making everything a competition. Watching you and Finn eating Carole's cookies yesterday was frightening."

Kurt smirked. "He needed to be put in his place."

"Well, seeing as he threw up afterwards, I'd say you managed to do that," Blaine said, grunting and twitching his hips into Kurt's grip. "Mmm, you know, you can fit a lot in your mouth."

Kurt laughed quietly.

"I have to admit," Blaine muttered, "normally I'd be shocked to see someone fellating a cookie in front of their family but with you I've come to expect that sort of thing. The fact that you can do that to a *cookie* is what really impresses me."

"Mmm, I have an impressive mouth," Kurt whispered. "Maybe I'll show you sometime. If you're good."

"*Ugh, Kurt.*" Blaine moaned quietly as Kurt stroked him a final time and he came across his fingers, shuddering and breathing out hard against his mouth.

Kurt caught his lips in a lazy kiss, gliding their tongues together smoothly. He sighed and hummed contentedly as he broke away, smiling at Blaine's dazed expression.

"Can I get some help?" Kurt said, holding up his hand.

"Oh, right," Blaine muttered, half rolling off the couch and standing up. He grimaced as he tucked himself back in his jeans and walked out to the kitchen, returning with a damp paper towel. "Sorry about that," he said, smiling as he wiped Kurt's hand clean, kissing him as he did.

"Mmm, so what now?" Kurt said, rolling onto his back and yawning. He was going back to school in just over a week and was spending as much of his time as he could simply lying around and enjoying his last few days off.

"I dunno," Blaine said, tossing the paper towel in the trash and flopping down onto the couch next to Kurt's head, stroking his fingers through his hair absently. "We could go outside if you'd like. Now that you've got your crutches."

"Are you suggesting I go for a walk...with crutches?" Kurt said, lifted one eyebrow slightly.

"It was just a suggestion," Blaine said, shrugging and shifting to lift Kurt's head into his lap.

Kurt pulled a face, staring up at the ceiling thoughtfully. "Oh, what the hell," he said, struggling to pushing himself up into a sitting position.

"Yeah?" Blaine said, steadying him gently.

"Yeah, I could use some time outside," Kurt said. "My ass might fuse to the couch if I spend any more time on it."

Blaine laughed and helped him to his feet, helping him step into his right boot and slipping his coat over his arms for him.

"I know how to use a button," Kurt said as Blaine fastened up his coat for him.

"I'm aware of that," Blaine said, pulling Kurt's hat down onto his head and tying a scarf loosely around his neck. He pressed a kiss to his cheek. "Stop pretending you don't like it just a little bit."

"Never," Kurt said, smirking as Blaine slipped his own coat on and pulled on his shoes.

"I'm not giving up," Blaine said, passing him his crutches. "I know you secretly love it."

"Hmm, is that so?" Kurt said, adjusting his crutches under his arms and going ahead of Blaine towards the front door.

"Yeah," Blaine said as they stepped outside into the cold air and locking the front door behind him. "I'll get you to admit it one day. Maybe under the effects of alcohol. Or with the threat of withholding sex."

"You're an ass, you know that?" Kurt said, careful to avoid the ice on the path as they walked through the thin layer of snow dusting across it, fat flakes drifting down from the bleak sky. "And you can't withhold sex. You'd miss it too. Don't pretend *that's* a lie."

Blaine sighed and slipped the spare house key Kurt had loaned him in his pocket. "You've got me there," he said.

Kurt rocked along on his crutches, which he'd become very good at using over the past two weeks, taking in the bare trees coated in a layer of fluffly white snow, which contrasted with the dark bark. Their breath rose in front of them in little puffs, the air silent save the crunch of their shoes and Kurt's crutches in the snow.

"I love this weather," Blaine said, taking a deep breath and closing his eyes as he stuffed his hands in his pockets. "It's so...clean, you know? Fresh."

Kurt grunted non-committedly.

"You don't like it?" Blaine opened his eyes to look at him.

Kurt shrugged. "I just...Christmas...winter in general holds some...unpleasant memories for me."

Blaine stopped and Kurt sighed as he did the same.

"Kurt," Blaine said gently. "You know at some point we're going to have to talk about all this, right? You're...you're going to have to open up some day."

"And what about you?" Kurt said defensively. "You...you haven't exactly told me everything about Christian."

Blaine folded his arms over his chest. "You want to know what happened?" he asked, straightforward and almost inviting.

Kurt opened his mouth, suddenly curious, closed it, and nodded silently.

Blaine cleared his throat. "Alright," he said, squaring his shoulders as if he was steeling himself. He took a deep breath. "When I was in seventh grade my parents split up. They'd been fighting for years but my mom didn't put her foot down until she caught my dad hitting me for getting a bad grade in history. She tried to get full custody but there wasn't enough evidence against him and I was...I was terrified to testify. Luckily, he didn't want to have to deal with me so by the time the divorce was official I was about to start high school so he sent me to Dalton.

"It was amazing. My first year there...I felt really...*free* for the first time. Like I didn't have to worry about being judged by anyone. And...I mean, I'd been bullied at my old school. I was always the quiet, shy nerd. I used to have glasses and I've always been on the, uh...the smaller side. But at Dalton no one cared about that. Everyone was great.

"And then I started my sophomore year, I'd finally gotten settled in and made some friends, I got on the soccer team and I didn't have to worry about my dad because I was boarding there...I was really *really* happy. A few of my friends were in the Warblers and invited me to come to a practice to see if it was something I'd like.

"When I got there, I kind of hung out in the corner and watched. It looked like so much fun and then...there was, this guy..." he blushed faintly, looking down at his shoes for a moment before continuing. "I'd seen him around school a few times but he was a year older than me so we didn't have any classes together. I'd never really had a crush on anyone before because, I guess...I guess I was kind of scared to. I hadn't come out yet and even though I knew there were out guys at Dalton, I was still nervous after everything.

"Anyway, so, this guy-"

"Christian?" Kurt interrupted.

"Yeah," Blaine said, clearing his throat as he nodded. "Yeah, it was Christian. He was...well, he was what I wanted to be, I guess. He was very openly gay. He didn't care who knew about it and I'd heard plenty of stories about him getting caught with other guys in the corridors and stuff. I'd always thought he was, er, cute.

"He kept looking over at me while they were singing and I thought maybe I wasn't supposed to be there or something. But then he came up to me as I was getting ready to leave and...talked to me and flirted for a few minutes. I didn't really know what to do with it, you know? No one had ever treated me that way..."

Kurt nodded slowly as Blaine paused to take breath and rub his hands together.

"Can we, er, keep moving?" Kurt said. "It's freezing."

"Huh? Oh, yeah, sure," Blaine said. "We can go back to the house...?"

"No, it's fine," Kurt said, smiling reassuringly. "Just...need to move before I get hypothermia."

Blaine laughed quietly though there wasn't any genuine amusement behind it. They walked in silence for a moment before he continued. "So...a few weeks after that, I finally came out to my friends. They were completely cool about it and everything. I asked them not to tell anyone just in case but not long after that, one of them, one from the Warblers, told me Christian was asking about me and asking if I was gay...apparently he wanted to ask me out.

"I couldn't believe he was interested in *me*, it was so weird thinking about it... Anyway, long story short, we started dating around October I think it was. He was great for the first couple months...really romantic and understanding that I wanted to take things slow because I was so new to all of it. Around the end of

January he started getting really snippy and impatient with me. He would snap at me for no reason and lash out about the stupidest things. I tried to figure out why and he told me...he told me it felt like I didn't love him because I wasn't willing to go further. The most we'd done was some light making out and stuff like that... I felt horrible because he told me he loved me all the time and I loved him back and I thought I was an awful boyfriend.

"So I, uh...I started giving him...more-"

"Blaine, you can *say* what you did," Kurt said gently. "It doesn't bother me. I know it happened."

Blaine smiled bashfully, scuffing the ground with the toe of his boot. "Alright, so, um, I started out with like...letting him feel me up and stuff but he got impatient so I started giving him handjobs and letting him do the same for me. It felt...weird. I wasn't ready for it. I didn't *want* it yet but I knew he wanted it and I wanted him to be happy.

"But he kept pushing for more. Kept telling me I didn't love him every time I said I wasn't ready yet. So I kept giving in...I cried after he forced me to give him a blow job. I just...I wasn't ready...he laughed at me for it, said I was just being immature and that he'd done way more. That was the first time he'd ever made me feel really inferior. But I wanted to make him happy. I still believed he loved me because he kept *saying* he loved me. Kept saying that people who loved each other did that sort of thing.

"Then, when I refused to get him off at Regionals, he hit me for the first time. It wasn't *too* hard, but it left a bad bruise on my shoulder and I'd never been more grateful for the uniforms. He never apologized for it, kept saying I loved him he wouldn't deny him any of the stuff he wanted."

He paused, eyes hard and glimmering as he stared down the sidewalk, though Kurt could tell he wasn't really seeing it.

"It got...pretty bad. I don't want to go into details but...well, he had to take me to the hospital at one point because we thought he'd broken my wrist from twisting it so hard. I had to wear a brace for two weeks from it. Around May he...he told me he wanted to have sex with him and if I said no he would leave me. I didn't want to lose him so I said yes but then...when it came to the night we'd agreed on, I changed my mind. I couldn't do it, I didn't want to."

He took a shaky breath, his voice quivering a little as he continued. "He tried to...he started hitting me and taking my clothes off and almost..." he broke off, voice cracking.

Kurt heard him sniff and looked over to see tears slipping down his cheeks, drying quickly in the cold air.

"He...he tried to..." he couldn't finish the sentence. It was too horrible to finish. But seeing the ghost of fear in Blaine's eyes was enough to confirm what he couldn't say aloud.

"I managed to get away," Blaine continued, voice thick with emotion. "I don't know how, I guess it was the adrenaline. I went to one of my friends' rooms and they made me stay there. They'd been suspecting something was up for awhile but I kept telling them I was fine. They went with me the next day to basically break up with Christian for me. They were *pissed*."

"I didn't tell them he'd tried to...you know, but they could at least see he'd been abusing me. They were going to tell the Dean but it was right around the time my parents were going back into a custody battle after my Dad had beaten his girlfriend."

"My mom won full custody and there were only two weeks left of school so I just finished it out at Dalton. I convinced my friends not to say anything about Christian because, well...after my Dad and everything, I was afraid I'd have someone else who might come after me if I said anything."

"I moved in with my mom as soon as summer break started and she got me enrolled at McKinley and...well, you already know the rest."

He let out a long, slow breath as he finished and Kurt could almost feel the weight lifting off his shoulders.

"Wow," he said quietly. "I...wow. I really...I...I feel like a real ass now for...well, being an ass...."

Blaine smiled faintly, eyes still fixed on the ground.

"It's alright," he said. "I mean...you didn't know, just like I don't know about your ex."

"Mark."

"Huh?"

"His name is Mark," Kurt clarified, not looking over at him. He still wasn't sure about telling anyone about what had happened but Blaine had just poured his heart out without hesitation, he deserved *some* details in return. "Mark Bishop." He stopped, shivering, and glanced around the empty street. "Can we go back? It's really cold."

"Of course," Blaine said softly, holding out his hand, palm up. At first Kurt didn't understand what he was trying to do but then he saw Blaine's eyes flicker to his crutches and passed them over, balancing almost all of his weight on his right foot until Blaine slipped his arm around his middle, fingers gently gripping his hip bone and Kurt's own arm draped around his shoulder so he didn't have to deal with the pain of the crutches.

"So tell me about Mark," Blaine said, his head dropping to rest against Kurt's shoulder, the warm weight like a silent, comforting encouragement.

"I guess it would have been just over two years ago," Kurt began, hobbling along, barely putting pressure on his left leg, though it wasn't hurting nearly as much these days. "I'd just come out at the start of the year and started getting bullied pretty badly for it. I was a lot shorter then and smaller and I was just...I got thrown into dumpsters and slushied and shoved into lockers. Not a fun start to my year, needless to say."

Blaine gave his waist a sympathetic squeeze.

"Mark was on the football team and senior class president and, well, everything *knew* he was gay but he didn't really, you know, talk about it. I remember hating that he was so popular and everyone bullied me because I was gay. It didn't make sense.

"A couple of guys on the football team were pushing me around one day and Mark stopped them and just...talked to me, asked me how I was and if he could help because he knew what it was like struggling with being bullied for being gay but he'd overcome it. We started hanging out at school and the bullying started to stop when people realised we were friends.

"He invited me to Homecoming and it was...I was nervous but I had fun and he was Homecoming King and he *still* danced with me. During the last dance he kissed me right there in front of everyone and asked me out. Obviously I said yes... After the dance, we went to another party and Mark was drinking and smoking and I could barely believe he of all people would do that but he said it wasn't a big deal because everyone did it and he would never hurt me so I had a little to drink and smoked because I wanted to impress him.

"We started going to a lot more parties. We'd usually end up in the back seat of his car, half-drunk and half-naked. He wouldn't push me to do anything I didn't want to but I was ready. I wanted the physical contact and just feeling *needed*, you know? It was amazing being treated like I was...attractive and desired like that.

"We went to a Christmas party together and I got so damn drunk, I blacked out. Last thing I remember was us in some random bedroom taking each other's clothes off and he was kissing me all over and saying he loved me. Next thing I know I'm waking up, sore as hell and puking everywhere.

"I'd never felt so sick in my life. But he took care of me and kept saying he felt bad that I was hurting and he wished we hadn't had our first time drunk.

"I felt awful but I was happy because I was with him. People started being a lot nicer to me, they listened to me, *like* me. I was actually popular.

"Mark and I partied almost every weekend and we were...well, to put it lightly, we fucked like rabbits."

He glanced over and caught Blaine's blush but didn't comment on it.

"We were always sneaking under the bleachers at games and meeting up after his practice and my rehearsal. We usually ended up just sitting and smoking and sometimes drinking afterwards.

"I got my bike that spring and people started to...not really *fear* me but they listened to me. They *respected* me and I just loved it. Mark was the most popular guy at McKinley and I was right up there with him and we were just...invincible. None of the teachers knew about the drinking or sex or any of that. My dad didn't have a clue. Hell, Mark was the perfect gentleman around him. I was...I was so happy."

He took a moment to take a long breath, sadness twisting into anger inside of him.

"And then graduation came," he said, Blaine catching the dro in his voice, the faint hint of a growl behind it. "And Mark was going to Ohio State to be a teacher on a football scholarship. We'd talked a little about it...me visiting on weekends and Skype and stuff...but then Mark came up to me after the ceremony and told me he wanted to break up.

"He said...'it was fun while it lasted, Kurt, but, come on, it's high school. You can't really have expected me to stay with you? How am I supposed to keep up a relationship with you when you're here and I'm there?'...so he left. That was it. No...no, 'I'm sorry' or 'I'll miss you' or...anything. He just *left*."

"I went to another friend's party that night and...well, I'm surprised I didn't die, to be honest. I had enough alcohol and drugs in me to knock out a horse. I don't even know what all I took...I think I smoked pot and I remember taking some pills but that's it..."

"I woke up with strangers in a strange house and I'd had sex with *someone*, I was still wearing the condom and I freaked out because I couldn't remember any of it. It was the second time I'd really lost control and I couldn't...I had no idea what had happened."

"I went home and cleaned up and just...I cried for the first time because I really *really* missed him and I felt so...so fucking lost and scared and *alone*... I moped around half the summer but I hated feeling like shit and I just got...*angry*. I started hating him for what he'd done rather than missing him."

"I went back to partying. I kept smoking and drinking. I dressed differently and just stopped caring about anything. I got back to school and my grades were *horrible*. My dad tried to figure out what was wrong but I stopped talking to him. I yelled at everyone and got into fights and hooked up with anyone I could. You already know about the shoplifting. I hung around Puck and Santana a lot, they'd been there for a lot of the partying, but I think some of it was too much even for them."

"I calmed down a little towards the end of the year and over the summer, less partying and I stopped wearing my piercings at the start of the year."

"Wait, piercings?" Blaine interjected.

"Yeah, nose and cartilage," Kurt replied, tugging his ear, where the hole was still visible around the upper shell. He didn't think they would ever grow closed after the amount of time he'd had them in."

"That's...well, surprising, I guess," Blaine said with a faint frown.

"I don't look like the type of guy who'd have piercings?" Kurt said with a dubious look.

"No, no, I'm surprised you took them out," Blaine corrected. "I...that actually sounds, er...kind of hot."

"Oh, really?" Kurt said, smirking as Blaine blushed.

"M-maybe," Blaine stammered. "But that's not important, we're talking about other things," he said hastily.

"Kurt, I'm so, so sorry...that's awful what he did..."

"Why don't we just agree we both had shitty exes and leave it at that?" Kurt said, starting to feel uncomfortable talking about it as they strode up the path to the house.

Blaine sighed softly but nodded as he dropped his head against Kurt's shoulder again. "Alright...thank you for opening up about it though."

Kurt didn't reply, pretending to adjust his scarf as they climbed the stairs to the front door, which swung open to reveal a beaming Finn.

"We wondered where you were," he said, standing back to let them in. "We just got back."

"I can see that," Kurt said, glancing at the bags of shopping scattered around the kitchen as they trooped in, Carole putting a large turkey in the fridge and But examining a bottle of wine. He caught Kurt's narrowed eyes and set the bottle down.

"The doctor says a glass of wine every now and then *helps*, Kurt," he said as Carole put the bottle in the fridge with the turkey. "And where were you two?"

"Walk," Kurt grunted shortly, wobbling his way into the living room and peeling off his hat, coat, and scarf before Blaine helped him sit down, propping his leg on the ottoman.

Finn walked passed with a plate of cookies and mug of cocoa, accidently knocking against Kurt's foot as he did.

"Oops, sorry, dude," he said to Kurt's glare and hiss of pain.

He was about to shout at him when Blaine sat down and silenced him with a short kiss.

"Come on," he muttered, arms snaking around Kurt's waist. "Christmas is in two days. Be nice."

Kurt grumbled in reply but was otherwise silent as Blaine had started nibbling at his earlobe and he was finding it very distracting from his annoyance with Finn and his inability to walk in a straight line.

"I know you don't want to talk about it right now," Blaine said quietly in his ear. "But I'm here if you need me okay? I know you're still hurting...maybe you won't show it but I know you are. So...if you want to talk..."

Kurt nodded awkwardly, leaning towards his mouth to try and get him to continue kissing his ear.

"Hey now, keep it PG."

Kurt scowled as his father sat down in the armchair and Blaine pulled away, keeping one arm loosely around Kurt's waist and lightly grazing his fingers up his side.

"So, Blaine, he hasn't scared you off yet then?" Burt said, lounging back in his chair and flipping absently through the channels.

Blaine laughed, Kurt glowering at his father, and shook his head. "No, sir. I've...I've seen worse."

Burt raised his eyebrows, pausing in his channel-surfing to look at him. "That so?" he said before returning his attention to the TV again. "Has he told you about his tattoo?"

"Dad!"

"What tattoo?" Blaine said curiously.

Kurt glared at his father and grumbled as he tugged down his right sleeve to show Blaine the tattoo positioned above his shoulder blade, a white lily with *07-12-01* below it.

"What's that for?" Blaine said, frowning at the date.

"It's the day my mom died," Kurt grunted, not meeting his inquisitive gaze.

He saw Blaine's features soften out of the corner of his eye and his lips brushed against his cheek in a brief, dry kiss.

"Yeah, I'm not happy about him getting a tattoo without my permission," But said with a mildly disapproving look, though the corner of his mouth twitched. "But at least he didn't get...I dunno, a hobo smoking crack or something."

Kurt groaned in embarrassment and gripped his face in his hand. "Just kill me now," he mumbled, much to Blaine's amusement.

Warm breath ghosted across Kurt's face, tickling his nose and making him scrunch up his face as he rolled into the pillow.

"Wake up, sleepy."

"Go 'way," he grumbled.

"Come on, grumpy, it's Christmas. And it's nearly noon already."

"I hate you," Kurt whined.

"You do not," Blaine said, sounding amused as he kneaded his bare shoulders gently beneath his fingers. "You look good without a shirt on, by the way."

"Thank all the built-up sexual tension you've been causing me," Kurt yawned as he rolled his shoulders back into Blaine's touch. "Fuck, that feels good."

Blaine slid his hands down the curve of his spine, lightly pressing between the bumps of vertebra as his lips grazed over his shoulder and pressed to his tattoo.

"It's very sweet, by the way," he said. "The tattoo."

Kurt hummed absently, Blaine's arm draping over his waist to glide his hand flat up his stomach.

"I have your present for you," Blaine whispered, Kurt's fingers fisting in the blanket as Blaine's thumb hooked on the waistband of his loose pajama bottoms hanging low on his hips.

"Does it happen to involve your mouth and certain areas of my anatomy as of yet only acquainted with your hand?" Kurt said hopefully.

Blaine's chest shook slightly with silent laughter. "No," he said, kissing his neck.

Kurt pouted, making a soft sound of disappointment.

"I think you'll like this though," Blaine said, reaching his hand up to frame Kurt's face and turn his head towards him to meet his lips in a slow, lazy kiss.

"So what is it?" Kurt murmured against his lips.

Blaine pulled his hand away and Kurt could hear something rustling behind him. Something heavy dropped onto the bed beside Kurt's head and he cracked open eye open curiously, turning his head to see a black and red motorcycle helmet with a bow tied around it next to him.

"What..." he frowned and picked the helmet out, a pair of new gloves falling out onto his chest. "What's this for? I...I don't have a bike anymore."

Blaine smiled, brushing his fingers through Kurt's hair, pulling them through the soft strands. "Yeah, I kind of had to spoil your dad's gift giving you this...but he said it was okay."

Kurt's eyes widened. "He...he got me another bike?" he said quietly.

Blaine nodded. "Yeah...he told me he was going to use the insurance money to get one. Smaller than the one you had but a nice one... I figured I could get a new helmet for you seeing as you never wore one before."

Kurt fiddled with the chinstrap, a lump suddenly rising in his throat though he had no idea why.

"What's wrong?" Blaine said worriedly, sitting up hastily to move closer to him.

Kurt shook his head, dashing a hand across his eyes hastily.

"Kurt..."

Kurt sniffed, blinking hard. God, why was a *helmet* making him break-down like this?

"Shh," Blaine said soothingly, taking the helmet from him and holding him against his chest. "Shh, it's okay, Kurt. If you don't want it, I'm sure your dad can take it back."

Kurt buried his face in Blaine's chest, pressing against the soft fabric of his cardigan and inhaling his strong, comforting scent. "I thought I was going to die," he whispered. "I thought...it reminded me of those times...when I lost control...I was s-scared, Blaine, and dammit, I *hate* being scared."

"I know," Blaine said, stroking his hair. "I know, Kurt, but there's nothing wrong with being afraid. It doesn't make you a bad person or weak or any of that. There's nothing wrong with it, okay?"

Kurt nodded against him, clinging to his shirt and pulling him closer, breathing in his warmth, his very essence. He loved the way Blaine smelled, loved the firmness of his muscles under his clothes and the way he could instill some kind of strength in Kurt without even really trying.

He pulled back, smiling gratefully and wiping his eyes on the corner of the blanket. Blaine was watching him closely, eyes soft and warm, inviting, full of a gentle sort of adoration and care that Kurt had never seen before.

"Um, thanks," he muttered, looking away quickly.

"Kurt..."

"I got you something, too," Kurt said, talking over him and reaching over the side of the bed to pick up the bag stuffed with green and red tissue paper, the contents of which he'd ordered online after Blaine had told him he'd bought him a present.

"Kurt."

"Here," Kurt said hastily, shoving the bag into Blaine's hands. "I think you'll like it. I know you like these sort of clothes and stuff and-"

"*Kurt.*"

Kurt gulped as Blaine grabbed his hands to stop him from ripping the sweater and gloves he'd gotten for him out of the bag. Blaine clasped his hands together, closing his eyes as he kissed his knuckles softly. His eyes fluttered open again, peering up through his thick lashes, open and trusting.

Kurt's lower lip quivered as he exhaled tremulously, sudden anxiety rising in his throat.

"Kurt..."

Kurt shook his head very slightly, eyes widening. "Don't say it," he breathed.

"I love you."

Chapter Fifteen

Kurt closed his eyes at the words, trying to imagine Blaine hadn't said them. He couldn't look at him, with his hopeful, tender smile and bright eyes that just screamed innocence. He simply couldn't take seeing the rejection he knew he was going to put there.

"Why would you say that?" he asked, getting up from the bed, grabbing the crutches resting against the wall as he went so he could hobble a few more steps, still refusing to look at Blaine.

"Because it's true," Blaine said in a soft, resigned tone as if he expected the reaction. "I'm not anticipating you saying it back or—"

"Good," Kurt interrupted before wincing at the sharpness in his voice. He opened his mouth to attempt to take the sting off his words, but Blaine beat him to it.

"No, it's okay," Blaine said, smiling, though Kurt could see the hurt behind his eyes, "I understand. You aren't ready for feelings that deep. It's fine, I just needed you to know how I feel and it *is* Christmas so I..." Blaine talked faster and faster as the feelings seemed to build. Kurt could see his eyes were brighter than normal as he choked out words.

Like he didn't already feel like enough of an asshole.

He opened his mouth to say sorry before shutting it abruptly. He *shouldn't* have to apologise for not saying anything back. Blaine knew him well enough to know that Kurt didn't do soppy declarations of love and he shouldn't have put him on the spot like that.

"Kurt, I'm sorry," Blaine tried again.

Kurt frowned and shook his head. "I... I think you should go, Blaine." The words were like ash in his mouth; Kurt hated the fact he was saying them at all, but what were the alternatives? Sitting awkwardly next to his boyfriend for the rest of the day, or pretending as if it had never happened while they roasted a turkey and shared inside jokes and awfully cheesy smiles like normal couples who didn't have commitment issues?

Blaine's shoulders slumped in defeat as he pushed himself up, pulling on his coat and shoes as quickly as he could. Kurt stared down at the crutches, playing with the plastic handles.

He glanced up when two feet entered his line of sight and found Blaine hovering, indecision lingering in his eyes before he leaned in and pressed a swift kiss to the corner of Kurt's lips.

"Bye," he said as he pulled away. "Take all the time you need, okay? I won't be angry. But will you call me later? Please?"

He left after Kurt nodded slowly, allowing him to shakily limp back over to the bed and collapse onto the mattress after he'd pulled a t-shirt down over his bare chest, ignoring the scent of Blaine's cologne sticking to the pillows. This wasn't his fault. Blaine couldn't blame him for not feeling the same things he felt for him.

But how could Blaine *love* him? It was insane! They'd only been really dating for a few months and Kurt had never given any sort of indication that he wanted some deep relationship, that he wanted to end up...married or something stupid like that. He didn't *do* that sort of thing. He just wanted to have a normal, high school relationship, to fool around and not have to worry about commitment and all of that *love* nonsense. He'd dealt with enough of that already and it was *not* something he wanted to experience again.

He sighed and rolled onto his back, scowling at the ceiling. The door creaked open and he froze, thinking Blaine had come back.

"Hey, kid, are you alright?" Burt's voice drifted from the doorway and Kurt glanced up, his lips tightening into a thin line.

"Why would I not be?" he asked tightly.

Burt scratched at the back of his neck with a free hand as he spoke, obviously not wanting to wind Kurt up anymore. "Well, it's just that Blaine left kind of... abruptly, and it *is* Christmas so I was expecting him to stick around a bit longer for presents, and you usually insist on kissing him goodbye on the porch..."

"So?"

"I just want to make sure you're okay; and to let you know that if you two had a fight or broke up, then you can cry on my shoulder or...whatever and I promise I won't let your brother know – your reputation is safe with me."

Kurt rolled his eyes. "Not needed," he said, "because *first* of all, you and I both know that I don't cry and Blaine and I didn't break up."

"Oh, good." Burt let out a sigh of relief. "So why are you sulking?"

"I'm not—" Kurt stopped himself because, yeah, he pretty much *was* sulking. "Blaine told me he loved me."

"Okay," Burt said slowly, like he was trying to garner more information but was apprehensive about asking for it at the same time. "And I'm guessing you didn't say it back?"

Kurt shook his head. "No," he grumbled, scowling at his knees. "Why did he have to say it? He just..." anger pulsed inside him suddenly. "He just fucked everything up!"

"Hey," Burt said sternly. "Language. And how did he mess is up?"

"Because!" Kurt cried exasperatedly. "I-I can't...he can't..."

"Kurt...is this about Mark?" Burt said gently, hand dropping comfortingly onto Kurt's shoulder.

"What's that supposed mean?" Kurt said harshly, narrowing his eyes. "How would this be about *him*?"

"You know full well what it means and why it's about him," Burt said seriously. "Listen, Kurt...I know he hurt you. I know he said he loved you and you loved him. Hey now, you did," he said in response to Kurt's scoff and eye roll. "And it hurts being betrayed like that, believe you me, I know."

"But you can't close yourself off, Kurt. You can't let one bad experience define how you live the rest of your life. Bad things happen, you get your heart broken, but you have to take risks sometimes even though things might not also turn out exactly how you want them."

"Don't throw away the possibility of happiness on the chance that you might get hurt. You do that, you push away the opportunity for something real and special and honest every time it comes along and you'll be alone for a long time."

"Gee, thanks." Kurt mumbled.

"You know what I mean, Kurt," Burt said, squeezing his shoulder. "I lost your mom for a completely different reason than you lost Mark but you think it doesn't still tear me up inside, being without her? You think I regret a second of the time we had together? I don't. Not even the fights because in the end I *loved* her and she loved me. And she gave me you. And now I love Carole and can you imagine if I hadn't given myself the chance and opened up to finding someone else?"

Kurt turned his head away, tears stinging his eyes and sliding down his cheeks as a painful lump grew in his throat.

"It's not fair," he croaked. "It's not fair for him to say that when he knows I...I can't...I don't even know what I want out of this."

Burt sighed and his arm slid around Kurt's shoulders. "I know, kiddo," he said as Kurt sniffed. "You're still young and no one expects you to know exactly how you want your life to go. But that's the thing, isn't it? Life throws us curve balls and you just have to try your best not to strike out. I know you don't know how you feel about Blaine yet but I'd say he's a home run."

Kurt hiccupped at the corniness and Burt chuckled softly, squeezing his shoulders.

"That's for you to figure out though," he continued. "No one can tell you how you feel. Not me or Blaine, just you. And if Blaine really does love you, he'll be willing to wait for you to figure it out."

Kurt wiped his eyes on the back of his hand as Burt pulled his arm back, hand returned to rest on Kurt's shoulder. "Thanks, Dad," he said quietly, giving his father a small smile.

"No problem," Burt said as he tightened his grip momentarily before standing back up, pausing on his way to the door to grab Kurt's phone off his desk and toss it onto the mattress. "Put the poor kid out of his misery and give him a call, will you? Knowing that boy, he's probably beating himself up over it."

Kurt nodded slowly, picking up his phone as his dad shut the door behind him, scrolling down the recent contacts until he found Blaine's name. He hit call and waited, pressing the phone into his cheek hard so as not to feel the shaking of his hand.

He picked up after one ring.

"Kurt?" Blaine asked immediately.

"The one and only," he joked feebly.

"Oh thank god." Blaine heaved a sigh of relief. "I didn't know whether you were going to call and I didn't want to be the clingy boyfriend, but I just need to say that I'm so, *so* sorry. I shouldn't have said it, but I wasn't thinking straight because it was so early and you looked so perfect but you were upset and I didn't know what to do and I'm sorry, I know it was wrong for me to force it on you like that."

"Are you done now?" Kurt asked after Blaine finished his monologue, but continued before the boy had a chance to pick it back up. "It's okay, I'm not... not *angry* at you for saying it. I was just so put on the spot and you were suddenly looking at me like you wanted me to do the whole...*feelings* thing and you know I don't do feelings... No, fuck, that came out wrong."

Kurt dragged a through his hair, tugging at the roots in frustration. "I don't do *expressing* feelings. At least, not that openly. And you know about Mark and the fact I didn't have anyone after him, and now suddenly you're saying 'I love you' in my bedroom on Christmas morning and I freaked."

He cursed the way his voice rose in pitch at the end of the sentence. Blaine was annoyingly perceptive when it came to things like that.

"Kurt, are you crying?"

"No, *no*. I'm just not good with words like you and it's pissing me off because this conversation is just getting more and more awkward."

"It's not," Blaine hastened to assure him. "And I would settle for any form of communication from you, awkward or not. I'm just glad you're not angry at me."

Kurt sighed. "I...don't know how I feel right now, if we're being perfectly honestly."

"I'd like for us to be, yeah," Blaine said.

Kurt flopped back on the bed again. "Okay then," he said, frowning in thought. "I have no idea where this is going...this relationship." He cleared his throat. "I mean...what do you expect to get out this?"

"What do you mean?" Blaine said, sounding genuinely curious.

"I *mean*, are you expecting me to say it back one day?" Kurt said, gesticulating sharply with his hand not holding the phone. "Do you expect us to end up together forever and...I don't know, going to college and sharing an apartment and getting married or-"

"Kurt, shut up."

Kurt blinked, taken aback by the combination of amusement and forcefulness in Blaine's voice. Normally, he'd get angry at anyone who *told* him to do anything, but there was something in Blaine's tone that struck him silent.

"I don't know what's going to happen," Blaine said quietly. "Who ever knows how a relationship is going to end up? No one goes into something like this expecting to have found the person they're going to spend the rest of their life with. It just...happens. And no, I'm not saying I've got a huge plan for our lives together, I'm saying I love you *now*. There's no way of knowing what's going to happen in the future, I just know how I feel about you today. Here and now. And I love you. I'm sorry that you don't want to hear it and I know you can't say it back yet but that doesn't stop me from feeling that way, okay? ... Kurt?"

"I'm h-here," Kurt said, trying unsuccessfully to keep the quiver out of his voice. He heard Blaine make a sympathetic noise on the other end of the line and he held the phone away to sniff and wipe his eyes.

"Kurt?"

"Yeah?" Kurt said, voice thick.

"Are you okay?" Blaine said softly. Kurt could hear the faint rumble of his car and the low sound of the radio in the background.

"Will you come back over?" Kurt said. "I...never mind, you don't ha-"

"Of course I will," Blaine said without hesitation. "Give me a few minutes, I have to turn around."

Kurt nodded though he knew Blaine couldn't see it. "Okay," he said. "Th-thanks."

"No problem," Blaine said, the smile clear in his voice. "I'll be there in a few."

Kurt mumbled a quick goodbye and hung up, tossing the phone aside and pressing the heels of his hands against his eyes, scrubbing furiously though they already felt sore and raw from crying.

He waited, checking his phone every few minutes and hating that he was so impatient for Blaine to come back.

He realised that Blaine had left his present there, the sweater and gloves Kurt had spent a lot longer than he would like to admit picking out so that they matched his eyes. Laying the bag on his lap, he pulled out the dark green cardigan, rubbing the fabric between his fingers absently.

"I like the colour."

Kurt looked up to see Blaine standing in the doorway, smiling softly. He felt a pang in his chest at his red, swollen eyes and the tell-tale signs of tear tracks on his cheeks.

He moved across the room and sat on the edge of the bed next to him, slipping off his coat and draping it over the footboard as he toed off his shoes.

Kurt held his arms protectively over his chest, wishing Blaine wasn't giving him that familiar look like he was looking inside him. His vision blurred suddenly and he dropped his gaze, refusing to let Blaine see him so vulnerable and wishing he hadn't asked him to come back in the first place.

"Kurt..."

Blaine was suddenly engulfing him in a tight embrace, kissing the side of his neck and holding him against his chest.

"Kurt, it's okay," he soothed quietly.

"Can we just forget it?" Kurt said, voice muffled in Blaine's neck. "Can we just...pretend you didn't say it and move on?"

Blaine pulled back, looking hurt and confused. "What?" he said, brows furrowed. "Wh-why? It's...it's how I feel."

"But it's not how *I* feel," Kurt said. "I...I don't love you, Blaine."

Blaine's jaw tightened at the words. "I *know* that," he said a little sharply. "But that's not going to change the way I feel about you. And I'm not taking it back because that would be a lie and I don't want us building this relationship on lies."

"And what if I never love you back?" Kurt said. "Are you just going to hang around someone who might never feel the same way about you?"

"Why are you doing this?" Blaine said, the look of hurt masked slightly by the sudden anger in his eyes. "Are you *trying* to upset me? I don't...I don't understand what the point of this is, Kurt. Can't you just accept the fact that I love you and move on? It's not a big deal-

"It is a big deal!" Kurt cried, frowning. "I don't feel the same way about you, Blaine!"

"I *meant* it's not a big deal that you don't feel the same way about me," Blaine said, voice slightly lower than before. "If you'd have let me finish... Why do you do this, Kurt? Why do you *refuse* to let people get close to you? I'm not going to hurt you, you know. I'm *not* Mark."

"I know you're not," Kurt snapped.

"Really? Because it feels like you're just assuming I'm going to hurt you because *he* did," Blaine said, standing up and raking his fingers through his hair.

"Well, maybe you are!"

Blaine froze, turning around slowly. He looked like Kurt had just punched him in the face.

"Is that what you think?" he said quietly. "Is that *all* you think about? Jesus, Kurt, can't you just *trust* me? Can't you see that I'm *not* Mark and that I really *do* love you?"

"Stop saying that!" Kurt cried, clutching at his hair.

"No!" Blaine said. "I won't stop because it's true! I love you, Kurt Hummel, and you're going to just have to deal with it!"

They glared at each other, both breathing heavily and Kurt was suddenly struck by how absolutely ridiculous the moment was. He burst into a fit of laughter, shaking and clutching his face in his hand.

"How's that funny!" Blaine cried, sounding affronted.

Kurt shook his head, leaning over to reach out and grab his cardigan and pull him down onto the bed with him. Blaine let out a shout of surprise, quickly muffled by Kurt's lips as he kissed him hungrily, letting the adrenaline from the fight take over for him.

Blaine kissed him back for a moment before breaking away and giving him a shocked look.

"Wh-what are you doing?" he said, searching Kurt's face.

"Kissing you," Kurt said slowly, smirking slightly.

"But...but..."

"I don't like the idea of you saying you love me," Kurt said honestly. "But...I guess I can't stop you and...if you accept I don't feel the same then...well, the sex is too good anyway."

Blaine rolled his eyes, though he looked relieved.

"You're insane, you know that?" he muttered.

"And you love it," Kurt said with a grin.

Blaine sighed. "I do," he murmured before smashing his lips against Kurt's again, kissing him hard and gripping his face in his hands.

Kurt groaned and lay back on the bed, tugging Blaine's leg to pull him on top of him. He pushed his hips up, sliding his hands down from Blaine's face to squeeze his ass and force their bodies together.

Blaine sucked Kurt's lower lip into his mouth, swiping his tongue across the front of his teeth and gently grinding his hips down.

"This can't be healthy," he muttered as Kurt moved his lips from Blaine's mouth to the underside of his jaw, sucking harshly and biting on the red mark it left. "Normal people talk out their problems after an argument."

"We just talk with our bodies instead of our mouths," Kurt breathed, hooking his right leg around Blaine's left one. "There's nothing wrong with that."

Blaine laughed, the sound turning into a choked moan when Kurt slid his hand between their bodies and squeezed his erection through his jeans.

"Mmm, I don't think you'd be able to leave me, either," Kurt murmured, licking up the shell of Blaine's ear. "You want me too much, don't you? Do you want me, Blaine?"

"You know I do," Blaine said as he nuzzled into Kurt's neck and inhaled. "God, your smell and your taste and...I love it all...crap, sorry."

"Just stop talking," Kurt whined when Blaine's thigh rubbed against his crotch.

"Kurt, sweetie, are you and Blaine okay in there?"

Blaine practically flew off Kurt, landing on the floor with a loud thump and shout of pain.

"Fine, Carole!" Kurt called, fixing his hair and slamming a pillow over his lap as the door opened and Carole peered in, looking anxious.

"I heard shouting," she said with an apologetic look. "I just wanted to make sure the two of you aren't...Blaine, why are you on the floor, dear?"

"Er, tripped," Blaine said, rubbing his arm where it had collided with Kurt's nightstand.

"Are you alright?" she said, sounding concerned.

"Fine," Blaine said, plastering a bright, slightly manic smile on his face, one hand held rather conspicuously over the front of his jeans.

"Right, well, lunch is ready," she said, smiling warmly. "Can you come downstairs, Kurt, or would you like me to bring your plates up here for you?"

"Erm, will dad care if I eat here?" Kurt said, glancing at Blaine, who was blushing furiously, the colour creeping down his neck.

"I'm sure he'll understand," Carole said gently. "Blaine, dear, could you come help me? Then you two can eat in peace."

"S-sure," Blaine said, nodding and hurrying after her. He paused at the doorway and went back to Kurt, bending over the bed to give him a short, slightly rough kiss. "Later," he muttered.

Kurt gaped after him, a slow grin spreading across his face as he lay back in the pillows.

Blaine returned a few minutes later with two plates full of turkey and all the trimmings.

"Do you guys always have turkey for Christmas?" Blaine said as he sat on the bed and wriggled up next to Kurt, passing him his plate.

"Yeah, why?" Kurt said, fumbling a little with his knife and fork, his left arm still not as strong as it had been before the crash.

Blaine shrugged. "We usually have ham," he said around a mouthful of stuffing. "When my mom feels like cooking."

"I'm not a big fan of pork," Kurt said thoughtfully, cutting his turkey and dipping it in his potatoes before popping it in his mouth.

"Don't tell me you don't like bacon," Blaine said.

Kurt shrugged noncommittally. "It's alright," he said. He looked up when Blaine was silent to see him staring at him. "What?"

"You're crazy," Blaine said.

Kurt snorted. "It's just bacon," he said. "There are...*other* meats I'm more fond of than pork."

The blush rose in Blaine's cheeks again and he returned his gaze to his plate, clearing his throat and eating silently as Kurt smirked.

All in all, he had to admit, even with the argument and the fact that he still wasn't onboard with the idea of Blaine telling him he loved him, it was one of the best Christmases he'd had since before his mother had

died. After they'd finished eating, they went downstairs and shared a plate of cookies with Finn, dipping them in their hot chocolate as the radio played Christmas music in the corner, Blaine occasionally singing softly in his ear.

They opened presents together, Kurt awkwardly hugging his father when he showed him a picture of the Sportster he'd gotten for him and explained that it was still at the dealer's and would remain there until Kurt was completely healed, which would conveniently be in early spring when it started warming up. Until then, he would continue riding to school with Finn like he did the previous winter.

"And I could always pick you up," Blaine said as they were discussing the topic and Finn brought up the fact that he would have football practice that Kurt would have to stay after for.

"Yeah?" Kurt said from where he was leaning back in Blaine's lap, looking up at him with a slightly surprised look.

"Of course," Blaine said, kissing the back of his head gently. "I'd like to see you in the mornings and it will give me an excuse to come over here in the afternoons when I drop you off."

Kurt rolled his eyes but grinned, yawning as he rested back against Blaine's chest again, enjoying the warmth through his t-shirt.

They ended up back in Kurt's bedroom that evening, Blaine claiming that he'd told his mother he was planning on spending much of the day with Kurt anyway and explained about the argument they'd had.

"She understands," he said as he snuggled under the quilt with Kurt so they were laying on their sides, facing each other, his fingers brushing over Kurt's chest, drawing out random patterns. "I spent yesterday with her and this morning before I came over. She wasn't going to make a big meal anyway, she hates cooking."

Kurt smiled, stifling a yawn when Blaine's hand traced over his arm, trailing up to where Kurt's own hand was resting between them on the bed. He linked their fingers together, looking up at Kurt with the same expression of adoration he'd been wearing that morning when he'd told Kurt he loved him. It still made Kurt uncomfortable, having someone looking at him like that, but he found it didn't scare him nearly as much as it had before.

Blaine kissed his fingers and brushed his nose against them gently, a look of contentment coming across his features. He looked back up at Kurt, a tender smile on his lips.

Kurt sighed. "You can say it," he said, rolling his eyes.

Blaine lifted himself up from the pillows, placing his mouth next to Kurt's ear, breath warm over his skin.

"I love you," he whispered, kissing his ear. "I really do, Kurt. Even if you don't love me back and even if you never do...though I hope you can some day... I love you."

Kurt closed his eyes, hearing Blaine settle back on the bed next to him again, the mattress shifting slightly.

"And Kurt?"

"Hmm?" Kurt said, not opening his eyes, feeling warm and sleepy.

"Merry Christmas."

Kurt smiled. "Merry Christmas, Blaine."

Blaine squeezed his hand gently and yawned, his sock-covered toes sliding up Kurt's ankle and over his foot.

"What about next week?" Blaine murmured.

"What about it?" Kurt said, moving his leg under the blanket so their feet rubbed together. It was strange how comforting the simple gesture could be.

"New Years," Blaine said sleepily. "I thought maybe...you could come to my house...meet my mom."

Kurt eyes snapped open. Blaine was watching him anxiously, the same hopeful look in his eyes as when he'd told Kurt he loved him.

"O-oh," Kurt said. "Um..."

"If you don't want to, I can just come here," Blaine said hastily. "Or...or I can stay home...whatever you want."

"No, no, it's...it's fine," Kurt said, wishing he wasn't as nervous as he was at the thought of meeting Blaine's mother. Really, it shouldn't bother him as much as it did.

"Really?" Blaine said, perking up. "You...you want to meet her?"

"I guess," Kurt mumbled. "I mean...I'll have to meet her some time, right?"

Blaine beamed, surging forward to kiss him happily.

Kurt let out a muffled cry of surprise but kissed him back until Blaine lay back down again, still grinning from ear to ear.

"She can't wait to meet you," he said, still holding Kurt's hand tightly.

"You, er...you told her a lot about me?" Kurt said, feeling slightly awkward again.

Blaine's face fell slightly. "Should I not have?" he said quietly.

"It's not that," Kurt said with a small frown. "I just...you told her about our argument and I'm sure she knew it was *my* fault when you skipped school the day of the accident and everything so-

"Kurt, she doesn't hate you," Blaine said, laughing. "She wants to meet you because you're my boyfriend and I love you."

"You told her that too?" Kurt said, voice rising to a slight squeak.

Blaine gave his hand a comforting squeeze. "Kurt, don't be so worried."

"I'm not worried," Kurt lied, voice still obnoxiously high. He coughed. "I'm not...I'm not worried. Really. I...I'll definitely come over for New Years. I can get use some champagne with my fake ID."

Blaine gave him a reproofing look but didn't protest, Kurt assumed he was just happy that he'd agreed to the terms so far.

"It'll be fun," Blaine said reassuringly. "I promise."

"I'm sure," Kurt muttered, though there was a very large part of him that was sure the only way it would be 'fun' was with the introduction of copious amounts of alcohol into both of their bloodstreams before the night was over.

Chapter Sixteen

"Hey, how much alcohol do you think I can get away with drinking before this?"

"Kurt," Blaine sighed on the other end of the phone. Kurt could see him rubbing his forehead in that way he did when he was exasperated. "You're going to be fine, can you please put down whatever bottle or cup you've currently got in your hand?"

Kurt grimaced as he set the water bottle full of Champagne he had been clutching back onto the table, grimacing at how well Blaine knew him.

"Great, now stop freaking out, Kurt. My mom's going to love you."

"Blaine, I am a seventeen year old alcoholic, who crashed a motorcycle while seriously breaking speed limits and is obsessed with getting into your pants. What part of that screams 'great for meeting the parents'? Stop laughing at me!"

"I'm sorry, it's just that I've never heard you so panicked and you're just meeting my mom, who already loves you and you're getting yourself so worked up over it."

"I don't do mothers," Kurt repeated sullenly.

He heard Blaine sigh. "Well, you're doing my mother."

Kurt giggled at the word choice and Blaine yelped his name, scandalised when he realised what Kurt was laughing at.

"Kurt! You can't- Ugh, no, she's my mom. Get your mind out of the gutter."

"You should stop talking about me doing your mom then."

Blaine sounded mortified as he said, "Oh, shush. I'm coming to pick you up now."

Vaguely in the background, Kurt heard someone asking, "Who are you talking to?" and then Blaine's voice, much louder and clearer calling back, "Kurt. He's panicking about coming over."

"Blaine, don't tell her-" Kurt protested but he was interrupted by a cheerful female voice babbling in his ear.

"Oh, Kurt, don't panic! I can't wait to meet you, especially after all the raving that Blaine's been doing about you. I'm forcing him out of the door now, so he'll be arriving at your house in about ten minutes. Okay? See you soon!"

"I... er, yeah," Kurt said as there was a brief rustling while the phone was passed back to Blaine.

"See? Nothing to worry about?"

"If you're not here in ten minutes then I'm downing this champagne and there's nothing you can do to stop me."

"I'll drive fast then," Blaine said – Kurt could hear the grin in his voice – and then hung up.

Kurt sighed deeply, running a hand through his hair – a nervous trait that he had picked up from his own mother when he was a small child.

"Oh fuck," he swore when he remembered the hairspray that he had put in his hair earlier to try and keep it looking presentable. He felt a few locks falling down to brush against his forehead and groaned in annoyance; he'd actually attempted to make an effort to look good for Blaine's mom. Sighing in frustration, he limped over to his bed where he could perch on the edge of the mattress and take the strain off his leg while attempting to reassemble his hair in the full length mirror on the opposite wall.

By the time Blaine was knocking on the door, he had tried to redo it no less than five times – each attempt looking worse than the first. As he heard his father answer the door, he gave up, running a hand through the locks and pushing them away from his face, settling for the dishevelled look as he got back to his feet, tucking the bottle of alcohol under his arm as he slipped his hands into his crutches.

Blaine was waiting patiently in the living room, chatting amiably with Burt while adverts flashed up on the television.

"Hey," Kurt greeted, only looking up when he had managed to shuffle safely down all the stairs. The words he was about to say got stuck in his throat as he caught sight of Blaine. "You... You're wearing the sweater," he said in shock, staring at the soft green material.

"Of course I am, my wonderful boyfriend gave it to me," Blaine said with a grin, holding his arms out so Kurt could inspect the way it clung to his torso in the most delightful of ways. "And it matches my eyes."

"Oh yeah," Kurt said as if he hadn't spent the times carefully comparing colours and styles to find the perfect one. "Shall we get this over with, then?"

Blaine rolled his eyes as he extracted the bottle from its precarious grip under Kurt's arm.

"It's really not going to be as bad as you seem to think. She already loves you and it's not going to be anywhere near as terrifying as it was for me when Burt found out we were dating."

Kurt shrugged as he made his way into the hall, pulling his jacket off the coat stand and shrugging it on – shouting a goodbye to his dad before following Blaine to the car. The ground was icy from the midwinter Ohio weather and, more than once, Blaine had to reach out to grab hold of Kurt whenever the crutches slid out from under him. By the time they had managed to reach Blaine's car, Blaine had his arms wrapped around Kurt's waist and was practically carrying him down the drive. As soon as they were both seated, Kurt continued their conversation.

"You're practically the model of a perfect boyfriend, though. My dad was probably thrilled it was you he caught talking to me about masturbation that anyone else."

"Well, as long as we steer clear of topics like that," Blaine said, the tips of his ears flushing adorably, "then my mom will love you."

There was a lull in conversation as Blaine took the crutches – that Kurt had been attempting to wrestle into his lap without stabbing himself or Blaine – and carefully placed them on the back seat so Kurt could spread his legs out in the passenger side.

"Honestly," he said when Kurt was comfortable, putting the key into the ignition and reversing carefully, "I don't know what you would do without me."

Kurt grimaced. "I'm actually extremely self-sufficient and would manage perfectly fine without you pandering to my every whim."

"Oh really?"

"Don't flatter yourself with false facts, Anderson. I just keep you around because you look pretty, and still give me handjobs when I'm being a bitch."

Blaine laughed and glanced over to smile tenderly at his boyfriend. "Of course," he said, obviously humouring him.

For once, Kurt didn't mind.

It was probably because of the nerves that were rising in the back of his throat as Blaine turned down a residential street, driving way too fast, in Kurt's opinion. Although, if

Kurt was driving they would probably be crawling along the tarmac at one mile an hour, just to delay the inevitable.

He had no idea why he was so worried about this; why he cared so much about what Blaine's mother thought of him. He'd met Mark's parents while they were dating (though it had only been for a few minutes while Kurt waited awkwardly for Mark to finish getting ready for a party, but he had still held a brief conversation with the two of them).

If he was being honest with himself, Kurt knew it was because Blaine mattered to him so much more than Mark ever did, but that knowledge hardly did anything to calm his nerves.

"We're here!" Blaine said as they pulled up onto the sidewalk in front of a small, cosy-looking house. "Remember: be calm, be yourself, try to avoid making too many innuendoes, and my mother will love you."

"I'm holding you to your word," Kurt grumbled as Blaine twisted to grab his crutches from the backseat and pass them to Kurt, who took them with a nod of thanks.

"Come on, I can see her peeking out of the curtains already – we should probably get inside before she has a fit from the excitement of it all."

"How likely is that?" Kurt asked as they walked the short way up Blaine's drive.

"Unlikely on the actual fainting front, but she'll definitely hug you as soon as you put one foot across the threshold."

True to Blaine's word, as soon as he had unlocked the door and ushered Kurt in ahead, he was met by a small blur of woman before being swept up into a tight hug, which was kind of necessary as Kurt was teetering on his crutches from the sudden impact of another human.

"Okay, mom, let him breathe," Blaine joked, helping Kurt out of his jacket before shrugging off his own.

"Kurt, darling!" Mrs. Anderson cooed, releasing Kurt but not showing any other signs of paying attention to her son, who merely rolled his eyes and set Kurt's bottle of champagne down on the table in the small entrance. "It's so wonderful to finally have you here. I've been dying to meet you ever since Blaine started talking about you – which is basically every second he's home. He seems to have forgotten how to talk about anything else apart from you!"

"Mom," Blaine grumbled, though Kurt could tell there weren't any real bad feelings behind it. "Let's save the embarrassingly gushy talk for when Kurt's left? I'm going to show him my room."

"Okay, ladybug, I'll call you when dinner's ready," his mom said before sweeping back into what Kurt assumed was the kitchen, giving his shoulder a quick squeeze as she passed by him.

"Ladybug?" Kurt repeated in an amused whisper when the door was shut, grinning at his boyfriend.

"Oh, shut up. Didn't you have embarrassing childhood nicknames?"

"Of course I did. The only difference is that people calling me them years ago."

Blaine blushed and changed the topic. "Come on, I want to show you my room."

Kurt smiled, dropping the subject as he followed Blaine towards the stairs. Blaine was bounding ahead of him, pausing on the bottom step to wait for Kurt, who was making his way at a slower pace so he could inspect the room. It would be a rather bland hallway – simple white walls and a wooden floor – if not for the frames hanging at random intervals, all of them pictures of Blaine and his mom. There wasn't any order to them – they were only a mish-mash of settings and ages – but the way the two of them were smiling as they posed in front of rollercoasters, historical monuments, with groups of friends or alone, remained consistent through all of them. The pictures continued up the stairs, too, but interspersed with Blaine's school photos. Kurt snorted at the dorky pictures of an – admittedly adorable – elementary school Blaine.

Blaine was waiting for him at the stop of the stairs, ushering him down the corridor and through a door, saying, "My room."

It was small, like the rest of the house, but no unpleasantly so. There was a lack of big furniture – only a desk, wardrobe and single bed tucked behind the door – and the floor was devoid of dirty clothes or general mess. The walls were cream, the thick blue carpet underfoot matching the navy bedspread. A large pinboard took up the entirety of one wall, covered in pictures of Warblers, the New Directions and a few of his mom and Blaine on different holidays. School books, a laptop and random knick knacks that were probably birthday presents from friends covered every available surface of his desk, so Blaine had obviously been forced to stack most of his books on his bedside table. Kurt smiled when he saw *Brave New World* resting on top of the pile.

Sinking down onto the bed, Kurt dropped his crutches onto the floor, running his fingers across the soft, knitted blanket that covered the duvet.

"It's very... you," he said to Blaine, who was still standing in the doorway, watching Kurt nervously.

"Is that a good thing?" he asked, slowly walking over to sit next to Kurt.

Kurt nodded. "Yeah. I meant it as a compliment."

Blaine smiled at that and sat quietly while Kurt's eyes continued to drift around his room. He was about to say something when an object on Blaine's bedside table caught his attention and he shuffled down the mattress to pick it up. It was a framed picture of the two of them, taken by Finn on Christmas day. Blaine was sitting cross-legged on the couch, laughing as he wrapped tinsel around his head like a halo while Kurt sat back with his arms folded across his chest. Even in the picture, Kurt could see himself biting a lip to keep from smiling at his boyfriend's antics.

He hadn't realised that Blaine had liked it enough to take it home and frame it.

"I had a different one before," Blaine said softly. "But I liked this one better."

"Why do you have it?" Kurt asked, positioning it back on the table.

"It helps with the nightmares."

"You have nightmares?"

Blaine shrugged. "Occasionally. They're not too bad; it just helps if I see you when I wake up."

Kurt didn't answer. Instead, his eyes flickered to the open bedroom door before deciding it was worth it and leaning over, his hand tangling in Blaine's hair as he pulled his head forward into a deep kiss, his tongue immediately licking into Blaine's mouth as his boyfriend sucked in a breath through his nose.

"Wait," Blaine sighed, pushing against Kurt's chest gently before springing to his feet and shutting the door.

Kurt raised his eyebrows. "Why, Blaine Anderson, what scandalous things are you planning to do that require a closed door?"

Blaine flushed. "It's just a safety precaution..."

Kurt merely grinned and pulled the boy back down onto the bed by his sweater. "A necessary one," he said as they kissed again. "Because I intend on making you come in this bed so you have something to remember me by when I leave."

Blaine groaned and sank happily into Kurt's hold, still enough of a gentleman to avoid putting any weight on Kurt's leg even when he was obviously close to collapsing from Kurt's kisses and promises.

Kurt's lips drifted from Blaine's lips down to his neck, and Blaine immediately threw back his head so Kurt could suck a hickey onto his neck, his tongue laving over the abused skin after he bit down sharply, causing Blaine to whimper and thrash beneath him.

"Kurt, dinner will be soon..." Blaine panted, his hands curling into fists in Kurt's hair.

"Hmm... I better get started then."

Kurt grinned as he pushed Blaine's chest so he fell back onto the bed, his head leaning against the pillows as he watched Kurt with dark eyes. Kurt swiftly rolled onto his front, tucking his good leg underneath him to get some height as he struggled ungracefully down to rest in between Blaine's spread legs.

Blaine was watching him with a small smile, which Kurt quickly transformed into an expression of pure ecstasy as he palmed Blaine through his pants for a moment before quickly unbuttoning them and shoving them down his thighs, along with his underwear.

Blaine's blush spread from his cheeks down his neck as he moved his hands to try and cover his impressive erection, while still moaning at relief from the brief friction of his pants brushing over his cock.

"Kurt, stop staring and do something," he begged when Kurt caught his wrists and pushed his hands back to his sides.

"Like what?" Blaine was about to answer when Kurt's stuck his tongue out and licked a thin stripe up the shaft. "That?" he asked coyly, staring up through his eyelashes as he lowered his lips to suck lightly on the head. "Or that?"

Blaine whimpered, his fingernails digging almost painfully into Kurt's scalp as he tugged weakly on his hair. Kurt could probably grow hard on that action alone, but coupled with the needy whines and moans he was eliciting from Blaine, he was pretty sure he was going to come in pants.

"S- stop teasing," Blaine panted. "God, please, Kurt, please."

"Well, since you said please..."

Blaine groaned as Kurt opened his mouth again, although this time he continued past the head, his tongue licking every inch of skin he could get to as he sucked as hard as he could. He brought his hand up to squeeze the last few inches that he couldn't fit in his mouth and Blaine's hips twitched upward in response.

"God, Kurt, oh fuck, Kurt."

Really, it shouldn't be so hot to hear Blaine swear. They were just words after all. But, god, they made Kurt's body tremble from lust just from the way his normally smooth and polite voice rasped the words.

He moaned around Blaine, causing more pleas and incomprehensible noises to fall from Blaine's lips above him and Kurt decided that he was never, ever leaving Blaine's bed because he never wanted Blaine to stop making those sounds and-

"Boys?" Mrs. Anderson voice drifted up the stairs. "Dinner's ready."

"Oh *f-fuck*," Blaine groaned quietly, "Down in a minute, Mom," he added in a surprisingly composed voice.

He tugged on Kurt's hair to try and pull him off but Kurt merely grinned around him, flashing him a mischievous look as he sucked hard and hummed loudly.

Blaine spread his legs a little wider, hips thrusting up into Kurt's mouth and hands tightening in his hair. He whined and squirmed, twisting on the bed beneath him.

"Kurt."

Kurt shivered at the roughness of his voice, the low whine as he threw his head back in the pillow.

"God, Kurt, f-fuck, I love you."

He shook and twitched his hips up as he came, fingers dragging over Kurt's scalp and legs curling up on the bed.

Kurt smirked as swallowed around him, pulling off with an obscene pop and flicking his tongue over the slit to gather up the little bit of come still there before tucking Blaine back into his jeans.

Blaine's eyes were closed, chest heaving and forehead shining with sweat.

"Good god," he muttered, opening his eyes to give Kurt a dazed look.

Kurt laughed softly and crawled up the bed towards him, dragging his leg over the blankets and rubbing against Blaine's thigh as he kissed lazily across his neck.

"Maybe later you can return the favour," he murmured, sliding his hand up Blaine's side.

Blaine shifted a little and Kurt lifted his head to see him avoiding his eye and biting his lip.

"What?" Kurt said with a frown.

A faint blush bloomed across Blaine's cheeks.

"I...I don't really think I'm ready for that," he said as he twisted his hands anxiously. "I want to take this s-slower."

Kurt sat up, swinging his leg awkwardly over the side of the bed. "You weren't complaining five minutes ago when you were practically fucking my face."

"Kurt, no, that's not...I didn't...I don't *expect* you to do that for me either," Blaine said hastily, scrambling to sit behind him and wrap his arms around his waist. "I just...Christian pushed me into things so...I just want to be able to go my own pace, is all. If you don't want to do anything like that until I want to, too, I totally understand. I didn't mean to upset you, I'm sorry." He kissed the back of his neck. "I just...I don't want to mess this up...I love you."

Kurt was about the angrily retort that if he loved him so much, he'd suck his cock, but then he remembered that that was *exactly* what Christian had done to him he suddenly felt sick with himself.

"It's cool," he said, shrugging. "As long as you keep giving me awesome hand jobs. But I really can't wait to see your mouth around my cock."

He pushed himself to his feet, wobbling a little as he looked back at Blaine, who looked slightly confused, blushing faintly.

"So...you're not mad at me?" he said hopefully.

"Not mad," Kurt said.

"Are you sure?"

"I'm sure, Blaine."

"But you—"

"Blaine," Kurt said sharply. "I'm not mad at you. I will continue to suck your cock because, holy shit, that was hot. Stop being paranoid because I'm hungry and the last time I checked, come does not constitute a balanced meal."

Blaine's blush crept down his neck as he spluttered, Kurt smirking as he grabbed his crutches and moved towards the door.

"Coming?" he said, looking back at Blaine. "Well...I mean, you already did but you know what I mean.

Blaine stumbled a little as he hurried to help him out into the hall, one arm around his waist.

"Just...be good," he muttered as he helped Kurt totter down the stairs.

"Are you insinuating that I wouldn't be?" Kurt said with a look of mock astonishment. "Blaine, I'm hurt."

Blaine shot him a warning look but was silent as they walked into the cozy living room, where Blaine's mother had set up plates and bowls of food on the runner table—chips and dip, finger foods and punch.

"I'm not much of a cook," she said brightly. "Hopefully this will be alright though. I know people usually eat these sorts of things for New Year's, right?"

"It's fine, Mom," Blaine said gently as he sat Kurt down on the couch in front of the TV, where "Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve" was turned down low.

"Anything in particular you want?" Blaine said, moving towards the table as his mother handed Kurt a mug of hot cocoa.

"Eh, whatever," Kurt said. He smirked. "Anything you think will get the taste of your come out of my mouth."

He heard Blaine drop whatever he was holding, picturing his face turning beet red. His mother's eyes widened and she pursed her lips.

"I think I left the stove on," she muttered, walking quickly from the room, faintly red around the ears.

Kurt sniggered and sipped his cocoa.

"What is *wrong* with you?" Blaine squeaked anxiously. "Why would you say that around my mother?"

"Um, because it's hilarious," Kurt replied, accepting the plate of food Blaine passed him as he say down. "And you're cute when you blush."

Blaine sighed and muttered something Kurt couldn't hear.

"Sorry?" Kurt said, grinning as he sucked dip off a carrot stick with a lot more tongue and slurping sounds than was really necessary, loving the way Blaine's face turned scarlet.

"I said, you're lucky you're injured," Blaine said crossly. "And that I love you."

"I'm just amazing," Kurt said with a shrug, popping the carrot into his mouth and chewing happily.

Blaine's mother returned half an hour later, Kurt quickly pulling his mouth off Blaine's neck and tugging the throw blanket over their laps as she sat in the rocking chair by the TV.

"Did you boys get enough to eat?" she said, obviously trying to clear the awkward air.

"Sure did," Kurt said brightly. "Blaine always makes sure I get *plenty* of protein."

Blaine groaned and sank into the cushions, hiding his red face with one hand as he tried to melt into the fabric.

Kurt lay off making more comment for the next hour as they watched the performances playing over the screen and midnight ticked steadily closer, answering Blaine's mother's occasional questions about his family and school. She retreated to the kitchen after some time, packing up the extra food to put in the refrigerator.

Kurt eventually convinced Blaine to let him have his champagne back, insisting that since it was a holiday, he was allowed to indulge.

"Plus, I'm staying over," he said after taking a long gulp from the bottle. "And I get a little...*frisky* when I'm tipsy."

He slid his hand up Blaine's thigh and nuzzled his neck. Blaine shivered and whimpered softly.

"Kurt," he warned. "My mom is in the kitchen."

"Mmm, but you like it," Kurt said, squeezing his crotch under the blanket and kissing his neck before pulling away again and leaning against Blaine's shoulder. "I'm getting you off later."

Blaine exhaled shakily, eyes fixed on the screen. "Can I have some of that?" he said, nodding to Kurt's bottle.

Kurt lifted his eyebrows in surprise. "Sure," he said, passing Blaine the bottle and watching him chugging the champagne down in disbelief.

"Just so you know," he said as he passed the bottle back to Kurt again. "*I turn into a bit of a slut when I'm tipsy.*"

"Perfect," Kurt said with a smirk, finishing off the bottle as Mrs. Anderson returned from the kitchen. She ended up going to be at eleven-thirty as she had to work the next morning, kissing Blaine on top of the head and patting Kurt's shoulder.

By five til midnight, they were both feeling the effects of the champagne and Kurt was growing impatient to get back to Blaine's bed. Blaine had to pry Kurt's hand of his crotch half a dozen times, rock hard in his jeans and sweating anxiously.

"Just *wait*," he slurred for the tenth time. "I swear when it's midnight, you can touch me all you want."

"But I want you *now*," Kurt whined. "I want your cock in my hand, Blaine. I want you to beg for me to touch you. You're so hot Blaine, so hot."

"My mother is upstairs," Blaine ground out, punctuating each word.

The countdown clock was at ten seconds now and Kurt *needed* to tuch Blaine, to kiss him and feel his skin under his hand.

"Kiss me," he growled, "Blaine, kiss me. Kiss me now, I-"

The clock hit zero, the ball dropped, and Blaine grabbed Kurt's face and pulled him into a sloppy kiss.

Kurt groaned and tugged Blaiens hair, twisting his head to the side to hiss in his ear.

"I want to go upstairs. Now. Fuck, *now*, Blaine."

Blaine nodded, throwing the blanket off and pulling Kurt to his feet, helping him limp up the stairs, shushing him when he knocked into the banister and giggling a little as they stumbled down the hall to his bedroom. He locked the door behind him, turning back to Kurt with a hungry look as he tugged his shirt over his head and threw it randomly to the side.

"Fuck," Kurt groaned, eyeing his toned chest dusted in dark hair. "You should stop wearing shirts. Or just...clothes in general. Yeah, that would work."

Blaine grinned, unbuttoning his jeans and shoving them down to his ankles, blushing a little at Kurt's low growl at the sight of his cock straining at his boxers.

Kurt sat down hard on the edge of Blaine's bed, fumbling with the hem of his shirt as he pulled it off. Blaine stepped out of his jeans and kicked them aside before stumbling across the room and climbing onto the bed with Kurt.

He pushed Kurt back into the pillows and straddled his hips, immediately kissing sloppily across his neck and down over his collarbone.

Kurt grabbed at Blaine's shoulder, feeling the muscles shift and tauten under his touch. Blaine spread his legs a little wider and rolled his hips down against Kurt's, moaning against his shoulder at the contact.

"Fuck, Blaine, let me fuck you," Kurt groaned. "God, I want you. Let me, Blaine. Come on, let's just do it."

Blaine pulled back and Kurt could see his wide, dark pupils illuminated by the moonlight and brimming with lust, though his confusion was clear behind it all.

"Wh-what?"

"Let me fuck you," Kurt repeated, kissing over his shoulder and sucking small marks as he went. "I want to fuck you, Blaine, *please*. I'll make you feel so good. Just let me, I swear you'll love it."

"No," Blaine said, shaking his head and trying to pull out of his grip. "No, Kurt, I don't...stop, Kurt, stop! That hurts!"

"Come on, Blaine," Kurt groaned, sliding a hand down Blaine's warm stomach and palming him through his boxers. "You'll feel so good, I promise. I just want you, Blaine. You're so hot. So fucking hot."

"Kurt-I-stop-no!"

He yanked himself out of Kurt's grasp and leapt up, wrapping his arms protectively around himself, eyes welling with tears.

"What?" Kurt said, propping himself up on his elbows.

"Y-you...how could you...you know what h-happened," Blaine said, blinking hard.

"Oh...shit," Kurt muttered as it hit him why Blaine was so upset, his muddled brain slowly catching up with the situation. "Blaine, I forgo-"

"Must be nice," Blaine said, turning away to hide his tears, body paled by the bluish light streaming through the window. "Being able to forget that your boyfriend was almost..." His voice trembled and he fell silent, shoulders shaking.

"Blaine..." Kurt swore softly, dragging a hand through his hair. "I'm sorry, I didn't...shit."

Blaine hung his head and Kurt heard him stiff loudly. He flopped back against the pillows, hitting himself in the forehead and silently berating himself. Rolling onto his side, he scooted to one side of the bed. "Come here."

Blaine turned and Kurt felt another stab of guilt at the sight of the tears shining on his cheeks.

"Wh-what?" he said thickly.

Kurt held his arms open. "Come here," he repeated gently. "If you want pajamas, put them on."

Blaine glanced at his dresser but shuffled across the room without going to it, timidly lying down on the bed as far from Kurt as he could, looking like a scolded child and refusing to meet his eyes.

Kurt sighed and brushed a hand through his loose curls and down the back of his neck.

"I'm sorry," he said quietly. "I...I wasn't thinking. "I'm sorry, Blaine, I...I know you're not ready. I just...I *really* want you." He closed his eyes for moment to calm himself down. "But...I'll wait until you're ready. I'm...I'm sorry. I can be an idiot."

"Yeah," Blaine said, Kurt's eyes snapping open to see him smiling faintly. "But you're *my* idiot."

Kurt rolled his eyes though he felt a sense of relief seeping through him as he pulled Blaine into a slow kiss, caressing his cheek with his fingers.

"Sorry," he mumbled against his lips. "I really *really* am."

"I know," Blaine said, rolling over and moving back against Kurt so his bare back was pressed against Kurt's chest.

Kurt nipped the back of his neck and squeezed him around the waist.

"I swear I'll try to be less of a douche this year," he said, grinning against Blaine's neck as his stomach shook a little with silent laughter.

"Alright," Blaine replied as he tugged the blankets up to cover them. He twisted his head around and Kurt lifted himself up enough to kiss him, Blaine tangling their fingers together against his chest.

Kurt resisted the urge to take things further and broke away with a sigh.

"Night," he mumbled, yawning as the alcohol made him feel lax and drowsy.

"Night," Blaine yawned. "Love you."

Kurt hummed in acknowledgment, stroking Blaine's thumb with his own and breathing in the smell of him clinging to the room and his skin, warm and subtle and comforting.

He lay there for a few minutes, taking slow breaths through his nose and occasionally kissing the back of Blaine's head as his chest started moving in a slow, rhythmic pattern.

"Blaine?" Kurt said in a small voice.

Blaine didn't reply, snuffling a little in his sleep.

"Blaine?"

Blaine remained silent, sleeping soundly, his dark curls tousled and falling perfectly over his forehead and his long eyelashes resting lightly on his cheekbones.

Kurt smiled and moved a little closer to him under the blankets so that Blaine's hair tickled his lips and the tip of his nose, his scent strong in his nostrils as he spoke in a barely audible whisper what he was still terrified to say, too terrified for Blaine to hear and almost scared to hear it himself as he still didn't know if he was certain of them yet or not.

"Love you, too."

Chapter Seventeen

"Ready to go back?"

"No," Kurt grunted, scowling at the passing houses and trees, his bag on his lap and his crutches shoved into the seat next to him.

"Oh, come on," Blaine said, reaching over to squeeze his hand as they stopped at a red light. "Think of how much more time we'll get to spend together! And everyone's missed you."

"No they haven't," Kurt said with a humourless laugh. "They all *hate* me and you know it. If not for you and Finn none of them would have even known about the accident in the first place. And I'd have just been lying in the hospital alone for two months and none of them would have given a shit and—"

"Stop," Blaine said gently. "They don't hate you. What about Puck and Santana? You're good friends with them, right?"

Kurt snorted. "Only when I'm breaking rules with them," he said, shifting in his seat. "And I can't do much with a cast on so..."

"I don't really like you breaking rules either way," Blaine said in a resigned sort of voice, "but I'm sure that's not the only reason they're friends with you. And everyone else doesn't hate you either."

Kurt scoffed quietly. "Yeah, okay," he muttered, shaking his head.

"And *I* certainly don't hate you," Blaine said, returning his hand to the steering wheel as the light turned.

Kurt sighed. "I know," he said, softening a little at the tender smile Blaine was giving him.

He still hadn't told Blaine he'd loved him yet. He was *terrified* to say it, in fact, and that alone was enough to stop him. He didn't know *why* he was so worried about Blaine's reaction. Blaine had already told Kurt he loved him a dozen times. But Kurt hadn't said it to anyone since Mark had abandoned him and he was *not* about to give that opportunity to someone else.

"You okay?" Blaine said, sounding worried.

Kurt shrugged. "I guess," he mumbled. "Just...wish I could just stay home. I don't want to go back really. I don't understand the point. It's not like I can graduate anymore anyway."

Blaine gave him a slightly pitying look. "I know," he sighed. "But you'll have Glee Club."

"I can't *do* anything though," Kurt said, gesturing to his cast. "I'll just be sitting there and looking pretty."

Blaine laughed. "Well, that's *always* true," he said as they pulled into the school parking lot. "But we'll win Regionals, I'm sure of it. And you'll be *fine* by Nationals. And I'll come along to your physical therapy appointments with you, too, if you'd like?"

"I can think of a few 'physical therapies' we could do on our own," Kurt muttered, grinning as he leaned over the console and slid his hand up Blaine's thigh as he threw the car into park.

Blaine gave him a warning look, eyes fluttering closed when Kurt squeezed lightly at his crotch.

"Kurt," he groaned softly. "Not *here*."

"Have a little fun," Kurt mumbled, popping open the button on Blaine's jeans. "We have fifteen minutes til homeroom."

Blaine caught Kurt's wrist and pulled his hand away gently. He kissed his palm and gave him a slightly apologetic look.

"Maybe later," he said, rubbing Kurt's wrist. "We don't want you late on your first day back though, right?"

Kurt sighed heavily and flopped back in his seat. "Fine," he grumbled, shoving the door open and slinging his bag over his shoulder. He fumbled with his crutches and struggled out of the car, slipping a little on the icy pavement and falling against the door.

He heard Blaine hurrying out of his seat and around the front of the car to him.

"Are you okay?" he said anxiously, wrapping his arm around Kurt's waist. "Are you hurt?"

"I'm fine," Kurt grumbled, straightening up and tucking his crutches under his arms.

"Hey, don't be mad at me," Blaine said, one hand resting lightly on Kurt's elbow. "You're not mad at me, are you?"

Kurt sighed. "No," he mumbled. "I'm not mad at you... Sorry, I just...I don't want to be here. I wish I could just hang out with you. I hate this place."

"I know," Blaine said apologetically.

"And now I have to spend another whole *fucking* year here," Kurt said. "I just...I *hate* it here. You're the only damn good thing I have in whole place."

Blaine smiled and kissed the corner of his mouth softly. "Well, that's sweet of you," he said, pressing his warm body against Kurt's front. "Just for that, you earned a minute of making out."

Kurt grinned, rolling his eyes as Blaine pushed him lightly against the car, the chill of the metal soaking through his coat. He hooked his fingers on Blaine's belt-loops and kept him close, sighing as Blaine kissed him again, their lips moving smoothly together, Blaine's a little chapped from the cold.

Blaine slid his hands up Kurt's chest to cup the sides of his neck, his gloves soft on his skin as he reached on hand behind Blaine and gave his ass a rough squeeze.

Blaine groaned very softly, fingers tightening momentarily on Kurt's neck, before pulling back suddenly, blinking and looking dazed.

"I, um...I think that was a minute," he said breathlessly.

Kurt smirked, ghosting his fingers over the front of Blaine's jeans and feeling him half-hard beneath the fabric.

"Well, if a compliment can get me *this* far, imagine what you'd do if I told you I lo—"

"No," Blaine said, suddenly serious. "Don't say that." He furrowed his brow into a disapproving look. "If you say that, I want you to mean it. Don't you *dare* say it to try and get sex from me."

"Whoa, I was just...just joking around," Kurt said, holding up his hands in surrender.

Blaine nodded, though the defence was still up around him, fists clenched and jaw tight.

"I'm sorry," Kurt muttered, breathing a sigh of relief when Blaine relaxed.

"It's okay," Blaine said bashfully, cheeks darkening with a faint blush. "I was...overreacting."

"Nah, I get it," Kurt said as he pushed his door shut and hobbled towards the school on his crutches, Blaine at his side. "After what British McAsshole did to you, I understand."

"British McAsshole?" Blaine said, laughing. "Well that's new."

"He doesn't deserve to be called by his real name," Kurt said with a knowing nod. "I thought that worked instead."

Blaine laughed softly again, pulling the door to the school open for him and letting him pass by in the hall ahead of him. "Well, it's certainly succinct," Blaine said, "and accurate."

"I was pretty proud of myself for it," Kurt said airily as they stopped at his locker and Blaine opened it for him, slipping a few things inside and pulling out Kurt's books for the day.

"You have French first?" Blaine said, more for confirmation than anything. He'd memorized Kurt's schedule backwards and forwards to be read to walk him to and from classes for the next few weeks.

"Oui," Kurt said, adjusting his crutches to wave in reply to Finn and a reluctant-looking Rachel, who gave him a forced sort of smile that was more like a grimace than anything before forcing Finn's attention back to her again. Kurt rolled his eyes and followed Blaine towards his French classroom, lowering himself into a seat at the back and shoving his crutches under his desk.

"Do you have everything?" Blaine said, laying out his book, notebook and pen for him. "Are you comfortable? Do you want me to—"

"Blaine."

Blaine shut his mouth quickly, looking sheepish. "I just want to make sure you're alright," he said anxiously.

"I'm fine," Kurt said, rubbing his hand along the side of Blaine's hip and thigh. "I'm a big boy, remember?"

Blaine sighed. "Just...text me if you need *anything* okay? Anything at all."

"Does that include sex?" Kurt said with a look of innocent curiosity.

Blaine shook his head with a soft sound of amusement. Rolling his eyes at Kurt's pout, he leaned down to plant a kiss on his lips, letting out a muffled sound of surprise when Kurt grabbed the collar of his shirt and deepened the kiss, slipping his tongue into Blaine's mouth and resisting the urge to simply pull him into his lap.

"Don't forget about me," he said warningly when Blaine straightened up a few seconds later with the same dazed expression he'd worn by the car.

"Never," Blaine breathed. He shook his head a little. "I mean...no, I'll be here to take you to math a few minutes before the bell rings."

Kurt winked. "Sounds good," he said, lightly smacking Blaine's ass as he left. "And if you come a few minutes early to fool around in the bathroom, I won't complain!" he called after him, grinning when he heard him laugh from the hall.

"Well, isn't that just *awful*?"

Kurt suppressed the urge to roll his eyes with difficulty as Santana took the seat next to him, leering faintly.

"What do you want, Lopez?" Kurt grunted, scowling at her. "If I remember correctly, the last time we spoke, you nearly got my boyfriend arrested."

Santana smiled sleekly. "Oh, Kurt," she said, "he really *does* have your balls in a vice. I guess Puck was right."

"First off," Kurt snarled, hands balling in his lap. "Blaine does *not* have my balls in a vice. And second, I don't think my *balls* are any of your business in the first place."

"Yes, well, I guess your boyfriend wasn't taking very good care of them so—"

"What's *that* supposed to me?" Kurt snapped.

Santana smirked. "Have you two had sex yet?" she said.

"I—that's none of your business," Kurt said, fidgeting a little in his seat.

"That's a resounding *no*," Santana muttered.

"What does it matter to you anyway?" Kurt said, mustering up his bitchiest glare. "It's my sex life, not yours."

"Don't you have to be *having* sex to have a sex life?" Santana said smugly.

Kurt was about to retort when the teacher entered the room and he was forced to stew in silence, glowering at the chalkboard and barely concentrating through the entire class. When Blaine came to pick him up five minutes before the lesson ended, Santana smiled and waved at Blaine, who beamed back, though she smirked in Kurt's direction as Blaine bent over to gather up his crutches for him.

"Care to tell me what's wrong?" Blaine said as they stepped into the hall and he closed the door behind him.

"Santana's just being a bitch," Kurt said. "As usual."

"What did she do?"

"Nothing," Kurt muttered. "It's not important."

"It wouldn't have anything to do with the fact that we haven't had sex yet, would it?" Blaine said with a hint of bitterness.

"I...yeah, how did you know?" Kurt said, gaping at him.

"She and Puck have been trying to...*persuade* me that you're just trying to get into my pants," Blaine replied with a heavy sigh. "They listed off about a dozen guys you've, um...done that sort of thing to. You know...slept with and...and left."

A horrible, spiraling silence followed his words.

"Blaine," Kurt said as gently as he could. "That...that was the, um, 'old me'. I'm not going to do that to you. Those guys were...well they didn't mean anything to me. You mean something to me, Blaine." *I love you*, he added in his head, watching Blaine's expression anxiously.

"I know," Blaine said. He suddenly looked tired and drawn. "I know, Kurt. I just don't know why they hate us being together. Rachel's always trying to tell me you're no good for me and...I don't understand."

Anger bubbled up inside him at the thought of Rachel telling Blaine that Kurt wasn't good enough for him. He had the sudden urge to punch something.

"Kurt?"

"Huh?" Kurt said, turning to Blaine, his anger melting at the look of concern on his features.

"Are you okay?" Blaine said, running his fingers lightly up and down his spine.

Kurt forced a small smile. "I'm fine," he said. "Screw what all of them say. They don't know what they're talking about."

Blaine smiled but Kurt could tell he was still distracted. "I don't get why none of them get it."

"Get what?" Kurt said as they stopped by his locker to get his things for math.

Blaine frowned as he turned the dial on the lock. "They keep saying they want me to be happy because I'm there friend," he said, "and I keep telling them...*you* make me happy. And they don't...they don't understand.

"Well, fuck 'em," Kurt said, shrugging.

Blaine sighed, setting Kurt's French books carefully in his locker. "I just wish they'd accept it."

"Accept what?"

Blaine turned to him with a small, genuine smile. "That I love you," he said, shutting Kurt's locker with a soft snap and leaning against it, Kurt's math book tucking against his chest.

Kurt swallowed. This was it, the perfect opportunity to say it back. Blaine was being told to leave him by people he'd *thought* were his friends, his own friends doing just as much to try and get him to leave Blaine, all for stupid reasons when none of them realised how similar their situations had been. But he couldn't do. He couldn't say those stupid fucking words that stuck to the roof of his mouth and burned on his lips. He just couldn't say it.

Instead, he nodded slowly and muttered, "I know." A wave of shame washing over him when Blaine's face fell very slightly and he changed the subject, making a comment about getting Kurt to class.

Kurt followed after him silently, head hung and a feeling of disgust towards himself welling in his chest. He felt like a coward. Maybe Rachel was right. Maybe he *wasn't* good for Blaine.

The remainder of the day passed uneventfully, though Kurt had made Blaine take him to the bathroom between third and forth period, yanking him into the handicap stall with him and pushing him up against the tiled wall to suck at his neck and rub against his thigh, both of them ending up nearly late for class, hair mussed and lips red and swollen. Blaine hadn't let him go very far, insisting that their 'debauchery in the bathroom' before they'd started dating was a one-time event.

Still though, Kurt was grateful for the brief, stolen make-out sessions Blaine was granting him between classes—they'd ended up pressed together in an alcove outside of the choir room after sixth period before rehearsal that afternoon—as the rest of his day had been absolute shit.

He was so far behind in all his classes, he didn't even see the point in going anymore. All his teachers gave him busy work to try and get him at least partially caught up but he wasn't even being taught, just trying to learn everything on his own in the back of the classroom. Being able to pull Blaine into a corner and suck on his tongue every few hours made it so much more bearable.

He spent most of rehearsal slumped in the corner after they'd all greeted him back, eyeing Blaine as he danced and wishing he could join them. Regionals was just over two months away, though, and Kurt would still have his cast on for three weeks, followed by three months of physical therapy before he'd be doing any sort of extensive physical labour. Though, he thought if Blaine agreed to have sex before then, he'd rip his cast off himself and deal with the consequences.

Glancing at the clock, he sighed and shifted in the uncomfortable plastic chair he was seated in, wishing it would just *end* because he was going to Blaine's house afterwards and there were a lot more interesting things to be done on Blaine's bed, especially since his mother would be at work for three hours after they got there.

But Blaine was suddenly bounding happily over to him as they finished their last song, beaming and flushed from dancing.

"I have a surprise for you," he said, pulling a chair up and sitting down next to Kurt as everyone else returned to their seats.

"Okay," Kurt said suspiciously. "What is it?"

"Well, if I told you, that would ruin the surprise, wouldn't it?" Blaine said, grinning at Kurt's dead-panned look. He kissed him on the cheek and squeezed his hand before getting to his feet again.

"So," he said, moving to the center of the room, "I was thinking that, since my boyfriend is back, finally, I could do something for him." He flashed Kurt a bright smile, thought Kurt was too busy glaring at Rachel as she narrowed her eyes in his direction, Santana and Puck scoffing quietly.

Blaine cleared his throat, nodding at the band and winking in Kurt's direction as he started singing, Kurt rolling his eyes and shaking his head at the lyrics.

I like

Where we are

When we drive

In your car

I like where we are

Here

Blaine grinned as the steady thump of the bass drum kicked in, tapping his foot gently.

Cause our lips

Can touch

And our cheeks

Can brush

Cause our lips can touch

Here

Kurt tried to suppress a smile as Blaine started singing the chorus, pointing at him and beaming. He found himself tapping his fingers against his thigh and his mouth quirking up in a grin at the sight of him though.

Well you are the one, the one who lies close to be

Whispers "hello, I've missed you quite terribly"

I fell in love, in love with you suddenly

Now there's no place I could be but here in your arms

Blaine's look softened a little as he touched his fingertips to his lips before laying his hand over his heart.

Our lips can touch

He took a few steps towards Kurt, kneeling down in front of him and gripping his hands where they were resting in his lap.

Our lips can touch

Here

Blaine cupped Kurt's face in his hands and kissed him, stroking his cheekbones with his thumbs. Kurt heard Tina 'aw' and Rachel make a soft *tsk* of disapproval. Blaine broke away, smiling and resting his forehead against Kurt's for a moment before straightening up and continuing.

You are the one, the one who lies close to be

Whispers "hello, I've missed you quite terribly"

I fell in love, in love with you suddenly

Now there's no place I could be but here in your arms

The music petered off, the others clapping as it did, and Blaine smiled brightly, giving Kurt a slightly expectant look. Kurt shook his head and patted the seat next to him, Blaine looking mildly pleased with himself as he sat down.

"So?" he said, turning to face him.

Kurt tugged his sleeve to force him close, placing his mouth beside his ear. "You know, the sooner we leave, the sooner we get to your house and the sooner I can pay you back," he breathed. "I think you already know that I've got a talented mouth, too."

He heard Blaine take in a sharp breath, feeling him tense next to him as he swallowed. "Th-that...you don't have to do that," he whispered, "I just wanted you to know I missed you."

"I know," Kurt said, smirking, "but you want me to do it. Don't you?"

Blaine whined softly. "Yes."

"Well then, take me to your house," Kurt said, giving him arm a squeeze as he sat back into his seat with a smug grin, ignoring the mistrusting looks he was getting from a few of the other club members, namely Rachel.

Mr. Schue made his usual closing remarks about the rehearsal, reminding them all that they were meeting again on Thursday and that they should start thinking about song choices for Regionals, Kurt impatiently waiting and exchanging dark looks with Blaine.

Finally, they were dismissed and Kurt struggled to his feet, hobbling out into the hall with Blaine before any of the others had even stood up.

"Fuck, why do you have to live so far away?" Kurt grumbled as Blaine helped him into his car a few minutes later, stuffing his crutches in beside him unceremoniously.

"It's only fifteen minutes," Blaine replied as he climbed into the driver's seat, switching on the car and turning the heat up as he shivered.

"Yeah, but I don't know if I'll make it that long," Kurt murmured, running his hand up the inside of Blaine's thigh as they pulled out of the parking lot.

"Dammit, *Kurt*, ah, you can't do that," he groaned, Kurt palming him through his jeans and feeling him start to hard under his fingers.

"Well, I want you ready, don't I?" Kurt said, smirking. "As soon as we get to your house, I'm stripping you down and sucking your cock until you *scream* my name."

Blaine whimpered, swearing softly, knuckles white against the steering wheel. Humming sympathetically, Kurt popped the button on Blaine's jeans and pulled the zipper down, slipping his hand under the fabric to rub him through his boxers, running his fingers up and down the side of his cock, stopping occasionally to squeeze the base.

By the time they reached Blaine's house—Kurt had to commend Blaine for not crashing and killing them both—Blaine was a mess, flushed and sweating, hair coming loose from the gel from the heat of the car, and eyes dark and desperate.

They stumbled into the house, hands sliding over each other's bodies, unbuttoning shirts and undoing ties and scarves as they struggled up to Blaine's room, bags tossed beside the front door.

"Fuck, you need to be naked *now*," Kurt hissed, shoving his hands down the back of Blaine's boxers and squeezing his ass hard. "*Now*."

Blaine whined and ground his hips against Kurt's thigh, shedding his shirt and dropping it to the floor before pushing Kurt's back off his shoulders and pulling him close so their bare chests pressed together.

Kurt took a few heavy steps back and sat down hard on the side of the bed, pulling Blaine with him and turning him over to push him down into the mattress. He hauled his leg onto the bed, growling in annoyance at how cumbersome his cast was. He finally ended up with his legs stretched back and hanging over the end of the mattress as he lay on his stomach near Blaine's hips.

He took a moment to admire Blaine's bare chest, running his hands down the planes of muscle and dark line of hair running down from his bellybutton to disappear under the waistband of his boxers.

"*Fuck*, you're hot," he mumbled.

Blaine whined needily in the back of his throat, throwing his head back into the pillows when Kurt nuzzled against his erection through his jeans.

"God, Kurt, *please*," he groaned.

"Thought you didn't expect me to do this?" Kurt teased as he tugged Blaine's jeans and boxers down his thighs to free his cock.

Blaine looked suddenly mortified. "I don't!" he said. "Kurt, no, you don't have to if you don't—*oh, god, fuck.*" He let out a choked shout as Kurt gripped the base of his cock and sank his lips down around it, sucking and lapping as he bobbed his head, rubbing against Blaine's leg as he did.

Blaine's fingers slid through his hair, twisting gently in the strands as he pushed his leg up into Kurt's groin, Kurt moaning around him at the friction.

Kurt licked slowly up the underside of Blaine's cock, keeping his eyes trained on Blaine's face and the look of disbelief and pleasure etched on his features. He sucked lightly on the head, flicking his tongue over the slit and tasting the bitter pre-come gathering there. Blaine pushed his hips up with a low whine and Kurt sank his mouth down around him again, sucking hard and swirling his tongue.

"Fuck, *Kurt*, dammit!"

Kurt hummed softly again, moving his hand from the base of Blaine's cock to cup his balls, massaging gently as Blaine continued to rub his leg against his groin.

Blaine came down his throat with a shaky cry a few seconds later, fingers digging weakly into Kurt's scalp and eyes fluttering closed as Kurt's swallowed a few times before pulling off. He licked the head of Blaine's cock clean and tucked him back into his jeans with a faint smirk.

"Better?" he said, kneading Blaine's thighs.

Blaine laughed feebly. "Yeah," he whined. "*Fuck. Yes.*"

Kurt rolled onto his back and pulled himself up the bed to lie next to him, Blaine immediately pulling him into a sloppy kiss and sliding his hand down his stomach to rub him roughly through his jeans. He fumbled with the button and zipper for a moment before shoving his hand down Kurt's pants and wrapping his hand around his cock, pumping his fist in short, sharp jerks.

Kurt groaned and fisted his hand in Blaine's curls, tugging at the roots and lapping at his tongue, Blaine making a faint sound of surprise at the taste of himself so strong in Kurt's mouth. He twisted his wrist and spread pre-come with his thumb, mouthing at the side of Kurt's neck when he threw back his head with a low moan.

"I love the sounds you make," Blaine breathed, voice heavy with adoration. "And the way you say my name."

"Blaine."

"Mmm, exactly," Blaine groaned. "Do you know how hard it is to stop myself sometimes?"

"Ah, then why do you?" Kurt whined. "Why do you stop yourself? You just need to let go, Blaine."

Blaine smiled against his neck. "I control myself," he murmured, "because I know *you* never will."

Kurt whimpered, twisting Blaine head up and kissing him hard as his orgasm hit him, Blaine stroking him through it, lips moving lazily over Kurt's and back his jaw to his ear.

"Better?" he said, sounding amused.

"Ass," Kurt muttered, flopping back in the pillows and closing his eyes as he tried to regain his breath.

Blaine kissed the side of his neck softly before rolling over and grabbing a handful of tissues from him bedside table, wiping his hand and Kurt's softening cock before tucking him back into his jeans, pulling his own off so he was just in his boxers.

Kurt cocked an eyebrow curiously at him in question.

"I can get dressed again later," Blaine said, shrugging as he tugged the blankets up to cover them both.

"Does this mean with have to cuddle?" Kurt said, pulling a face.

Blaine laughed, curling against his side and drawing random patterns across his chest with his index finger, nestling his head in the crook of his arm.

"Don't pretend like you hate it," he said with a grin. "You weren't complaining on New Years, if I remember right."

Kurt stiffened briefly, a flash of fear running through his mind at the thought that Blaine might have heard what he'd said. He cleared his throat. "Well, I was drunk," he said quickly.

"Mhmm," Blaine said, yawning as he snuggled closer to him under the covers, his skin warm and pressed flush against him. "I'm taking a nap. Wake me if you get hungry, I'll make you dinner."

Kurt sighed, smiling as he rested his cheek against the top of Blaine's head, his curls soft and tousled against his skin.

"Love you," Blaine mumbled, sleepy and barely audible. Kurt thought he might already be drowsing.

He brushed his fingers absently through Blaine's hair, the smell of his cologne and shampoo heavy on the air. Blaine's chest expanded slowly under his arm, his breath blowing warm across his chest and neck as he slept peacefully.

"I love you," Kurt whispered very quietly ten minutes after Blaine had drifted off, eyes prickling with shame.

He hated that he felt like this about Blaine at all, but he hated even more that he was too afraid to admit the feelings to Blaine after everything he'd done for him. How patient and caring he was when Kurt knew he certainly hadn't done anything to deserve that kind of treatment.

Blaine shifted a little in his sleep, brow furrowing. Kurt tried to adjust him into a more comfortable position but he simply burrowed closer to him, whimpering quietly.

"No...stop it," he said, voice laced with fear. "*Stop.*"

"Blaine?" Kurt cupped his cheek gently. "Blaine?"

Blaine squirmed, making tiny sounds of what might have been pain and fear. "*Stop,*" he said with a dry sob. "Please, I don't...I don't want to. Christian, stop."

Kurt tensed, hate flaring inside him so quickly his hands shook and his vision flashed red.

"Blaine, wake up," he said, gently attempting to rouse him. He knew it wasn't supposed to be a good idea to wake someone in the middle of a nightmare because they could freak out but Blaine was actually crying at this point, tears sliding from his closed lids onto Kurt's chest. "Blaine, wake up!"

Blaine's eyes snapped open and he thrashed for a moment under the blankets, sitting up and staring around the room with wide eyes. His gaze fell on Kurt and he jumped.

"Kurt, what..." his eyes widened further and a blush darkened his cheeks. "Oh...did you...was I...crap."

"Blaine, do you have nightmares like these...often?" Kurt said, propping himself up on his elbow.

Blaine fiddled with the hem of his comforter, not meeting his eyes. "I...sometimes," he murmured. "Not so much lately."

"Why not?" Kurt said, stroking his arm soothingly.

"Because of you," Blaine said glancing at him with a slightly frightened look. "I know you don't like that sort of sentimental thing but it's true. You make me feel...safer, I guess. I'm sorry..."

"Oh, shut up," Kurt said gently. Blaine looked up in surprise. "Don't...don't be sorry for that. Whatever helps... Your ex is a real fucking douchebag."

Blaine smiled half-heartedly. "Yeah," he said, nodding. He scratched the back of his neck absently. "Sorry about that...the nightmare I mean. I can't really, you know...control them."

"I don't expect you to," Kurt said. "Do you...do you really think I'd get upset at *you* for this?"

Blaine hung his head, shrugging his shoulders. Kurt felt another surge of guilt.

"Blaine, I...I'm pissed at *Christian*. Not you," he said in a small voice. "I could never actually be mad at you for that." He dragged a hand through his hair. "Wow, I feel like a real shit boyfriend."

"What?" Blaine yelped. "No, don't...don't say that! I just know you don't like that...emotional stuff and I thought you wouldn't want to talk about it."

Kurt turned to him with a look of disbelief, suddenly feeling hurt and even more ashamed than he had before. Did Blaine really think that about him? Had he actually been *that* cold to make him believe he wouldn't care about him having nightmares about his ex trying to force himself on him?

"Blaine...of *course* I care about that," he said, voice trembling. "I mean...I'm not really one for 'deep' stuff but...I care. I don't want to see you like that."

Blaine looked touched, smiling softly. He lay down next to him again, lightly grazing his fingers up and down Kurt's forearm.

"Is there anything I can do?" Kurt said, taking Blaine's hand as it brushed over his own and twining their fingers together.

Blaine smiled, tears still clinging to his eyelashes. "Just be here," he said, kissing his fingers tenderly. "That's all."

"Of course," Kurt said, nodding and squeezing his hand.

Blaine yawned and rested his head on Kurt's shoulder again, closing his eyes, still smiling as he slowly fell back asleep. Kurt waited until he was sure Blaine was out, his mouth hanging slightly open and his breath slow and steady. He carefully disentangled his hand from Blaine's, kissing him on the forehead before leaning over the side of the bed to find his jeans.

He dug Blaine's phone from the back pocket, scrolling through the contacts until he found Christian's name—Blaine said he kept the number saved as Christian still occasionally tried to call him. Tapping out a text, he glowered at the screen, the phone shaking slightly in his fingers.

Hey. I miss you. Meet me at the Lima Bean next Saturday at noon. Don't reply. Kurt might see. -Blaine

He waited for the message to send before deleting it to be sure Blaine would never read it. Quickly copying Christian's information into his own phone, he shoved Blaine's back into his jeans and tossed them onto the floor again before lying back and scooting closer to Blaine under the covers, Blaine instinctively draping an arm around his waist and nuzzling the side of his neck.

Kurt might not be one for long, emotional conversations, but if there was one thing he *was* good at, it was defending himself. He didn't just care about himself anymore though, Blaine had suddenly become a steady institution in his life and he wasn't about to stand by and watch him suffer because of some idiot with an accent who thought he could just stomp all over his life without any sort of consequences.

No, he needed to be taught a lesson. And Kurt was more than prepared to take care of it.

Chapter Eighteen

"Are you sure you can't stay? I'd be happy to help you with your Calculus homework."

"Fuck no," Kurt said, pulling a face as he continued doodling on the corner of his cast where he was leaning against Blaine's headboard. "Calculus sucks." *Plus, I have an appointment to kick your ex's ass*, he added in his head.

Blaine chewed thoughtfully on his lower lip for a moment. "Or we can...fool around," he suggested with a shrug.

Kurt perked up, shocked that Blaine was actually bringing it up this time. Usually *he* was the one to start that sort of thing. "Well, I'm not about to say no to that," he said, tossing his pen away absently. Christian could wait a few minutes if it meant he could get off. Actually, he thought it might help to show up smelling like sex and Blaine.

He grinned as Blaine pushed his homework aside and draped one leg over his lap to straddle his hips, a very faint blush creeping up his neck. He slid his hands up Kurt's shirt, running them up his stomach as he leaned down to press his lips to his neck and across his throat, Kurt tilting his head back and humming softly.

"Mmm, you should do this more often," he murmured, gripping Blaine's hips and pushing his hips up, feeling himself hardening quickly.

Blaine chuckled, sucking lightly on his earlobe and breathing a stream of air across it.

"You know what we should do?" he whispered, nuzzling the side of Kurt's neck.

"Please say sex," Kurt groaned, digging his fingers into his hips.

Blaine's breath stuttered across his skin as he laughed. "I was thinking more along the lines of something more...difficult."

Kurt frowned, though his curiosity was piqued. "Okay," he said slowly. "What did you have in mind?"

Blaine pressed a wet kiss to the spot behind his ear. "I was thinking...derivatives."

"Oh, fuck you," Kurt said, scowling when Blaine rolled off him, laughing, onto the bed next to him. "You suck."

"Come on," Blaine said, still grinning as he gathered up Kurt's books for him. "You know you need to practice. Your grade in that class is awful. Plus, you *did* say you needed to leave."

"You're a tease, Anderson," Kurt mumbled, shifting uncomfortably. "What the hell am I supposed to do with this?" He gestured to the bulge in his jeans with a frown in Blaine's direction.

"I'm sure you'll live," Blaine said, rolling his eyes. "You managed before we started dating."

"Yes well, it's harder to jerk yourself off with a cast," Kurt said, "I never have anything to clean off with and it's a pain trying to get up without getting come on your clothes."

Blaine blushed, clearing his throat and stammering something about them working on Kurt's homework the next day. Kurt smirked, craning his neck to look at Blaine's ass as he bent over to pack his things in his bag.

"You know, I can't wait until this damn cast is off and you're ready for sex," he said casually as Blaine straightened up, giving him a confused look over his shoulder. "I just want to pound your ass into the mattress and hear you screaming my name. Is your room sound-proofed? We should probably make sure it is if not."

Blaine gaped at him, jaw slack and eyes unblinking.

"Too much?" Kurt said airily. "Well, that's what you get."

Blaine swallowed, wetting his lips and setting Kurt's bag onto the bed. "S-so, I got your books together," he said, avoiding Kurt's eyes. "I guess Puck will be here in a few minutes, then?"

"Should be," Kurt said, biting back a laugh at how nervous he'd become. It was actually kind of cute to watch, the sudden stammering and blushing brought about every time Kurt mentioned sex. "C'mere. You can sit down with me until he comes, at least."

Blaine sat down on the edge of the bed hesitantly, scooting back to sit against the pillows with Kurt, who slid one arm around his waist and kissed the side of his neck.

"Just you wait," he breathed, Blaine stiffening at the feel of his breath across his skin. "I'll start out slow because I know that's what you'll want. I'll stretch you until you're begging for more than just my fingers. And I'll be sure to give you exactly what you want. I'll make you feel so good, Blaine. I'm going to make you *scream*. I'll make sure you're so well fucked, you won't want to move for a week unless it's for me to fuck you again."

All of a sudden, there was a loud, blaring honk from outside and Kurt swung his legs over the side of the bed to struggle into a standing position.

"So, are we still on for a movie at my place tonight?" he said, smirking as he pulled on his coat, facing away from Blaine, who was still sitting on the bed, silent and unmoving.

"Huh?" Blaine said, voice noticeably higher than usual. "Um, y-yeah, that...that's fine."

Kurt turned back to him and leaned over the bed, pressing his hand against Blaine's chest to force him back against the headboard, breathing hot across his face. He let his other hand drift down Blaine's stomach towards his crotch, pleased to find Blaine was already half-hard when he squeezed gently.

"And maybe we can finish this," he murmured, Blaine's eyes wide and eyebrows raised as he swallowed. "I think that would be more fun than actually *watching* the movie anyway, don't you?"

He tightened his fingers in Blaine's shirt and kissed him hard, biting down on his lower lip and tugging on it gently as he pulled away. Blaine continued to give him a look like his brain had just completely fried in his skull as he gathered up his bag and crutches and hobbled towards the door.

"See you later, babe," he said, stopping at the doorway to wink back at him, grinning as he made his way downstairs and out onto the porch, where Puck was waiting, leaning against the railing and looking bored as he eyed the Christmas lights still strung over the gable with an expression of distaste.

"Can we go already?" he said, stuffing his hands in the pockets of his coat as Kurt stepped outside. "This place is too damn...*homey*."

Kurt snorted. "Yeah, okay," he said, rolling his eyes. "I have to meet that dickface in half an hour and I refuse to be late to kicking his ass." He'd barely taken two steps when a loud thump followed by heavy, rapid footsteps came from inside the house.

Puck cocked an eyebrow and Kurt turned back just in time to see Blaine bursting through the front door before he pulled him into a rough, hungry kiss, hands fisting in Kurt's coat. Kurt immediately let his crutches fall onto the porch with a clatter and slid his hands down the back of Blaine's sweatpants to give his ass a rough squeeze, groaning into Blaine's mouth as Puck made a sound of disgust behind him.

"What the hell was that for?" he said, grinning when Blaine pulled back, shivering a little in his t-shirt and cheeks pink from the cold.

"Just letting you know that I'm all for finishing later," Blaine muttered. He blushed when he saw Puck standing behind Kurt. "Oh...hi, Puck."

Puck merely stared at him indifferently.

"Don't worry about him," Kurt said, "he's just pissed I get more action than him."

Puck scoffed but remained silent.

"See?" Kurt said, Blaine smiling though he still looked anxious.

"Right, so...I'll see you tonight," he said, straightening Kurt's coat absentmindedly. "If you need anything, let me know. Be careful."

"Puck will take care of me, I'm sure."

"I love you."

Kurt froze, straining his ears to try and hear Puck's reaction to Blaine's words. Clearing his throat, he smiled and gave Blaine's hand a small squeeze.

"See you tonight," he muttered, bending awkwardly to pick up his crutches and not meeting Blaine's eyes as he followed Puck to his truck and climbed into the passenger seat.

"So," Puck said as he started the truck, the engine sputtered to life with the rough groan of gears. "Anderson's in love with you?"

"Shut it, Puckerman," Kurt snapped, glaring at him. "We've been over this. You're just bitter because I get more ass than you."

"Oh, so you've have sex with him at last?" Puck said with an all too knowing smirk.

"I don't need to have sex to get off," Kurt replied, "Blaine still manages to take care of that pretty damn well."

Puck pulled a face.

"I *knew* you were just jealous," Kurt said smugly. "Not getting as much tail after you got Quinn pregnant, huh?"

"I'm not jealous of you," Puck said, sounding amused. "I'm not a fan of dick."

"Yeah, well neither was Ryan Walker," Kurt said with a smirk. "But he didn't seem to have a problem begging for me to fuck him last year when he had my cock up his ass."

"*Dude*," Puck said, sounding affronted. "Too much information! I'll never be able to look him in the eye again."

Kurt simply grinned triumphantly and settled back in his seat to watch the scenery passing by outside, allowing himself to think back to everything Christian had done to Blaine to let his anger build. He was going to give that asshole what he deserved.

"Who is he again?" Puck said after fifteen minutes of silence when they were approaching their destination.

"A dick."

Puck took his eyes off the road to glare at him for a second. "Yeah, you've mentioned that several times. But, like, why do you need to beat him up? Not that I'm complaining, it's nice to have the old Kurt back and all, but you usually have a better reason for actively searching someone out to punch them."

"He's Blaine's douchebag ex who Blaine lets walk all over him. I'm making a stand," Kurt said with a shrug as Puck turned down a familiar street.

"It's less impressive when it's being done for your boy toy, but I'm still happy for you, man."

Puck pulled to a stop outside the Lima Bean, his beat-up truck stuttering and whining in complaint.

"You need a new car," Kurt said as he pushed open the door and shuffled to the edge of the seat awkwardly, sliding onto the ground, his arms jolting as his crutches hit the tarmac.

"We can't all have fancy motorcycles to crash," Puck said. "I'll wait here for you, yeah?"

"Yeah." He paused, leaning against the car door as his eyes scanned the tables inside the coffee shop, searching for the arrogant douchebag. He spotted him sitting at one of the window tables, sipping from a cup with a smug smile on his face as he stared at the door, waiting for Blaine. "This won't take long."

He strode over to the Lima Bean, slamming the car door shut with his crutch as he went. Someone held the door open for him and he muttered a thanks before moving across the shop towards Christian, who was dressed in a long, obviously expensive wool coat and a dark red scarf draped loosely around his neck. The fact that he was so effortlessly attractive made him hate him even more.

To his credit, Christian managed to cover his confusion within ten seconds of Kurt pushing into the coffee shop, and by the time Kurt was sliding into the chair opposite, Christian was regarding him with an expression akin to delight at being fooled.

"Kurt," he greeted with a smile. "I wasn't expecting to see you here."

"You were expecting Blaine." Kurt didn't smile; they both knew that this wasn't pleasurable for either of them and Kurt didn't want to waste the energy of rearranging his facial muscles on someone like Christian.

"I must admit I was. I think it was the text coming from his phone that fooled me. Very clever indeed." He sat back in the chair, his hands falling from the table to his lap. "You're rather sneaky, aren't you? Does Blaine know that you took his phone?"

"Of course," he lied, putting as much disdain into his words as possible. "Unlike you, I don't have to lie and trick him to get him to do things."

"I think you'll find he did everything willingly with me. Is that why you're here? Did the two of you have a row because he isn't willing to do what you want and you're looking for advice on how to get into those wonderfully tight pants of his? It's funny. He used to beg for it. He *loves* it. Maybe it's just you."

It took all of Kurt's self-restraint not lunge across the small table and throttle him until that stupid smile fell from his lips.

"We both know you're lying," he said between gritted teeth. "Blaine didn't want to do any of that shit with you. And you're going to listen to me now and do what I say: you are *never* going to talk to Blaine again – you are going to delete his number from your phone and you're going to stop this creepy obsession you have with him because he's *not yours*."

"It's rather adorable that you think you can tell *me* what to do," Christian said, laughing silkily as he took a sip of his coffee. "My family's influence spreads across the *globe*. I could have all of yours dreams and aspirations crushed in a second if I wanted to."

"And if *I* wanted to, I could crush your testicles under his table in a heartbeat." Kurt rapped his crutch against Christian's ankle sharply. "Leave my boyfriend alone."

Christian's smile seemed forced, but it was still stuck to his face like glue. "You're awfully protective over him. It's sad, seeing as you two won't last another month."

"As if *you* know anything about a healthy, long-lasting relationship."

Christian laughed harshly. "I know that Blaine's much too good for you," he said. "You'll grow tired of him and find some back alley whore to sleep with and Blaine will come crawling back to Dalton...and me. Your relationship is on a short fuse, Hummel. And as soon as Blaine realises what an unimportant slut you are, that you're too busy thinking about your own dick to be able to love him like I did, he'll be gone in a heartbeat."

"I've heard enough about you to know *exactly* what you are, Hummel. You're a poor, stupid little whore who thinks so highly of himself that you're too busy to pull your head out of your own ass long enough to see that *nobody likes you*."

Kurt pressed his lips together and narrowed his eyes in anger as Christian stood with an air of smug finality.

"If you don't shut up, I'm going to rearrange your face," Kurt threatened, rising from his chair as Christian paused. His hands were gripped tightly around his crutches.

"This is coming from a crippled boy? I'm so scared," Christian mocked, the vindictive smirk firmly in place. "Tell me, have you two managed to do anything with you all bandaged up like that? Because Blaine's going to leave you if you don't start; that boy begs for it like a slut if he's left alone too long."

Kurt snapped, raising one crutch like a golf club and swinging it through the air towards Christian, landing a solid blow across the left side of his face and sending him sprawling into the window, knocking over a chair as he went.

The coffee shop went silent as everyone turned to stare at them, frozen in their seats as Kurt jabbed Christian in the chest with the end of his crutch, forcing him to fall further back onto the floor, Christian's hand pressed against his cheek, which was already bruising as he spat out blood into a discarded napkin.

"Now that I have your attention," Kurt said, deadly quiet, "you are going to *listen* to me. If you don't stay away from Blaine, then I won't even bother coming after you again, I will go straight to the cops and report every single thing you forced him to do for you, and I will *make* Blaine show them the scars that you left on him. Do you understand?"

Christian glowered at him for a moment, glancing around the shop, before nodding slowly. Kurt straightened, satisfied. He ignored the shocked gazes of the other Lima Bean patrons and walked out of the building with his head held high and a wide smirk planted firmly on his face.

Puck was still leaning against the door of his truck, obviously having just watched everything through the window.

"Impressive, Hummel. I can safely admit that I consider you a badass once more."

Kurt rolled his eyes as he made his way around to the passenger side and hopped in. "He's a creep of the highest degree; he deserved it."

"You're ruining the whole thing with honourable intentions," Puck warned, but Kurt could hear the smirk in his voice as he put the truck into reverse and pulled away from the Lima Bean. "Where are we going now? Are we going to the mall? Should I call Santana and see if she could meet up with us?"

"No, you can take me home, my leg's aching and Blaine's coming over tonight and he pretty much promised *at least* a handjob. And getting off is a little higher on my list than shopping with you and Lopez."

"You're pleased with yourself, aren't you?"

Kurt nodded. "Of course. I'm pretty sure I hit him hard enough to concuss him *and* I'm partially handicapped," he patted his crutches for emphasis. "Plus, he's going to leave Blaine alone now and I didn't get in trouble for it. Really, there is no downside to this whole situation."

"Hey, dude-"

"Don't call me that, Puck, we've been through this."

"Yeah, right, sorry. Anyway, *Hummel*, I just want to... like, apologise for the way Santana and I have been... For the stuff we said to you, okay? It was...kind of out of line."

"Yeah, you've both been pretty big *dicks* since Blaine and I started dating," Kurt agreed. He paused for a moment. "Is this to avoid me beating you up too?"

Puck snorted and all the seriousness of the situation was lost. "There's no way in hell you could ever beat me in a fight, Kurt, even if you did have full control of all of your body."

"Dream on, Puckerman."

The car groaned to a stop outside his house twenty minutes later and Kurt flashed a smile as he got out, swinging his bag over his shoulder. "Thanks for the ride, Puck."

"No problem. You'll call me if you need another one, right? Because that was a good source of afternoon entertainment."

"Yep," Kurt called over his shoulder as he limped up the path to his house, fumbling with the key in the cold weather. He cursed as he dropped onto the porch and had to bend down awkwardly to pick it,

swearing again when he saw the streaks of Christian's drying blood that was stuck to his crutch. If his father saw that, he would freak and most likely attempt to ground Kurt – not that that was ever a successful endeavour.

"You're back early," Burt called as he shut the door behind him. "I thought you were getting coffee."

"Yeah, Puck remembered that he doesn't actually like coffee so we left pretty early." The lie came effortlessly to his lips as he quickly shuffled down the hall, zipping past the open door to the living room as fast as humanely possible. "Anyway, Blaine's coming over later and I need to...uh...clean my room for him."

His Dad didn't even raise an eye from the TV as he waved him off. "Just keep your door open when he gets here, okay?"

"I know," Kurt muttered under his breath and began the ungraceful journey up the stairs to his room.

He tossed his bag, coat, and crutches aside randomly, thinking he'd cleaned his crutch later, before flopping onto his bed and pulling out his phone, rolling his eyes at Blaine's text of '*I miss you :)*' as he tapped out a quick response.

I'll see you in a few hours, remember?

He waited a moment for Blaine to respond, smiling faintly.

Still miss you. :)

Snorting quietly, he shifted into a more comfortable position against the pillows.

Right. So what are you up to? I just got home.

His phone beeped after a minute.

That was a quick trip. I just got out of the shower. So did you and Puck not go shopping then?

Kurt groaned at the thought of Blaine, dripping wet and dressed in nothing but a towel. Or perhaps nothing at all.

Yeah, we got bored. Let's go back to talking about you in the shower, though. When you say you just got out do you mean you just got out? As in, you're not wearing clothes?

He waited a moment, images of Blaine with his curls wet and sticking to his face, stretched out on the bed, completely naked, flashed across his mind.

;)

"Oh fuck you, Anderson," Kurt mumbled as his response.

Asshole. You should come over here so you can come over here. Also, I can come over here.

He slid his hand down his stomach and popped the button on his jeans, still keeping his phone in his other hand as he glanced at the closed door. Blaine had responded when he'd turned back again.

I thought we were finishing later?

Kurt bit back a low groan as he rubbed himself through his jeans, phone shaking in his hand.

Now's good too. Fuck, do you know what thinking about you naked does to me? It's not fair. You should get over here now because I've got my hand down my pants and I'd rather it was yours.

He dipped his hand down his boxers, sighing as he wrapped his hand around his quickly hardening cock and pumped lazily.

Kurt! Are you serious?

Kurt grunted softly, struggling to keep his hand steady as he typed.

Of course I'm serious. You expect me to have the picture of you naked and wet in my mind and not jerk off to it? Are you crazy? That's permanently stored in my spank bank now.

"Fuck," he whined quietly, squeezing his hand around the base of his cock and rubbing his thumb over the head, trying to imagine it was Blaine's hand, the thought of him dripping wet and begging to be touched vivid in his head. *"Fuck, so fucking hot."*

Kurt! I can't believe you sometimes. Are you really...you know?

Kurt laughed, strangled and cut off as he replied, fingers shaking around the phone as he sped up the movement of his fist.

Jerking off? Yeah. I am. I'm getting close too. It's hard to type right now. Wish it was your hand. Or mouth.

He paused to shove his altered jeans and boxers down his thighs to the top of his cast to remove the restriction on his movement as he moved his hand in sharp jerks, biting his lip and arching off the bed.

Oh my god, you're so...so...you have no filter.

Serves you right for telling me you're naked and wet, Kurt replied, twitching his hips up, heat building in his gut. *You're hot as hell and I'm horny.*

You're always horny.

"Oh, f-fuck, *Blaine*." He squeezed his eyes closed, groaning softly as he came across his fingers, stroking himself through it and slumping back on the bed with a dazed grin. He grimaced and tugged his t-shirt over his head before wiping his hand on it and tossing it in the general direction of the hamper.

His phone, which he'd dropped on the bed when his orgasm hit him, beep and he picked it up to read the new message from Blaine.

Kurt?

I'm here, Kurt said, *it's hard to type when you're coming.*

Oh my god, what is wrong with you? Blaine said a few seconds later.

I told you, Kurt said, *you're hot.*

He could picture Blaine sighing and rolling his eyes, maybe blushing modestly as he read it.

That's very sweet of you to say but the fact that you just...masturbated via text message kind of ruins it.

Kurt snorted loudly.

I promise I'll get you off when you come over tonight. I'm taking a nap though. Come on upstairs when you get here.

He tugged the blanket up over himself and adjusted the pillows around him.

Okay, Blaine said, I'll see you soon. I love you. :)

Kurt stared at his phone, the words 'I love you too' typed out and his finger hovering over the send button. He sighed and deleted it after a few seconds, instead sending 'yeah, see you' instead and tossing his phone across the bed, scowling as he rolled onto his side. His leg ached from all the movement he'd done that day and he couldn't stop thinking about what Christian had said about him.

He knew he *shouldn't* care, having someone he hated so much insulting him like that, but he'd hit so soundly on all the things he'd always insisted didn't matter to him, his sexuality, his fear of commitment, his lack of truly *close* friends, that it was hard to admit it didn't affect him. And he *still* couldn't admit to Blaine that he loved him back. He hated himself for it.

Tossing and turning, he eventually fell into a shallow sleep, shame and disappointment in himself still strong in his mind.

"Kuuuurt. Wake up sleepy."

Kurt grumbled at the sound, tugging his pillow over his head to try and block out the light of the bulb shining overhead.

"You want me to turn the light off for you?"

He heard footsteps and the soft click of a switch, the light dimming around the edges of the pillow. The mattress sank next to him again and Blaine pulled the pillow away from him gently.

Kurt blinked blearily, frowning at the sight of Blaine's wide grin and expression of amusement.

"Whas wrong?" he mumbled, voice gruff with sleep.

"Nothing's wrong," Blaine said happily.

"So...why're you so happy?" Kurt said, yawning.

"Someone apparently punched Christian in the face!" Blaine said gleefully. "David texted me about it after you went to sleep. He got back to Dalton with a busted lip and a huge bruise." His face fell. "I mean...I shouldn't be excited about it..."

"You have every right to be excited about it," Kurt said, grinning at his reaction and pushing himself into a sitting position. "He's a dick."

"Yeah..." Blaine said absently. He smiled, shrugging. "I guess I'd just like to shake the hand of whoever did that to him."

"Or you could just kiss him," Kurt said, leaning a little closer to him and wiggling his eyebrows.

Blaine frowned for a moment before his eyes widened in realisation and he leapt up, looking mortified.

"You...*you* did it?" he breathed.

"Course I did," Kurt said, brow furrowing. "Who else did you expect?"

"I...I don't know!" Blaine cried, throwing up his arms as he began pacing beside the bed. He raked his fingers through his loose curls. "I...why did you...Kurt, you shouldn't have done that!"

"You just said you were *happy* he got hurt!" Kurt said in disbelief.

"Well, I mean in the sense that he deserved it, yeah," Blaine said, "But I don't...you shouldn't...why did you do it?"

"Um, because he *hurt* you?" Kurt said incredulously. "He's the reason you have nightmares, Blaine!"

"But, Kurt, you could get in so much trouble!" Blaine said, looking nervous. "I'm not worth you getting sent to jail over!"

"Shut up, of course you are," Kurt grunted.

Blaine scoffed, shaking his head and twisting his hands anxiously.

"You *are*, Blaine," Kurt said, now starting to feel annoyed.

"And why's that?" Blaine said, still pacing.

"Because I love you, you *moron*!"

Blaine stopped pacing and stared at him, mouth hanging open and eyes suddenly over-bright.

"You...what?" he said in a small voice, as if he wasn't sure he'd heard correctly.

"I love you?" Kurt repeated, feeling self-conscious and rubbing the back of his neck.

Blaine smiled so widely Kurt thought his face might split as he all but lunged at him, knocking the air from his lungs as they toppled back onto the bed, Blaine kissing him hard.

"I love you too," he murmured between kisses, sliding his arms up Kurt's bare chest and arms. "I love you too, Kurt, god, you have no idea how long I've wanted to hear you say that."

"Well, if you don't let me breathe, you won't hear me say it again," Kurt gasped.

"Oh...sorry," Blaine said, rolling off him onto the bed, still beaming as Kurt coughed. "Are you okay?"

"I'll live," Kurt muttered, smiling as he turned to look at him.

Blaine brushed his fingers gently through Kurt's hair and pulled him into a slow kiss, sucking on his lower lip and sliding his hand down Kurt's neck and over his arm to grip his waist.

"I don't like you beating people up though," Blaine said when he broke away. "Even if it is for me."

"I'd have broken his arm if I wasn't in a cast," Kurt said honestly. He grinned. "You *are* worth it, you know. And he's a fucking asshole. He never deserved you... *I* don't deserve you..." He hung his head, refusing to meet Blaine's eyes again.

"Kurt," Blaine said gently, touching him lightly under the chin so he looked at him. "Don't say that. You're...you're so different from when I first met you. You're the same person. You still make the inappropriate remarks and think about sex *way* too much but...you're definitely different. You let yourself *care* now." He smiled tenderly. "And I love you."

Kurt felt his eyes burn suddenly, blinking hard as tears welled up to blur the edges of his vision. "I...I love you too," he said. It was incredibly freeing to say aloud. To have Blaine hear it and see his reaction. He felt like he'd just shed a massive weight from his shoulders.

Blaine pressed a soft kiss to his forehead.

"Why don't you get comfortable and I'll go get your laptop," he said, stroking his forearm. "We'll just watch movies up here, okay?"

Kurt nodded silently, wiping his eyes the moment Blaine turned away.

"So your cast comes off in two weeks," Blaine said, gathering up Kurt's laptop from the desk and moving back towards his bed, grabbing a few DVDs out of his bag before settling next to him. "Care if I come along?"

"It's going to be gross," Kurt said, shifting to give him room. "I smelled like death when they took the one off my arm. Plus the muscle will be all shrunk and...urg."

Blaine smiled, setting the laptop on his knees. "That's okay," he said, "I think I've put up with worse from you."

"Gee, *thanks*," Kurt muttered, scowling at him.

Blaine merely grinned as he popped in the movie. "I'm allowed to say that sort of thing," he said. "You love me, remember?"

"And so it begins," Kurt sighed dramatically, suppressing a grin at Blaine's laughter and letting his head rest against his shoulder.

Christian had no idea what he was talking about. He didn't know Kurt other than what the other Warblers might have told him and *they* certainly weren't about to put him in a good light to anyone. Nobody

understood the relationship he had with Blaine but, though it may annoy him to no end that they all refused to believe it was possible given his past, he loved Blaine. And Blaine loved him. And that was enough for him so he really didn't care anymore if it wasn't enough for anyone else.

Chapter Nineteen

Kurt stared around the bland room with a scowl. Posters exclaiming—in obnoxiously bright colours—the delights of good hygiene and eating healthily were the only break from the monotony of the white walls and pale blue laminate floor. The white paper covering the bed Kurt was perched on crinkled as he shifted into a more comfortable position.

Blaine's hand immediately covered his, and Kurt tore his eyes away from the large poster on the side effects of smoking –which was *almost* as patronising as those damn leaflets Miss Pillsbury had tried to hand him the year before—to look at his boyfriend questioningly.

"Are you nervous?" he asked. "Because you don't need to be, it's not going to be any different to when you got your arm cast off."

Kurt blinked at him as if he'd gone crazy. "What? I'm not nervous."

"Oh, you were just sighing and twitching and stuff."

Kurt rolled his eyes. "I'm *bored*. I want the fucking doctor to show up already and take this damn thing off so I can get on with the rest of my life."

"You do realise that you'll have to do loads of physiotherapy until you'll be able to walk again?"

"I know." A smirk stole across his lips as he lifted his healed wrist. "I didn't have too many problems with getting *this* back up to shape, though. I should probably thank *you* for that, seeing as you provided me with all of those opportunities to get my wrist exercises done in a rather more *enjoyable* way."

He watched in satisfaction as Blaine blushed. "Well, you can't do *that* with your leg, so you'll probably have to turn up to a few sessions."

"Really?" Kurt feigned disappointment. "You mean you don't have a hidden foot fetish that you'd like to try out instead?" He stared in disbelief as Blaine looked down at the floor, his cheeks flushing pink as he stayed silent. "Wait... You actually have one?"

"Not...not feet in general. Just *yours*."

"You have a fetish for my feet?" Kurt repeated.

"Well, everything about you really," Blaine said slowly.

"So, you have a Kurt-fetish?" Kurt had meant it to sound teasing, but he winced as it came out more accusatory, causing Blaine to look away from him with over bright, humiliated eyes. "Hey, no, Blaine, I didn't mean it like that; it just surprised me. I *like* knowing that everything about me turns you on – think of all the kinky sex is now open to us."

Kurt winked as there was a knock on the door and Blaine slapped his hand over his mouth to cut off the conversation as the doctor entered.

"Hi, Kurt," she greeted pleasantly as he allowed the door to swing shut behind him, casting Blaine a curious look and causing him to lower his hand slowly, ready to throw it back across Kurt's mouth if he started speaking again.

Kurt nodded in response sitting back against the plastic headboard of the hospital bed as the doctor shooed Blaine away into a corner with a good-natured sigh – she'd been the one to take Kurt's arm cast off, too, and had discovered Blaine's anxious hovering pretty quickly. Kurt couldn't help but roll his eyes in amusement at Blaine's put out expression as he sank into one of the hard plastic chairs in the corner.

"Okay, so like last time, Kurt, I'll just quickly cut your cast off with the saw and then give you a few instructions on how to look after the leg and then you can go."

"Great, yeah, fine," Kurt said, bored again without the entertaining conversation provided by Blaine.

He tilted his head back and stared at the ceiling as the doctor wandered around the small room, putting a new bag in the large plastic bin on one side, and fetching various scissors and pliers out of drawers.

Kurt turned his head to look at Blaine, who had, of course, snuck out of his chair while she had her back turned, and was slowly tiptoeing forward. Kurt caught his eye and sighed in amusement as the doctor turned the saw on and lowered it to the hard cast, sending vibrations shooting up Kurt's leg as it cut along the white plaster.

He grit his teeth against the strange sensation of feeling something on a limb that had effectively been numb for months and allowed the doctor to roll it over so he could cut down the other side before picking

up the pliers and pushing the two halves away from each other and his leg, peeling away the hard outer shell before picking up the long scissors and snipping away the layers of padding and bandage underneath.

Kurt blanched at the smell that lingered on the newly uncovered flesh. The sight of the skin was already disturbing enough – his leg was pale and thin, with flakes of dead skin clinging to his leg and giving it a reptilian appearance – without the odour of dried sweat and mould that had accumulated under the cast.

"*Fuck*, that's worse than my arm," Kurt said as he turned his face away, breathing through his mouth. Blaine had physically flinched away from the smell, retreating back a few steps as the doctor felt the muscle, causing the skin to flake away like a bizarre snowfall.

"This all looks good; with physical therapy you'll be healthy in no time," she said. "Just take a bath when you get home and spend some time washing your leg *carefully*."

"I'll get Blaine to help me with that," Kurt said, raising his eyebrows invitingly at his boyfriend. "He never turns down a chance to see me in the bath, after all."

Blaine flushed and spluttered, but the doctor merely continued packing away the tools she'd used, the slight reddening of the tips of her ears being the only indication that she had heard Kurt.

"I'm just saying," Kurt continued, "that I built up the strength in my arm pretty well on my own, but I'm just not flexible enough to use my *leg* to jerk off, so I'm going to need to borrow your di-" Blaine slapped a hand across Kurt's mouth, his face burning and he pointedly ignore the doctor, whose blush was spreading down to her cheeks.

"I'll go and get the physical therapy instructions," was she said as she bid a hasty retreat.

As soon as the door swung shut, Blaine groaned and let his head fall into his hands. "I can't believe you sometimes," he said.

Kurt rolled his eyes. "I add interest and humour to your otherwise dull and monotonous life, don't complain."

Blaine's blush faded slightly but he continued glaring at the opposite wall. Kurt sighed.

"Oh, babe, don't be mad. I'll make it up to you."

Blaine's eyes narrowed and he asked shrewdly, "How?"

Kurt grinned. "Well, it's ultimately your choice, but my preference is to explore and develop the kinkier aspects of our sex life."

Kurt waited for Blaine to roll his eyes and insult him teasingly, as he did every time Kurt tried to convince him to go a little bit further when they weren't behind the privacy of a locked door, but instead he was quiet and pensive – so much so that Kurt started to wonder whether he was actually considering the sex.

"What about accompanying me to the Valentine's Day Dance?" he asked finally, his voice quiet but obviously hopeful.

That managed to shock Kurt into silence. "...That wasn't *quite* what I had in mind," he hedged.

"Come on, Kurt, I *swear* it'll be fun," Blaine whined again, his hands clasped in front of him as if he was praying.

"In what world is a *McKinley High School dance* going to be *fun*?" Kurt asked. He wondered whether his obvious deflection was obvious to Blaine and if it hurt his feelings. It probably did, but a school dance—especially a tacky *Valentine's* one was pretty much out of the question for Kurt, even if Blaine was involved. "*Especially* on Valentine's Day?"

"Well, it's just that we'll be there together and it'll be a nice evening out with dancing and making fun of all of the doomed straight couples in there – it would be a date."

Kurt was silent for a moment, willing himself to just say no and then cope with Blaine's expression, but the logical side of his brain knew that he would do anything to avoid being the cause of Blaine's kicked puppy look, so he relented.

"If you change the 'dancing' to 'grinding in my lap' then *fine*, I guess I can drag myself along."

"Really?" Blaine's face lit up in a thousand watt smile as he bounced on his feet. "You'll actually come?"

Kurt laughed and kissed him deeply, his tongue licking into Blaine's mouth before retracting. "If it will make you happy-" He realised what a ridiculously cheesy thing that was to say and bit his tongue, trying to remedy the situation, "I *mean*, if I get a blowjob out of it..."

Blaine merely grinned and kissed him back just as passionately. "I know you; it's because you love me." The smile fell from his face slightly as he added, "There isn't actually anyone else *here*, you know. No one's going to judge you if you act like that around me."

Kurt changed topic.

"I'm absolutely *not* wearing a pink tux. And neither are you. I don't give a fuck if you want to adhere to the stupid traditions: if you're going to drag me along to this thing, we're at least going to look good will doing it."

"Deal," Blaine said with a happy smile, kissing him more deeply.

"Mmm," Kurt hummed against Blaine's lips. "I hope this is some kind of build up to my reward for being such a lovely boyfriend."

He felt Blaine smile as they continued to kiss, his fingers winding into Blaine's hair and messing up the helmet of gel as Blaine wrapped his arms around Kurt's waist and pulled him straighter on the bed so the angle was less awkward.

"Oh," the doctor said as she opened the door again; Blaine wrenched himself out of Kurt's grip back away a few steps while smoothing down his hair. "Right, well, um, here are some of the things you need to be doing to build up your muscle density again," she said, handing over a few pages with detailed diagrams of exercises. "You'll need to keep using your crutches for a few more weeks; if you make regular appointments to see me and check your progress then hopefully we can get you walking normally soon."

"Cool," Kurt said, grabbing his crutches as he swung his legs off the bed, the leg of his leg sweatpants falling down to covering his leg.

"Thank you," Blaine said as he moved to Kurt's side and grabbed the papers from her.

She smiled and nodded, still avoiding eye contact as she bid them goodbye.

Kurt wobbled a little as he followed Blaine into the hall, rotating his foot experimentally.

"So what do you say to you and going back to my house and going a little 'physical therapy' of our own?" he said, smirking over at Blaine, who blushed very faintly though he was still smiling.

"I don't think you over-exerting yourself and breaking your leg again is such a good idea," he said as he slipped Kurt's papers into his bag.

"Hey, if you're riding me, I won't have to use my leg at all," Kurt said hopefully.

Blaine flushed scarlet and mumbled something about stopping for coffee as he shifted things in his bag, obviously hoping to find a change of subject in its depths.

"Mmm, I bet you'd look hot," Kurt said, suppressing a grin as every inch of visible skin on Blaine's neck coloured. "You've got a lot of strength in your thighs...you probably ride cock like a champ." He caught sight of a pair of nurses gaping at him and gave them a challenging look. "I'm sorry, I don't remember inviting you to this conversation."

They blushed and hurried to look away and strike up their own conversation as Blaine groaned quietly, hiding his face with one hand.

"What?" Kurt said innocently. "I'm just making an observation. I want you grinding on my cock and I think you'd be good at it. It's a *compliment*, Blaine."

Blaine looked like he might catch fire at any moment and remained silent as they walked out to his car and he helped Kurt into the passenger seat before sliding behind the wheel and pulling out of the parking lot without a word, blush slowly receding.

After another minute or two of this, Kurt was starting to feel vaguely worried and the smug smile faded from his face as he turned to Blaine, who was gripping the steering with a stony expression.

"Hey, um...you're not, er...mad at me, are you?" he said anxiously.

"Hmm?" Blaine said, sounding distracted. "Oh...no, I'm not mad. Why?"

"You just...stopped talking," Kurt mumbled. "I thought maybe I'd gone too far or something."

"Oh, sorry," Blaine said, looking alarmed. "I was just thinking. Guess I got a little lost."

Kurt smiled in relief. "Care to tell me what you were thinking about?" he said, reaching over the console and stroking the inside of Blaine's thigh lightly with his fingertips. "Did I give some good visuals?"

Blaine let out a quiet hum of amusement, smiling as he laid one hand on top of Kurt's and gripped it gently.

"Not quite," he said, glancing over at him and smiling at his pout and slumped shoulders. "More...just thinking about what I'm getting you for Valentine's Day."

Kurt's face fell slightly. "Oh...right..."

"What?" Blaine said, frowning in confusion.

"I just...never, um, actually...Valentine's Day isn't really my *thing*," Kurt muttered, fidgeting in his seat.

He actually hated the holiday, the commercialization and gaudiness of it was as bad as Christmas. The only reason he'd agreed to go to the dance was the possibility of punch spiked by Puck and some drunken groping in the back of Blaine's car. He couldn't exactly dance much, after all. The dance was in two weeks and he knew his mobility would be limited well into March. Blaine didn't expect anything from *him*, did he? The thought made him freeze in panic.

"Hey, calm down," Blaine said kindly, squeezing his hand. "We don't have to celebrate if you don't want. I just...I wanted to get you something nice and I thought you might not...but, nevermind, it'd fine." He smiled through Kurt could see he was hurt by his reaction.

"Sorry," he muttered, "I'm not...I'm shit at romance and all that...*stuff*."

Truth be told, he'd once loved the idea of Valentine's Day. Back when he was still young and inexperienced in relationships. Then Mark had come along and laughed about how it was all just a joke, a trick for men to spend money on their wives and girlfriends and give cheesy gifts and cards and flowers.

They'd ended up spending the day having sex in the back of Mark's car after his track practice before getting drunk in his basement as his parents were out, Mark not mentioning that it was Valentine's once and Kurt feeling mildly disappointed, though he'd been happy enough at the time because he'd still gotten to spend the day with Mark.

Blaine seemed to relax a little at the look on his face, giving him a sympathetic look and a genuine smile.

"Don't worry about it," he said, returning his hand to the steering wheel. "I love you."

Kurt hesitated for a moment before replying with a mumbled, "I love you, too."

He still wasn't quite sure how he felt about saying it out loud and Blaine kept...springing it on him when he least expected it. They'd been eating dinner with Blaine's mother the previous weekend and Kurt had asked Blaine to pass the pepper when he'd randomly dropped it on him as Kurt wrestled with the mechanism on the grinder.

There'd been an extremely awkward moment during which Kurt had stared at his potatoes, wishing dearly that he could simply sink into his plate. Or possibly drown himself in the gravy pooled at the bottom to escape the embarrassment. He'd eventually mumbled a reply, avoiding Blaine's mother's gaze for the rest of the meal.

He still hadn't said it around any of their friends, Puck's teasing was bad enough just with Blaine saying it on occasion. He knew he shouldn't *care* about what the others thought but he was so used to everyone else respecting him for his carefree attitude that he was sure his reputation would go down the toilet if the rest of the school though he was waxing lyrical over Blaine.

The fact that Blaine continued to be so patient with him was maddening. Kurt *wanted* him to get angry just so he didn't feel like such an asshole for his own behaviour. But Blaine was apparently the epitome of a perfect boyfriend and Kurt was left to deal with his sweet smiles and the random L-bombs he kept dropping at the most inopportune of times.

They ended up heading back to Blaine's house after they left the hospital, Blaine filling the tub with warm, soapy water and helping Kurt gently into it, insisting he wear a pair of swim trunks so he 'didn't get any ideas and end up hurting himself'.

"You're no fun at all," Kurt grumbled as Blaine scrubbed his leg lightly with a rag, smiling faintly at Kurt's scowl.

"We can still fool around later," he said. "I just don't want you trying to stand up and breaking your neck when you slip and fall. You've had enough injuries, don't you think?"

"I'd risk it if it meant tub sex," Kurt muttered, flicking at the surface of the water and sulking until Blaine declared his leg clean and helped him carefully out onto the bathmat fifteen minutes later, allowing him to lean against the counter as he towelled him off and helped him into a set of cosy pyjamas.

They curled up on Blaine's bed, Kurt nestled in the crook of Blaine's arm as he gently brushed his fingers through his damp hair. The new pain killers they'd switched him to made him incredibly drowsy and put him into a warm stupor, Blaine's chest rising and falling slowly and rhythmically under his head.

"How're you feeling?" Blaine said quietly, obviously not sure if he'd fallen asleep or not.

"Fine," Kurt mumbled. He yawned and shifted closer to him. "Tired...pissed that I'm too tired to fool around."

Blaine chuckled, still carding his fingers through his hair. He kissed his temple gently and tightened his arm a little more snugly around his shoulders.

"I'm sure you'll live," he said.

Kurt tilted his head back to see him watching him with a soft, tender look that sent a pleasurable, tingling chill over his skin. He was shocked when Blaine's eyes suddenly filled with tears and he swallowed, clenching his jaw tight.

"What's wrong?" Kurt said apprehensively.

Blaine shook his head. "Nothing," he said with a quiet sniff, voice thick. "I just...I think about how close I was...to losing you. And that I never would have known you like I do now and...you're *still* suffering from it and it's *my fault* and—"

Kurt pressed his fingers to Blaine's lips to silence him. "Don't say that," he said sternly. "It's *not* your fault. You didn't...you didn't *tell me* to act like an idiot. If I hadn't been such a douche to you in the first place, none of it would have happened. But I'm an asshole by nature so I'm bound to screw up on occasion. That occasion just happened to be...worse than the others."

Blaine's pained expression intensified and tears slipped down his cheeks as he closed his eyes and leaned into Kurt's hand when he slid it around to rest on his cheek, stopping one of the tears with his thumb and brushing it away.

"Hey, come on," Kurt said nervously. He was horrible with this sort of thing. "Don't...don't cry, Blaine. I...um, I love you."

It was the first time since he'd first said it to Blaine that he'd done it without Blaine saying it first and it seemed to relax Blaine immeasurably.

"I love you too," Blaine said with a small sniff and a smile. He wiped his eyes with the heel of his hand and scooted further down the bed so he was lying next to Kurt, pressing a soft, slightly wet, kiss to his lips.

They didn't do this much, just lying and looking, occasionally exchanging light touches or kisses, as Kurt was usually too busy trying to get into Blaine's pants. But he was tired now and he had to admit it was nice, just enjoying the silence and proximity of Blaine's warm body, the sound of his breathing eventually lulling him into a light sleep from which he periodically woke to share a few slow, drowsy kisses with Blaine before dropping off again. It wasn't something he was used to, having never done anything of the sort with Mark, but he didn't think he'd be too upset if that changed.

The next two weeks passed relatively smoothly as Kurt slowly adjusted to having his cast off, gradually regaining the muscle in his leg, though he *loathed* his physical therapy sessions. He didn't force Blaine to tag along because they were completely dull and he wouldn't have been able to do much but sit in the waiting room at the doctor's office as Kurt went through monotonous exercises for his leg that left him stiff and sore and grumpy.

More than once he'd ended up snapping at Blaine, immediately apologising and soundly abusing his physical therapist until Blaine managed to calm him down again. He thought that, if not for Blaine, he'd have gone crazy and started murdering everyone in the office after his first session.

But he was getting much better now, deciding to see if he could spend the Friday before the dance without Blaine walking him to class, determined to do *something* on his own for once. He was on his way to French, his leg wobbling beneath him as he walked down the empty hallway—the teachers still permitted him a few minutes leeway between classes to avoid the crowds—when he stumbled over his own steps and rolled his ankle, books flying everywhere as he landed sprawling on the floor.

Muttering a steady stream of curses, he gritted his teeth and crawled around to gather up his books, his leg throbbing and burning from the jolt of the fall.

"Whoa, need a hand?"

Kurt didn't bother looking up at the man standing in front of him, just catching sight of his shiny dress shoes and the hems of his khakis as he stopped a few feet away.

"Yeah, whatever," Kurt grumbled. He refused to ask for help but he wasn't about to deny it when someone readily offered if there wasn't anyone else around to see him making such an idiot out of himself.

"Oh, you take Mrs. Abram's World History?"

Kurt half-glanced at the book in the man's hand as he bent down to help him pick them up.

"Oh...yeah," he grunted, shoving his Calculus notes at random into his bag and thinking Blaine would help him organise them later.

"I guess we'll be seeing a lot of each other then," the man said, neatly stacking some of Kurt's papers for him and smoothing them out. "I'm her new TA."

Kurt paused and looked up at last, feeling his stomach drop at the sight of the dazzling smile and sparkling grey eyes visible beneath a mop of tousled blond hair. He felt numb, his hands shaking in his lap as he stared unblinkingly at the handsome young man grinning back at him.

He was taller than Kurt remembered him being, his jaw more defined and dusted with stubble, chest filled out and shoulders broader under his dark blue button-down, the sleeves of which were rolled up to his elbows to reveal his muscled forearms.

"Hey, Kurt," he said. "How've you been?"

Kurt swallowed dryly.

"Why are you here, Mark?"

Chapter Twenty

"I just told you," Mark replied, smiling as he eyed Kurt closely. "I'm TA for Mrs. Abrams. I have to do so many hours for my degree and-"

"No," Kurt interrupted sharply. "What are you *here*? At McKinley. You can't tell me no other schools wanted you."

Mark's face fell slightly, though the smile remained plastered to his lips. He cleared his throat and gathered up the rest of Kurt's books, tucking them under his arm.

"Come on," he said, pushing himself to his feet. "We should get you to the nurse's office so she can look at your leg. It can't be good falling like that when you're just starting to heal."

Kurt frowned, wobbling a little as he stands.

"How'd you know I broke my leg?" he said, swinging his bag over his shoulder.

Mark chuckled quietly. "Your Dad and my parents still talk sometimes," he said, looking over at him with an expression that's far too familiar for Kurt's liking. "They worry about you. They always liked you, Kurt."

"They barely talked to me," Kurt mumbled.

"Well, they still liked you," Mark said with a shrug. "Probably because of all the raving I did about you." He laughed and Kurt suddenly felt more confused than ever.

"I still don't understand why you're *here*," Kurt muttered, limping slowly along beside him.

Mark shifted his books in his arms, not looking at him as he replied. "I dunno," he said. "The position was up for grabs and I guess...I missed you."

Kurt feels a surge of anger rush through him as they reached the nurse's office and Mark held the door open for him.

"Don't pull that shit on me, Mark," Kurt growled, not entering the room. "I'm not fucking stupid. Do you have any idea what you did to me?"

Mark's smile faded slowly off his face, replaced by a guilty expression.

"I'm sorry, Kurt," he said softly. "I...I shouldn't have broken up with you like that." Kurt snorted. "But I did it for *you*, Kurt. I didn't want you here, waiting for me, while I was off at college. It wasn't fair to you."

"Really?" Kurt snapped. "Because if I remember correctly, you said it was 'fun while it lasted' and left me alone to spend the next three months trying to rebuild my fucking life. Yeah, really great way to do what's best for me, Mark."

"Kurt..."

"No," Kurt said sharply, shaking his head, his leg aching beneath him. "No, don't even try to pull me back in, Mark. It's not going to work. I've suffered enough already because of you and I'm *done*."

He limped past Mark into the office, glaring at everyone as he waited for the nurse to take him back to the small room with several beds pushed against the wall for sick students, though they were currently all empty. He tried to protest when she allowed Mark to follow him back, but she left to answer her ringing phone before he had a chance.

"Go away, Mark," he grumbled as he plopped down on one of the beds, crossing his arms and glaring at his shoes.

"Kurt, don't you think you're being a tad immature?" Mark said with the slightest air of superiority.

"Says the asshole who made me love him and then dropped me like a bad habit," Kurt snapped, glowering at him.

"I *still* love you," Mark said quietly.

Kurt opened his mouth to reply but nothing came out, words sticking in his throat as Mark gave him a small, private sort of smile, setting his books down and taking a small step closer to him.

The door swung open and Blaine burst into the room, breathing heavily and looking anxious as his eyes fell on Kurt.

"Kurt!" he cried, hurrying to his side. "Are you okay? Someone in French said they heard you fell and hurt your leg. God, I *knew* we shouldn't have let you off your crutches yet! You should have let me walk you to class. Does it hurt?"

"Blaine," Kurt said, talking over him and smiling at his worry, his hair falling loose from the gel holding it down. He took Blaine's hand in both his own and gave him a reassuring look. "I'm fine."

Blaine let out a slow sigh of relief, cupping Kurt's cheek in his hand and pressing a kiss to his forehead.

"You're going to give me grey hair, you know?" he mumbled, tucking a stray strand of hair behind Kurt's ear.

Kurt rolled his eyes, though Blaine's presence was indescribably calming to him at the moment, and pulled at Blaine's collar to force him into a kiss.

Blaine pulled back after a moment, nuzzling against him for a few seconds before straightening up and smoothing down his shirt as he turned to Mark.

"Thank you," he said with a warm smile. "For getting him here. I bet he would have stayed there trying to get everything himself if you hadn't come along. He's not very good at accepting help." He grinned over at Kurt as he huffed quietly. Striding across the room to Mark, he held out his hand. "Blaine Anderson."

Mark lifted an eyebrow as he looked down at Blaine's hand, though he didn't accept it and Blaine let it fall limply to his side after a few seconds.

"Who's this, Kurt?" Mark said, looking around Blaine to Kurt with an unreadable expression.

"He just told you," Kurt snapped. "Blaine. He's my boyfriend, Mark."

Mark's eyebrows rose higher up his forehead as he surveyed Blaine with an amused look. "Boyfriend, huh?"

Blaine's brow furrowed at Mark's name, his expression slowly changing from confusion to realisation to anger.

"What the hell are you doing here?" he said, voice low and rough like Kurt had never heard before.

Mark clucked his tongue softly. "Easy now, kiddo-" Blaine snarled. "Don't want to wrinkle your cardigan." Mark smiled, apparently unaffected by Blaine's reaction. He turned back to Kurt. "I thought you liked taller guys, Kurt? That's what you always told me. Or is what Puck says true? He said you started hooking up with anything that moved." He clucked his tongue again. "Really, you shouldn't be wasting a body like yours on...*that*." He eyed Blaine with an amused expression.

"I don't think it's really up to you who Kurt lets touch him anymore," Blaine growled, fists clenched at his sides. Kurt prayed he had the self-restraint not to hit Mark because assaulting a teacher would get him suspended, if not expelled, for sure.

Mark hummed quietly, eyes back on Kurt again. "You look good," he said. "Even with the leg."

"Shut up, Mark," Kurt spat. "I don't want to hear it. I don't know why the hell you came back but if it was for me, you're out of luck. I'm with Blaine now."

"I suppose you're in love," Mark sneered.

"Yes," Blaine said immediately. His gaze snapped to Kurt when he remained silent, brow furrowing.

"I-yes," Kurt said lamely. He cleared his throat and nodded. "Yes. I...I love Blaine."

"You sound so sure about that," Mark said with the faintest of smirks.

"Oh fuck off," Blaine snapped, taking a step closer to Mark, who looked more amused by the second. "He doesn't *want* you. *Get over it*."

Mark simply glanced at Kurt before shrugging.

"Right," he said, with the air of one preparing himself, clearing his throat and squaring his shoulders as he turned to Blaine, "you need to know something about Kurt. Kurt used to be a sweet, innocent little boy, quiet and shy and just *adorable*. Then he met me. And that little act flew out the window so quickly, it would've made your gelled-up head spin. Kurt Hummel is an *animal*. I can just *tell* that you're a virgin and if *you're* not satisfying him, someone else is."

Blaine snarled and took a sharp step forward, shifting on the spot like it was taking all of his self-control not to rush at Mark and smash his face in. Kurt struggled to his feet, wobbling dangerously on his aching leg.

"Just *go*, Mark!" he cried, grabbing for the wall when his leg gave out from under him.

Blaine hurried to catch him before he toppled, still glowering at Mark as he wrapped one arm around Kurt's waist and steadied him.

Mark flashed a final, dazzling grin in Kurt's direction before leaving, stopping at the door to call back, "See you in History, Kurt!"

There was a long beat of silence during which Blaine glared at the spot Mark had disappeared, breathing heavily and gripping painfully tight around Kurt's waist.

"Blaine," Kurt grunted, wincing as his leg throbbed.

"Oh...crap, sorry," Blaine muttered, helping him onto the bed with a concerned look, though Kurt could still see the anger lingering behind it.

Kurt stretched out his leg with a grimace, rubbing his thigh as Blaine pulled away from him and paced aimlessly around the room.

"Hey you...you know it's not true, right?" Kurt said anxiously.

Blaine stopped and looked over at him and Kurt was shocked to see the irritation in his eyes directed straight at him.

"I-I'm not cheating on you," Kurt said hurriedly. "I'd never do-"

"Why didn't you say it right away?" Blaine interrupted.

"I...what?" Kurt said, blinking in confusion.

"When...*he* was making fun of our relationship and said...said we were in love, I said yes right away and you..." he shook his head, muttering something Kurt couldn't quite make out, though he caught the phrase 'being stupid'.

"Blaine," Kurt said, shifting uncomfortably. "You...you know I love you. I'm just...not good at that romantic...*stuff*. And plus, Mark had just told me he still loved me so I-"

"What?" Blaine shouted, rounding on him with a look of almost manic fury.

Kurt drew back, wide-eyed, from him. "Blaine...calm down," he said. "It's not...not a big deal. A little bit of a shock but...he's so full of shit, his eyes should be brown so don't listen to him, don't believe anything he says. I don't love him, Blaine. I love you."

That softness of his voice seemed to calm Blaine and some of the tension faded from his shoulders as he sighed.

"*Asshole*," he mumbled, raking a hand through his hair despite the gel. "What's he even doing here?"

"TA for Mrs. Abrams," Kurt grumbled, wincing as he rubbed out the stiffness in his calf. "So I get to deal with him every day. Whopty-fucking-doo."

Blaine's anger melted from his features and he walked over to kneel gently at Kurt's side, pushing his hands away to massage his calf for him.

"Let me," he said, smiling and kissing Kurt's knee as he kneaded at the sore muscle. "You sure you're okay?"

"I'm fine, Blaine," Kurt replied, softening a little at Blaine's look as they shared a private smile. He leaned down to catch Blaine's lips against his own, resting one hand on the side of Blaine's neck as he sighed, pulling back with a wet smack a few seconds later.

"So I guess you definitely won't be dancing tomorrow night then?" Blaine said, setting his chin on Kurt's knee as he peered up at him.

Kurt smiled, shaking his head. "Doesn't seem like the best idea to me, no," he muttered. "But we can still go. I know you wanted to."

"Well I hope so," Blaine said dramatically. "I've already paid for my tuxedo and the limo and three dozen pink roses!"

He laughed at Kurt's mortified expression.

"I'm kidding," he said. "There isn't a tux or a limo."

"And the roses?" Kurt said suspiciously.

"Not three dozen," Blaine said coyly.

"Blaine Anderson, if you got me roses, I'm warning you right not, you can throw them in the trash because that's where they'll end up."

Blaine hung his head, jutting his lip out in a pout as he looked up through his lashes with a pleading expression.

"Oh my *god*, you actually got me roses?" Kurt said in disbelief.

Blaine nodded at his knees. "I can get rid of them if you don't want them," he mumbled, looking hurt.

"N-no," Kurt said hastily. "Um, I mean...you already got them so...yeah, whatever. I guess they'll stop the house smelling like Finn's feet."

Blaine smiled, resting his head on his knee and releasing a small, content sigh.

"I love you," he said, fingers trailing up and down the back of Kurt's thigh.

"You know if you keep saying it all the time it won't be as special," Kurt said as he cocked an eyebrow.

"Mmm, it's true though," Blaine said with a grin.

Kurt rolled his eyes. "Try and contain yourself a little bit," he muttered as the nurse walked in and Blaine was forced to pull away from him.

Kurt took his pain medication, which he could only get at school from the nurse directly because of the prescription, and listened silently to her scolding him about being off his crutches earlier than he should be. He managed to allow her to let him go after only ten minutes of lecturing, insisting he wanted to get back to French before it ended, though he actually ended up pulling Blaine into the bathroom the moment they left the office and spending the rest of the period making out in the handicap stall.

"I can't skip another class," Blaine mumbled when the bell rang twenty minutes later.

"Mmm, but you *want* to," Kurt said, grinning and burying his face in Blaine's neck, kissing slowly over the already damp skin. "You standing up to Mark like that was *hot*. Come on, babe. You know you do."

"Maybe, but my grades actually matter to me so..."

"Asshole," Kurt grunted, pulling back and scowling at him, though he couldn't stay mad for long when Blaine's hair was rumpled the way it was, his cheeks pink and his lips swollen and shiny. "Fine."

"We'll get you on the honour roll yet," Blaine said, kissing him brightly on the cheek.

"Don't count on it," Kurt grumbled as he followed Blaine out of the bathroom, smiling very faintly at his laughter.

"Where's your mom?" Kurt asked as he shrugged his jacket off and hung it over the coat stand in Blaine's hallway.

"Work," Blaine called back from the kitchen where he was throwing away their empty coffee cups. "She doesn't get back for a few more hours." He returned and raised his eyebrows at Kurt's suddenly flirtatious expression. "Your libido is insatiable," he muttered.

"Untrue. We haven't do anything more than heavy making out for *days*, so I think that I have a right to be horny."

Blaine obviously couldn't stop the small twitch of his lips as he leaned forward to kiss him gently. Kurt barely had time to open his mouth before Blaine was pulling him away and leading him into the living room.

"No," Kurt protested, "more of that. He tugged at Blaine's hand, pulling him back around so he could reattach their lips. He didn't hesitate this time to open his mouth immediately and bite gently at Blaine's lower lip in the hope that he would get the hint and open his too.

"As nice as this is," Blaine said, pulling away again and ignoring Kurt's whine of dissatisfaction, "you really need to get the weight off your leg and I don't fancy hauling you upstairs so will you *please* sit down on the couch?"

Kurt sat with a sigh, falling heavily onto the cushions, and stretched his legs out, using the coffee table as a footrest. Blaine rolled his eyes at his boyfriend's strop as he sat down next to him with slightly more grace.

Kurt was immediately shifting onto his side and kissing up the column of Blaine's neck, stopping just under his jaw to suck a small hickey there. Blaine let him, his arms wrapping around Kurt's waist and pulling him closer so the angle was less awkward. Kurt hummed happily into Blaine's skin as he finished the hickey with a parting nip and pushed himself up on his arms so he could lean over Blaine's chest to give him a proper kiss.

Kurt's mouth was opened and insistent – wanting to get Blaine to the same irresistible, debauched mess he had been in the bathroom as soon as possible – his lips moving against Blaine forcefully, and his tongue licking into Blaine's mouth the second it opened. His hands wound into Blaine's carefully gelled hair, tugging lightly.

"You're messing up my hair," Blaine protested, pulling back a few millimetres.

Kurt smirked. "I know," he whispered before sealing their lips together again.

"Kurt," Blaine moaned as Kurt swung his leg more securely over Blaine's thighs so he was straddling him, his body lined up against Blaine's and ground his hips down. Blaine's hands slid down from Kurt's hips to his ass, squeezing as he pulled him closer and moaning at the friction.

His hands pulled more desperately as he tried to get Blaine's face closer to his as he lost himself in the feeling of their mouths moving together and the feeling of Blaine's tongue against his and Blaine's fingers digging into his hips and the way his cock was pressing against Kurt's through the fabric of their jeans and the smell of Blaine's cologne and just *Blaine, Blaine, Blaine*.

"Kurt," Blaine said again, but this time it wasn't a moan of pleasure, it was a signal of some kind of impending seriousness.

"No, don't say anything, more making out."

"*Kurt.*" Blaine pushed Kurt's shoulders, forcing him away so there was enough space between their lips that Kurt couldn't just shut him up again. "Are you sure we shouldn't talk?"

"Talk about what?"

"About today. About *Mark*."

"I thought we already talked about that in school," Kurt said as he strained against Blaine's hold, puckering his lips insistently.

"I know, I just..." Blaine paused and bit his lip. Kurt could see the insecurity and uncertainty flash across his face as he dropped his gaze to his hands and shrugged.

Kurt stopped resisting Blaine's hold and sat back on his lap; Blaine's hands fell from Kurt's shoulders uselessly. Kurt rolled his eyes and covered them with his, threading his fingers through Blaine's and squeezing.

"The reason I don't want to talk about it was because we went over every important thing today at school, and I really don't want to spend my free time with *you* discussing my ex who means nothing to me. I would much prefer to think about how amazing and sexy my boyfriend is, okay?"

Blaine smiled at him, but Kurt could see the force element to the twitch of the lips. He sighed and kissed him lightly.

"I... I love you, Blaine," he said quietly, pointedly not breaking the eye contact, no matter how much his mind tried to recoil away from the emotion. "And Mark's not going to change that."

Blaine's grinned goofily in response, happily pulling Kurt close again as he peppered kisses all over his face. "I love you too. So much. I *love* you."

"Ssh," Kurt said, "remember what I said about not wearing it out?"

"Can't help it, I love you too much," Blaine answered and kissed him soundly.

"Uh huh, does this mean that I get to come now?" Kurt asked as he clenched his thighs around Blaine's hips and thrusting downwards, his cock responding quickly to the friction.

Blaine groaned and matched Kurt's rhythm, thrusting up while simultaneously grabbing Kurt's ass and pulling him down so they could barely move but the pressure was so good that Kurt couldn't really bring himself to care as he desperately rutted down.

"Going to ruin your pants," Blaine panted out as his head fell onto Kurt's shoulder, turning it inwards so he could kiss Kurt's neck weakly. The featherlike brush of his lips against his sensitive skin caused Kurt's back to arch, pressing his chest to Blaine's.

"Don't care," he moaned in reply, "I'll borrow some of yours, I know how much you, *ah*" – Blaine's erection thrust against his particularly hard – "you like seeing me in your c-clothes. *Shit*, Blaine, do that again."

He could feel Blaine's lips pull up into a smile against his neck, his tongue soothing the skin that he had just bitten sharply.

"Blaine," Kurt growled, trying to push his boyfriend's face further into his neck, "stop teasing and do that *agai...*"

He trailed off into a moan of pleasure as Blaine's teeth sunk into the hickey again and his hips stuttered a broken rhythm against Blaine's. The sharp, fleeting flare of pain contrasting with the steady pleasure rippling through his lower body as his muscles tensed in anticipation because he was so close to coming it was unfair.

Blaine moaned and whimpered underneath him as he stopped thrusting into Kurt's erection as he came, throwing his head back as his eyes shut. Kurt continued to rut frantically, though he had enough sexual etiquette to shift himself slightly so he was rubbing against Blaine's hip instead of his sensitive dick.

"Blaine," Kurt groaned, drawing his boyfriend through his post-orgasm haze by grabbing his hand that had been resting limp on Kurt's ass and tugging it so it rested over the prominent bulge in his jeans. "*Do something.*"

It didn't take much; Kurt was already so on edge from the kissing and frottage and the sounds that Blaine was capable of making that it only took a few thrusts into Blaine's warm, malleable hand and he was coming hard into his briefs, his eyes falling shut as he concentrated simply on how fucking *great* it felt. He fell slack against the warm body underneath him, his hands trapped in an uncomfortable way but he couldn't really bring himself to care.

"That probably wasn't good for your leg," Blaine said, pushing at Kurt's shoulder and forcing him to roll off Blaine and back onto the couch.

"Mmm," Kurt hummed distractedly in agreement as his come-covered pants stuck to his skin, "after you get me some new pants you can give me a leg massage."

"Yes, sir," Blaine teased. He groaned as he got up from the couch and readjusted his pants so they touched as little skin as possible as he moved in the direction of the stairs.

Kurt stared at the TV remote of the coffee table while he waited for Blaine to return, wandering if he could be bothered to push himself up to grab it. His decision was made when Blaine entered the room again, chucking a fresh pair of boxers at Kurt before seeing the direction of his stare and rolling his eyes, scooping up the remote as he sat.

"So about tomorrow," Kurt said as wiggled out of his pants and stained underwear, knowing that Blaine would be blushing and pointedly averting his gaze. "What do you actually expect me to do at this dance?"

Blaine shrugged and grabbed the underwear Kurt had left on the floor as he zippered his jeans again. Kurt relaxed, flicking the TV on and propped his leg up on the table again. He felt distinctly refreshed after changing pants, but his muscles were aching worse than before.

"Just sit next to me and talk for the evening. Maybe dance a little bit if your leg is up to it."

"Nothing embarrassingly cheesy, though?" Kurt double-checked.

Blaine sighed. "No, don't worry, I'll make sure to restrain myself whenever I'm feeling mildly affectionate."

"Not like that," Kurt said. "You can kiss me whenever you want or compliment how stunning I look as many times as you like, just try to avoid cheap-budget, romantic comedy clichés. Deal?"

"Deal."

"And I wouldn't say no to a lap dance either," Kurt added thoughtfully. He could almost hear Blaine rolling his eyes as he sighed.

Chapter Twenty-One

Plucking at the collar of his shirt, Kurt screwed up his face in scrutiny. He'd chosen a dark red button-down and a pair of black skinny jeans to wear that evening. His left leg still hadn't regained all the muscle it had had before the accident, giving him a slightly uneven look.

"God, I look like a freak," he mumbled, glaring at his legs.

He limped over to his crutches, tucking one of them under his left arm as he hobbled downstairs. His father and Carole had already left to go to dinner and a movie and Finn had gone to pick up Rachel so Kurt was left alone to wait for Blaine.

Sitting down on the couch, he checked the clock, fidgeting in his seat and tapping his foot against his crutch. He wasn't really excited about the dance itself, he hated that sort of thing, and Valentine's Day was possibly his least favourite holiday of the year, but he'd done very little with Blaine outside of school and hanging at each other's houses for the past few months because of his physical restrictions so he was actually looking forward to being somewhat social, if only to have an excuse to be all over Blaine in public and show everyone that they both wanted to be in the relationship. For whatever reason, most people still seemed to think Kurt was using Blaine for sex and that Blaine was too naive to see what was going on.

The doorbell rang and he hobbled to the front door, his crutch under one arm. He leaned heavily on it as he opened the door, blinking in surprise as Blaine held out a bouquet of dark red roses.

It wasn't the roses that were the shock though, he'd known about those, it was Blaine himself. He hadn't gelled his hair back, leaving his soft curls loose save a small amount of product to keep them off his face. He wasn't dressed in his usual wardrobe of cardigans and bowties, either, instead wearing a black button-down, a dark red skinny tie, and a pair of dark jeans, the fit of which had Kurt openly staring at his crotch.

"Um, can I come in?" Blaine said anxiously after a full minute's silence.

"Huh? Oh...right," Kurt said, taking a few steps back and allowing Blaine to walk by him to give himself a few seconds to gape at his ass.

"You look hot," he blurted out loudly. Blaine blinked and cocked an eyebrow as he turned to face him.

"Thanks?" he said, giving him a curious look. "You look nice, too."

"Oh...thanks," Kurt muttered, tugging at his sleeve. "Those are...um...pretty?" He nodded to the roses in Blaine's hand.

Blaine grinned and held them out to him. Kurt tilted his head forward to take a brief sniff, smiling and nodding at the fragrance.

"Yeah, they're...nice," he said. He suddenly felt incredibly awkward. How did one react to flowers anyway?

"Glad you like them," Blaine said, glancing around the entry. "Um...where can I put them?"

"Oh, there's a glass in the kitchen," Kurt said, nodding down the hall.

He waited for a few minutes as Blaine went to the kitchen, the sound of the sink running drifting down the hall.

"Ready to go?" Blaine said when he'd rejoined him in the entry, beaming brightly.

"Yeah," Kurt said, allowing Blaine to wrap his arm around his waist and help him out to his car and into the front seat.

He shoved his crutch against the door and tried to shift into a more comfortable position as Blaine climbed into his seat and started the car, flicking on the heat.

"Do you need a blanket or something?" Blaine said. "You know...for your leg?"

"I'm fine," Kurt mumbled, frowning out the window.

"What's wrong?" Blaine said as they pulled out of the driveway and pulled onto the main road.

"Nothing," Kurt grunted. He could feel Blaine's eyes on him as they stopped at a stoplight and sighed. "I'm fine, Blaine."

"This doesn't have anything to do with Mark being back, does it?" Blaine said, his hand coming to rest on Kurt's thigh, squeezing gently.

"No," Kurt lied, shoving his phone a little deeper into his pocket.

"Kurt."

"Okay, fine," Kurt said, sighing. "He sent me a text earlier saying he was one of the faculty chaperones and I *really* don't want to deal with him tonight. I just...I wanted to have a good night with you, you know?"

Blaine's fingers tightened a little around the steering wheel and Kurt's leg.

"I didn't know he was going to be there," he said, voice lowering slightly and eyes darkening. He blinked a few times and turned to Kurt with a small smile. "Do you want to skip it? Just hang out at my house or something?"

"No," Kurt said sternly. "I'm not letting him ruin this for us."

"But you hate Valentine's Day," Blaine said, sounding vaguely amused.

"But I...like being with you," Kurt mumbled, frowning and folding his arms. "And I'm still banking on a lapdance."

"Ah," Blaine said with a faint grin. "I see."

Kurt suppressed a smirk, resting his forehead against the cool window and allowing Blaine to thread their fingers together over the console.

The parking lot was already crowded when they turned into the school, Blaine pulling the car as close to the curb as possible to allow Kurt out as he parked. Kurt hobbled over to the double doors, scowling at people as they passed and shivering in the cold as he waited for Blaine.

"You look great."

Kurt closed his eyes and took a deep breath before turning to Mark, who was leaning against the doorway, propping the door open for a group of giggling girls.

"What?" Kurt grumbled.

"I said you look great," Mark repeated, standing and moving towards him.

"I heard that, you *idiot*," Kurt snapped, glaring at him. "I mean what do you want? I'm here with Blaine you know."

"Yeah I saw," Mark said, smirking. "Your little boyfriend must had a rich daddy to afford a car like that."

"What's it matter to you anyway?" Kurt said.

"Well, it just seems to me that dating a boy like you would be the perfect way to get back at his parents or to get what he wants out of them," Mark said, shrugging.

"Shut up, Mark," Kurt growled. "You don't know Blaine. You don't know what he's had to deal with or his family or any of that so just...just shut *up* about him. I don't want you anymore, Mark."

"But you still love me," Mark said quietly, taking a step closer to him and glancing at where Blaine was approaching from across the lot. "Don't you?"

Kurt opened his mouth to retort but his words stuck in his throat just like they had the day before when Mark had told him he still love him. But Blaine was suddenly there, sliding his arm around Kurt's waist and smiling, though it didn't reach his eyes as he looked at Mark.

"Ready to head in?" he said brightly to Kurt. His voice cooled when he turned to Mark again. "Hi, Mark."

"Blaine." Mark nodded, one corner of his mouth lifting in a smirk.

"Let's just go," Kurt muttered bitterly, shifting his crutch and allowing Blaine to hold the door open for him.

"So what did Mark want?" Blaine said briskly, raising his voice over the music as they entered the cafeteria, which had been decorated in so much pink, red, and white, Kurt thought he might be sick.

"To be an asshole," Kurt grunted, sitting down heavily at one of the tables crowded in one corner of the room, mostly empty as the majority of the students were currently dancing beneath the dimmed lights. He suddenly remembered why he hated this sort of thing so much. And now he couldn't even dance with Blaine because of his damn leg.

"Do you want something to drink?" Blaine said, craning his neck to peer through the crowd at the snack table.

"Not really," Kurt said, tugging on Blaine's arm to pull him back into his seat and sliding his fingers through his hair. "There's a lot more fun we could have right here."

He kissed Blaine's jaw and nuzzled his ear.

"Kurt," Blaine murmured, pulling back and giving him a reproving look.

"Oh, like anyone's paying attention," Kurt said, pulling Blaine back into a hungry kiss, sucking lightly on his lower lip and slipping his tongue across his teeth. He ran his hand up Blaine's thigh, rubbing his thumb along the seam.

"Kurt," Blaine scolded, breaking away gently. "Not now. We have plenty of time to do this later."

"Is that a promise?" Kurt mumbled, kneading the inside of Blaine's thigh.

Blaine smiled. "I can't really make a promise," he said, lifting Kurt's hand from his thigh and twining their fingers together. "But we did get permission for you to spend the night at my house so maybe we can work something out. Can't we just...just have a good time without any of that?"

Kurt took in his hopeful expression and sighed, slumping back in his chair moodily.

"Fine," he grumbled. Blaine's face fell a little and he forced himself to smile, pressing a soft kiss to Blaine's lips. "Yeah. Sure, Blaine. We'll have...tons of fun. Um, I think I *could* use a drink, actually. But why don't go hang out with Rachel for a few first. I can see her trying to get your attention." He nodded towards where Rachel was waving frantically from across the room, where she was standing with Finn and a few other members of the Glee Club.

"Do you want to come with me?" Blaine said. "I can...help you stand or...whatever you need."

"Nah," Kurt said, shaking his head. "You go have fun. I'll be here when you're finished and we'll figure something out. Maybe you'll change your mind about that lapdance by then."

Blaine laughed and gave him a quick kiss before hurrying through the throng towards Rachel and the others. Kurt watched Rachel hug him, casting Kurt a faintly disapproving look over Blaine's shoulder, which Kurt readily countered with a glare. He watched them talk for a few minutes before they moved towards the snack table together and disappeared from view.

"Where'd your boyfriend run off to?"

"Go away, Puck," Kurt muttered, rolling his eyes as Puck plopped down next to him and shoved a flask into his hands. "What's this?"

"Does it matter?" Puck said as Kurt tentatively sniffed the contents of the flask and pulled a face. "It'll make this crapfest a lot more fun."

"Good point," Kurt muttered, taking a swig from the flask and grimacing at the burn. He coughed and passed the flask back to Puck, who took a gulp from it before handing it to him again.

"So," Puck said, turning in his seat to face him. "Guess you saw Mark was back."

Kurt grunted in reply and took a large gulp from the flask.

"Have you talked to him?"

"Why do you care, Puck?" Kurt said, glowering at him.

Puck shrugged. "Hey, you guys were happy together and—"

"Why do want me to be with him?" Kurt said loudly, causing a few girls dancing near them to yelp and cast him an affronted look.

"Whoa, easy, dude," Puck said, holding up his hands in defense. "I'm just saying that you and Mark...you guys were cool. Mark always threw the best parties and...you were *fun* back then. Back before—"

"Before Blaine?" Kurt said coolly as he thrust the flask back into his hand.

"Well...yeah," Puck said with a shrug, slipping the flask into his pocket.

"Listen, Puck," Kurt began, his patience quickly waning. "You don't know everything that happened between me and Mark and I don't plan on telling it to you. But I'm happy with Blaine so...just...give it up. Please. I don't want Mark back and I'm never going to so drop it."

Puck gave him a steady look, eyes flicking across the room to where Blaine was laughing and dancing with Rachel and Quinn.

"Whatever, dude," he said, sighing as he stood up. "I'm gonna go find some hot chicks to dance with."

Kurt rolled his eyes as he disappeared into the crowd. He fixed his gaze across the room at Blaine, smiling faintly as he watched him dance.

"Dork," he muttered when Blaine spun around, twirling Quinn as he did. Really, he was nothing like anyone Kurt had ever dated, and definitely not like Mark. But he thought, no, he *knew* Blaine was good for him. Maybe his friends didn't think so because he was no longer smoking or shoplifting and Blaine's friends didn't think so because Kurt was constantly trying to feel him up and skipping class with him but it was true.

He hated to say it and the cliché of it all but Blaine was, in fact, making him a better person. He wasn't about to change his entire personality because of him but he didn't feel like as much of a jackass anymore with Blaine around.

Not to mention Blaine was driving him crazy with the whole 'taking it slow' thing in the sex department. Kurt had jerked himself off so many times since they'd started dating he was afraid he might start chaffing. Though he was sure that by the time Blaine finally *did* agree to have sex, it would be worth the wait if the quality of his hand jobs was any indication.

He started to feel the alcohol kicking in after fifteen minutes, warmth rising in his belly and seeping out through his veins. Just as he was about to force himself to his feet and drag Blaine to the nearest bathroom, Mark sat down in the seat next to him, adjusting his tie and smiling warmly.

"Go 'way," Kurt slurred, swaying a little as he glared at him.

"You know I could have you kicked out," Mark said. "You *are* a minor after all."

"I'm eighteen," Kurt mumbled, blinking to try and get him back in focus.

"You're under twenty-one," Mark said. "And pretty obviously drunk."

"I'm not *drunk*," Kurt shot back.

"Tipsy then," Mark said, lounging back in his chair and giving him a fond look. "You always were cute when you were drunk. The way your hair would start to come loose and fall over your forehead and you'd push it back off your face. And you'd always curl up under my arm on the couch and kiss the side of my neck and I'd rub your back until you fell asleep."

"Stop," Kurt said quietly, shaking his head to try and clear the memories that were starting to resurface, the moments they'd been wrapped around each other and nuzzling together, heads fogged with alcohol.

"And Homecoming," Mark said reminiscently. "That's when I asked you out, remember?"

"So that's why I hate dances," Kurt mumbled.

Mark scooted his chair a little closer to him and Kurt turned away.

"Do you remember the first time we had sex?" he said softly.

"No," Kurt snapped. "I was drunk. Just like you."

"No, not...not that time," Mark said, shaking his head and laying his hand on Kurt's forearm. "The first time we...I dunno, made love, I guess." Kurt snorted. "You have to remember it, Kurt. We were sober and my parents were out of town and—"

"Stop it," Kurt said, blinking away angry tears.

"—And...and we spent hours just...touching each other and...god, you were so beautiful, Kurt. The way you looked and sounded and...everything about it...about *you*...was perfect. I'll never forget about that, Kurt. Never. You were my first too, you know." He rubbed Kurt's arm lightly and leaned closer to him. "I miss you, Kurt. So much."

"Please stop," Kurt choked, shaking his head hard.

"Kurt." Mark brushed his thumb gently over Kurt's cheek to catch the tears sliding down his face. "Don't you miss it? Don't you miss...us? I screwed up, Kurt. But I swear, I...I'm better. I changed. And I came back here to this...stupid fucking town. For you."

"You can't do this to me, Mark," Kurt said, pulling away from him. "You can't just barge back into my life and assume I need you to pick up the pieces for me. I already did that. I fixed myself, Mark. I don't need you to do it too. And...and I'm with Blaine—"

"You don't really love him, Kurt," Mark murmured, brushing his knuckles over Kurt's cheek.

"Yes, I *do*, Mark," Kurt said firmly. "And he doesn't care about partying and—and drinking or any of that. He just wants me to be happy. And I am happy, Mark. Blaine makes me happy. And that's without sex and any of that stuff we used to do. You really fucked me up when you left, Mark. But I'm over that now. And I'm over you."

"If you're over me, why haven't you pushed me off yet?" Mark said, one hand still on Kurt's arm and the other lightly caressing his cheek.

Kurt forced his arm away and struggled to his feet, dashing his hand across his eyes.

"I just want you to leave me alone, Mark," he said, glancing in Blaine's direction and praying he hadn't seen any of the exchange. He grabbed his crutch and hobbled away from Mark.

"Happy Valentine's Day, Kurt," Mark called after him.

Kurt resisted the urge to turn around and hit him and continued making his way towards Blaine, elbowing people as he fought through the crowd.

"Hey, what's up?" Blaine said, raising his voice over the music as Kurt approached. "Did you want your drink now? I saw Puck brought you a drink earlier but I didn't—"

"Can we go?" Kurt said quietly.

Blaine stopped dancing, his expression turning serious as he took in Kurt's bright eyes and streaked face.

"What's wrong?" he said, laying a hand on Kurt's arm.

"Can we go?" Kurt repeated. "I just...I want to be with you. Just you. Please."

Blaine nodded, looking worried. "Yeah," he said earnestly. "Sure." He turned back to Rachel and the others, who were giving Kurt curious looks. "Hey, I've got to take Kurt home his...his leg is bothering him so...um, we'll see you guys Monday, yeah?"

They gave their collective goodbyes and Kurt waited for Blaine to slip his arm around his waist to help him outside into the chill air.

"So," Blaine said when they were walking across the parking lot towards his car. "Where did you want to go?"

"Just...to your house," Kurt muttered, wincing as he put pressure on his leg as he climbed into Blaine's car.

Blaine slid into the driver's seat and pulled the door closed, slipping the keys into the ignition and starting the car. He turned in his seat to face Kurt, reaching across the console to take his hand.

"What's wrong, Kurt?" he said gently, laying his other hand on Kurt's cheek where, only a few minutes before, Mark's hand had been. Kurt didn't want to recoil from Blaine's touch, though. It was warm and comforting and he leaned into it, closing his eyes and swallowing back the lump in his throat.

"Kurt?"

Kurt sniffed and blinked, his lips trembling as he tried to stop himself from crying. He hated this helpless, weakened feeling and he had even more than Blaine was seeing him this way.

"Kurt, you don't have to be ashamed of whatever you're feeling right now," Blaine said, stroking his hand. "Just tell me what's wrong. That's why I'm here."

"It's Mark," Kurt said at last.

"What about him?" Blaine said, voice tightening.

Kurt shrugged, staring down at his lap.

"Kurt."

"He was...I don't know...trying to get me back or...something, I don't know," Kurt said, shaking his head. "Some of the things he said...it made me think about how...how shitty I felt after he left. How screwed up I was because of him. And I...I *hated* him because I still loved him and he...he..."

He rubbed his eyes hard with his fingers and lowered his head to try and hide his face but Blaine placed his fingers lightly under his chin to force him to meet his eyes.

"It's okay to be upset, Kurt," he said softly. "I'm not going to think any less of you for it. I still love you."

Kurt choked back a sob.

"I love you too," he whispered shakily. "Can we...can we go? I just want to go to your house and...be close to you."

"Whatever you want," Blaine said, smiling as he leaned across the console and kissed him, brushing his fingers through his hair and over the back of his neck before pulling away.

They rode in silence, Blaine rubbing slow circles over Kurt's knee with his fingertips as they went, arriving at Blaine's house twenty minutes later. Blaine's mother had been gone for work for the past few days and wouldn't be back until Sunday night, leaving the house to Blaine for the weekend, something Kurt had been planning on taking full advantage of, though now he just wanted to curl up in Blaine's bed and burrow into his arms and forget about Mark.

Blaine helped him inside and upstairs to his bedroom, carefully sitting him down on the edge of the bed and pulling off his shoes.

"How's your leg feeling?" he said, kneading Kurt's foot through his sock and working up his calf.

"Better," Kurt said, rubbing his sore thigh. He wound his fingers around Blaine's tie and pulled him up into a slow kiss, sighing against his lips and sliding his hand over the small of Blaine's back.

They broke apart for air after a few seconds but Kurt kept his hold on Blaine's tie steady, brushing their noses together and closing his eyes. He wet his lips, smiling at the taste of Blaine lingering there. Opening his eyes, he looked steadily into Blaine's honey-coloured ones.

"I love you," he breathed, moving his hand from Blaine's back to his face. "I...love *you*, Blaine. More than anything."

"I know," Blaine said, pressing a short kiss to the corner of his mouth. "I love you, too, Kurt. And I will *never* think you're...weak or anything like that for letting your walls down around me like this. If anything, it makes me love you more. I know you'll probably never be as open about this sort of thing as I am but that's okay. I don't care about that. As long as you know I'll still love you either way."

Kurt whimpered quietly as he fought back a sob, fresh tears sliding down his cheeks. He leaned back, falling slowly onto the bed and pulling Blaine down with him, forcing him to climb onto the mattress, knees planted on either side of Kurt's thighs.

He smiled, caressing Kurt's face with his knuckles. Kurt heard his shoes hit the floor as he toed them off, loosening his tie and slipping it over his head to toss it aside.

"I love you," he whispered again, lowering his head and kissing the side of Kurt's neck. "I love you." He unbuttoned the top button of Kurt's shirt and kissed his collarbone. "I love you."

Kurt closed his eyes and tilted his head back, biting his lip as Blaine slowly worked open the buttons on his shirt until the fabric was hanging open over his chest, kissing softly across his skin and whispering 'I love you' after each brush of his lips.

He nuzzled against the hollow of Kurt's hip, breathing warmly across it as Kurt slid his fingers through his hair, taking sharp, shallow breaths through his nose.

"B-Blaine, I-I—"

"Shh," Blaine said, skimming his fingers down Kurt's breastbone and the dip in his chest that ran down to his navel. Kurt could feel the hairs on his arms standing up at the touch, his eyes fluttering open and closed as Blaine continued to run his fingertips over his stomach, along the bottom of his ribcage, and across his jutting hipbones.

Blaine popped open the button of his jeans and slid the zipper down, looking up at Kurt steadily through his thick lashes as he tugged the fabric down his legs. He slid down the bed, straddling Kurt's ankles, sure not to put any pressure on Kurt's leg as he dipped his fingers under the waistband of Kurt's briefs.

"Blaine, you...you don't have to d-do this," Kurt said, stretching his hand down and brushing his trembling fingers over the side of Blaine's neck.

"I know," Blaine said quietly. "That's why I want to."

"Blaine, I—ohhh, *god*," Kurt groaned, his head pushing back into the mattress as Blaine pulled his briefs down and licked a wide strip up the underside of his cock. "B-Blaine. Blaine, you...y-you...ugh, so g-good."

Blaine slid his tongue slowly over his cock, up the sides and across the head, pressing the tip into the slit and gathering up the pre-come beading there. He wrapped his fingers around the base of Kurt's cock to lift it off his stomach, sucking lightly on the head and rubbing his thumb along the thick vein.

Kurt twisted his head to the side, curling and uncurling his toes as he rolled his shoulders back. He felt weak and light-headed from the combination of alcohol and pleasure, tightening his fingers in Blaine's hair and whimpering quietly.

"B-Blaine...god, *fuck*, you're good at that," he murmured.

Blaine smiled and kissed the head of his cock, dragging his lower lip across the ridge before lowering his head to bury his face in the seam of Kurt's thigh, breathing in slowly and kissing across the thin skin.

"You smell good," he mumbled, breath tickling across the inside of Kurt's thigh. He made to wrap his lips around Kurt's cock again but Kurt tugged on his hair and shook his head.

"No," he said breathlessly. "No, I want...I want you. I want to be...close to you."

"You're turning down a blow job?" Blaine said, lifting an eyebrow.

"Blaine...please," Kurt said quietly, voice cracking as he spoke around the thick lump in his throat.

"Right," Blaine said, nodding. "Sorry, I guess I was just...never mind." He sat up and unbuttoned his shirt, Kurt reaching up to push it slowly off his shoulders before he could take it off himself. He ran his hands down Blaine's chest, pressing his fingers into the firm muscles and hooking his fingertips in the waistband of his jeans.

Blaine stood up for a few seconds to slide his jeans off, climbing back onto the bed and tucking Kurt's hair gently behind his ear, brushing his fingertips over his temple and smiling softly.

"I love you, Blaine," Kurt whispered. "I know I don't act like it much and...and I act like an idiot a lot and I can never say the right thing or act romantic or whatever but...I do love you."

"I know you do," Blaine said, "you don't need to change who you are to show me that. And I don't expect you to."

Kurt tangled his fingers in Blaine's curls and pulled him down into another kiss, dipping his tongue into Blaine's mouth and breathing through his nose. He felt Blaine shifting, propping himself up on one arm and then the other as he slipped his briefs down his legs and kicked them off the side of the bed.

Kurt ran his hand down Blaine's back and over his ass, squeezing lightly and groaning at the feel of the soft flesh beneath his fingers. Kurt struggled for a moment to push his own briefs down his thighs. Blaine broke away with a wet smack to help him, tugging the fabric down over his knees and slipping it off his feet so they fell to the floor.

They sat there for a moment, drinking in the sight of each other in the dim moonlight that managed to fight through the cloud cover. Kurt lifted his hands and grazed his grazed fingers down Blaine's sides.

Blaine closed his eyes and sighed, smiling and arching back slightly as Kurt's hands explored his chest and stomach before gripping his hips, brushing his thumbs over his hipbones.

"Are...are you sure this is what you want?" Kurt said quietly. "W-we don't have to...I want to be close to you, is all..."

"I know," Blaine said, nodding as he opened his eyes again. "I want this too, Kurt. And I swear that...whenever I'm ready for...for sex, it's going to be just as perfect as this."

Kurt smiled.

"I'll wait," he said. "I know it doesn't seem like it much but...I will. I'll wait until you're ready, Blaine."

Blaine's smile widened and he bent over to comb his fingers through Kurt's hair. He kept his eyes locked on Kurt's as he lowered himself down and pressed their hips together, rolling his own gently and gasping quietly at the friction as their cocks, slick with pre-come, rubbed against one another.

Kurt gripped the back of Blaine's head and pushed his hips up, whining as Blaine kissed wet and hot across his neck and collarbone. His lips moved a little more sloppily as he continued to grind his hips down against Kurt's, his breath heavy over his skin.

"*Blaine.*" Kurt arched his back and groaned, digging his fingernails into the shifting muscles of Blaine's shoulders. He wrapped his uninjured leg around Blaine's hips, squirming beneath him, his nerves sparking up and crackling with pleasure.

He pressed one hand flat against Blaine's back, forcing him even closer to try and get as much of their skin touching as possible. He needed to feel Blaine's warm skin pressed against his own. He didn't even care about getting off at this point, just having him near.

He stroked his fingertips down Blaine's back and over the line of hair at the base of his neck. Blaine's hips ground down slowly; he licked slowly over Kurt's collarbone and up the tendon in his neck.

"B-Blaine, I'm so...so close."

Blaine simply sucked gently on his neck, nipping the spot running his tongue languidly over the abused skin until Kurt was sure there would be a large purpling bruise the next day.

Blaine lifted his face from Kurt's neck, eyes dark and lips wet and swollen. He rocked his hips steady into Kurt's, panting lightly as he lowered his head and kissed him hard.

Kurt dragged his fingers across Blaine's scalp, throwing his head back and releasing a low moan as he came between their bodies, hips stuttering up into Blaine's and leg tightening around his waist.

"Oh *f-fuck*, Blaine."

Blaine kissed sloppily across his jaw and sucked gently on his pulse point, where his blood was pumping frantically through his veins. He nuzzled against his throat and grunted softly, breathing Kurt's name against his skin, wet heat seeping between their bodies.

He collapsed against Kurt, panting hot against his skin and stroking his arm as they came down from their highs. He rolled off Kurt after a few seconds, smiling contentedly over at him, eyes glazed and hair damp with sweat.

"How's your leg?" he murmured. "I didn't hurt it did I?"

Kurt laughed softly, turning on his side and playing his fingers over Blaine's chest.

"My come is all over your stomach and you're worried about my leg?" he said, rolling his eyes. "I'm fine, Blaine."

"Just checking," Blaine said, sighing happily and propping himself up on his elbow to kiss him. He sat up and tugged open his dresser drawer, pulling out a few wet wipes and cleaning himself off before wiping off Kurt's stomach and hips.

"Baby wipes?" Kurt said amusedly. "Really?"

"Well, they work better than tissues," Blaine mumbled, blushing as he tossed the wipes into the trash. "I figured if you're going to be here and we're going to...do stuff...they'd be useful." He trailed off, mumbling something and blushing scarlet.

"Blaine," Kurt said, trying not to laugh as he ran his fingers down the dip of Blaine's spine. "It's not a big deal. I'm just teasing you. Now...come over here because I'm lonely."

"You never want to cuddle," Blaine said, biting his lip when he realised how accusatory it had sounded. "I mean, you—"

"Well I want to cuddle now," Kurt said, wrapping his hand over Blaine's hip. "So hurry up before I change my mind."

Blaine beamed, tugging the blankets down and helping Kurt under them before drawling in beside him and curling against his body, one arm tight around his waist.

"Mmm, spooning naked," Kurt said, smirking. "This should be fun."

Blaine grinned against the back of his neck, kissing slowly over the soft skin.

"Are you feeling better?" he murmured.

"Yeah," Kurt said, smiling. "Yeah...much better. I really just...needed that. Well, not...not *that*. Being close...to you, I guess. God, I'm shit at this sort of thing."

"I understand," Blaine said, pulling him a little closer. "You should go to sleep now. I like watching you sleep."

"Creep," Kurt muttered.

Blaine chuckled, caressing his ribcage lightly. They laid like that for a few minutes, Kurt feeling drowsiness sinking in as Blaine continued to stroke his chest.

"Kurt?"

"Hmm?"

Blaine shifted against him, warm and still slightly sweaty and smelling so much of himself that Kurt wanted to just stay there forever, wrapped up in the blankets and breathing in the scent.

"Kurt, I think...I think I'm ready," Blaine said very quietly.

"Ready?" Kurt repeated. "For what?"

Blaine cleared his throat. "For...f-for sex."

Kurt's eyes snapped open.

"But..but not *now*," Blaine said hastily. "I just mean that...when it feels...feels right...I'm ready... I love you."

Kurt smiled, shivering a little in anticipation, though he knew it could still be months until Blaine decided it was the right moment. Still though, him saying he was actually ready for it on the same night he'd given Kurt part of a blow job was a huge step forward in his mind.

"Okay," Kurt said, lacing their fingers together against his stomach. "Whenever you want, yeah?"

"I won't make you wait too long," Blaine said, the grin evident in his voice. He sighed and brushed his lips lazily over the back of Kurt's neck.

Kurt smiled sleepily and nestled back against Blaine's chest. He might not say it out but he was pretty sure Blaine already knew that he was willing to wait forever if he had to.

Chapter Twenty-Two

Smirking, Kurt twisted his fingers in Blaine's shirt and grazed his lips up the side of his neck, the already damp, reddened skin with the slightest sheen of sweat shining across it.

"W-we need to get to class," Blaine breathed, though he made no attempt to push Kurt away.

"Mmm, sure we do," Kurt murmured, hooking his fingertips under the waistband of Blaine's jeans and sliding them along the soft skin.

"Whoa, Kurt," Blaine said, placing his hands on Kurt's shoulders and pulling back in the crowded space of the bathroom stall. "We can't keep doing this here. Someone's going to catch us."

"So?" Kurt said, pouting and playing with the hem of Blaine's shirt. "There's nothing wrong with a little exhibitionism."

Blaine rolled his eyes and tucked his shirt back into his jeans, slipping past Kurt and out of the stall.

"Aw, come on," Kurt whined, following him out and wrapping his arms around Blaine's waist from behind as Blaine checked his hair in the mirror. "I don't want to go to history anyway. I'm sick of seeing that douchebag every day."

Blaine stiffened slightly. "Oh...right...Mark's in that class," he said, chewing on the inside of his cheek in consideration.

"Right," Kurt said, kissing the back of his neck. "So you should stay here with me instead."

Blaine sighed and turned in his arms, fiddling with the collar of Kurt's leather jacket. "We really need to get to class," he said. "Study hall's nearly over and we can't be getting detention the rest of the week."

"Why's that?" Kurt said, eyes fixed on Blaine's swollen lips. He licked his own, shifting uncomfortably in his jeans.

"Well, I thought we could have a nice night on Friday," Blaine said, smiling.

"What's Friday?" Kurt said, slightly zoned out of the conversation as he was still focusing on Blaine's lips.

Blaine didn't reply and Kurt looked up to see that his face had fallen slightly.

"What's wrong?" Kurt said, quickly trying to figure out what he might have said to upset him.

"Nothing," Blaine said quickly, shaking his head.

Kurt gave him a dead-panned look and he sighed.

"It's nothing, I guess," Blaine said, shrugging. "It's just...Friday is our five month anniversary. I guess it's stupid, I mean...five months isn't a big deal or anything." He trailed off and Kurt gnawed on the inside of his lower lip.

"Right," Kurt said, nodding slowly, not sure how to respond to this. "Um...well...I mean, I guess it's kind of a long time. But...I mean...you know I suck at—"

"Forget I brought it up," Blaine said, talking over him and smiling, though it didn't reach his eyes. "It's not a big deal."

The bell rang overhead and Blaine glanced up at the sound.

"I've gotta get to English," he said in a falsely cheery voice. "I'll see you in Glee, okay?"

He pressed a quick kiss to Kurt's cheek, pulling out of his arms before Kurt could say anything, swung his bag onto his shoulder, and left.

Kurt stared after him for a moment before letting out a slow breath and swearing quietly. He grabbed his own bag off the floor, picked up his crutch—which he was still annoyingly forced to use despite the fact that he had almost fully regained the strength in his leg now—and hobbled into the hall, heading in the direction of his history class.

Thankfully, Mark was busy talking with the teacher when Kurt arrived and took a seat at the back of the class, tossing his bag onto the floor and frowning at his desk as he sat down. He hadn't even thought about the fact that he and Blaine had been dating for so long. Yes, he supposed that anywhere other than high school, five months wasn't all that long, but in their environment, where couples usually had a shelf life of a few weeks—though for Kurt it tended to be more along the line of half an hour—five months was, he supposed, a big deal.

But he was horrible at romance. He didn't know what sort of thing 'regular' couples did on special occasions, he usually just focused on trying to get his hand down Blaine's pants as quickly as possible. He didn't think Blaine would mind all *that* much if he didn't make a huge fuss over it, though. Blaine was a great boyfriend. He understood that Kurt wasn't into flowers and candles and making eyes at each other across the table. Sure, he might be a little disappointed but Kurt was still new to this. He'd always been content with simply cuddling on the couch together and watching a movie, which was at least more romantic than what Kurt would have picked, so surely he wouldn't be upset if Kurt didn't make some grand gesture for something like their five month anniversary. Right?

"Something wrong?"

"Fuck off, Mark," Kurt said, not bothering to look up as Mark took the seat next to him.

"You know you can't talk to a teacher like that," Mark said casually.

"You're not a teacher," Kurt said. "You're a TA. It's not the same thing. Plus, you're an asshole."

Mark laughed quietly. "So what's on your mind? Is your little boyfriend shortening that leash he's got you on?"

"Blaine doesn't have me on a leash," Kurt snapped, glowering at him.

"Sure he doesn't," Mark said, smirking. "Though if anything Puck and Santana have said about it is true—"

"We both know they don't mind Blaine anymore," Kurt said. It was true, they'd finally stopped hounding Kurt to break up with Blaine to try and get back with Mark since the dance two weeks before. Though he supposed that might just have been to his face.

"Mhmm," Mark said doubtfully.

"And I'll have you know that I'm *not* on a leash," Kurt said resolutely. "In fact, Blaine just told me he wanted to have some big romantic evening for our five month anniversary on Friday but I said I'm not into that sort of thing so we're not going to do it."

"Really?" Mark said, looking mildly impressed. "Well, good for you, Kurt. You don't want that virgin turning you into a huge sap like him, do you?"

The second bell rang and Mark winked and patted Kurt on the shoulder as he stood and moved back to the front of the class before Kurt could reply.

Kurt sat there with his mouth hanging open slightly as Mark's words sank in and he played over what he himself had said in his head, realising just how bad it had sounded.

"Wow," he mumbled, "I'm a fucking asshole."

He looked down at his phone, running his thumb over the picture of him and Blaine he'd taken a few nights before after Blaine had picked him up from his physical therapy session and driven him back home, where they'd spent the evening in Kurt's room talking, Blaine gently working out the soreness in his leg as Kurt ranted about how much he hated the therapy sessions.

He swallowed hard as a thick lump rose in his throat. Blaine deserved better than what he'd gotten from Kurt so far. He'd stuck around for five full months of over-zealous groping and inappropriate innuendos and general aloofness from Kurt about their relationship. Blaine deserved the flowers and candles and whatever else it was he wanted on Friday night after everything he'd put up with from Kurt since they'd started dating.

Smiling down at the picture, Kurt made the decision that he would make Friday special for Blaine, even if it meant suffering through the kind of cheesy romance that made his stomach turn. Only problem was, he had *no idea* what to do.

He hadn't particularly wanted to get Rachel involved in the planning of his anniversary, but after trying and failing to force himself to come up with something romantic and special for Blaine, Kurt had realised that he was completely out of his comfort zone and needed to call in some expert help. He'd lived with Finn long enough to hear several different stories of how his step-brother had pissed off Berry by not being romantic enough for her tastes, and so decided that the girl must have some idea of how to plan an anniversary if she had such high standards.

Rachel was babbling at twenty miles a minute when Kurt took his seat behind her at Glee. He felt sorry for Finn, who was currently bearing the entire weight of her attention as she talked at him about something

that only she found interesting. Kurt could hardly bear to siphon that attention onto himself, but he didn't really have a choice.

"*Berry*," he hissed, leaning forward towards her.

Rachel turned to stare at Kurt in confusion. Finn shot him a thankful glance over her shoulder before mumbling something about talking to Puck and scurrying away before Rachel could return to their conversation.

"What do you want, Kurt?" she demanded suspiciously.

Kurt gritted his teeth and spat out the words, "I need your help," as quickly as possible.

Rachel's face lit up. "I would be more than happy to work on your vocals, Kurt; I'm glad that you've finally accepted how good you could be if you really tried. If we practice once a week, you should make major improvement by Nationals and--"

"No, *Berry*, shut up," Kurt said, cutting over her and holding up his hand. "This is only going to work if you don't speak too much, or I might have to resort to physical violence."

The smile slid off Rachel's face as she made a disgruntled noise and started to turn back around, obviously considering Kurt a waste of time. He shut his eyes and took a calming breath before poking Rachel to get her attention again.

"Okay, no, I'm sorry," he tried again, forcing the words out between his teeth, "I do actually want to talk to you about something serious..." He checked that Blaine was completely absorbed in his conversation with Brittany by the piano before muttering quietly, "Can you help me plan a date for Blaine?"

Rachel stared at him for a full five seconds before replying.

"What?"

"It's our five month anniversary and I want to do something special," Kurt muttered.

"The Valentine's dance was special," Rachel said blankly.

"Berry, that was weeks ago; I thought the general consensus was that anniversary dates are mean to be *on* the anniversary."

Rachel pursed her lips. "No offense to you, Kurt, but I don't think you're going to be able to pull off the whole 'romantic evening' thing. I mean, it's okay, not everyone can be as talented as me in the area of romance and I just think that your talents lie...elsewhere."

"I am pretty amazing in bed," Kurt smirked proudly.

"What? I- No! That's not what I was talking about," Rachel spluttered, blushing red at that same time. Kurt wondered how the hell Finn managed to stay with such an obvious virgin; didn't the frustration drive him mad? Kurt's eyes travelled back to where his own boyfriend was apparently pretending to be a dinosaur to amuse Brittany and was forced to rethink his position. It was hardly as if there was anything about Blaine that screamed 'amazing at sucking cock', so maybe Berry was hiding something. He shuddered at the thought.

"I know, I was making a joke, Berry, don't you have a sense of humour?" He rolled his eyes as Rachel glared. "Will you help me?"

Rachel pursed her lips and then sighed deeply. "I'll help you because it will make Blaine happy, okay? I'm not doing it for you. I still don't trust you."

"That's fine with me." Kurt nodded. "Oh, and this is meant to be a surprise for Blaine, so can you try and be a little bit subtle?"

"What are you talking about?" Rachel demanded, affronted. "I'm always subtle-"

"Hey, Blaine," Kurt said loudly, speaking over her as his boyfriend approached them both, his eyes darting between the two in confusion.

"Hi. What's going on over here?" Blaine said, narrowing his eyes in suspicion.

"Nothing." Kurt's foot slipped forward slightly and kicked the back of Rachel's chair. "I'm just resisting my urges to strangle Berry. You know, the usual."

"Kurt," Blaine said, rolling his eyes as he dropped into the chair next to his boyfriend. Kurt swung an arm around his shoulders immediately, his hand stroking up and down Blaine's arm as Blaine turned to Rachel. "Sorry about him."

"I'm going to talk to Finn. Or at least someone normal," Rachel huffed and stormed away and Kurt had to commend her on her acting.

"Never thought I'd see the day when you and Rachel were talking for more than thirty seconds," Blaine commented.

"I doubt it will happen again," Kurt told him before hastily changing the subject.

"Go slowly," the nurse scolded Kurt for what felt like the thousandth time. "If you rush through this then you're going to strain something."

Kurt sucked in a breath through gritted teeth, resisting the urge to slap the woman as he slowly lifted his leg in front of his body again, careful to keep it straight.

He carried out the rest of the activity in silence, his glare remaining fixed on his leg instead of letting it wander to the nurse's encouraging expression. He hated physical therapy. He despised the hours he had to spend in a bland, colourless room, repeating pointless exercise after pointless exercise. He especially hated the nurses who told him what to do; they were either so fucking patronising that Kurt wanted to slap them or very obviously bored with their job and their patients to the point where they hardly did anything except sit in the corner and give vague instructions from time to time. Kurt had yet to decide which one he disliked more.

"That's it, that's much better, Kurt. Well done."

At that particular moment, however, he was definitely finding the patronising approach more annoying.

The nurses weren't even the worst part of the sessions, the worst part would be the fact that they stretched over an interminable number of hours until Kurt was sure it was never going to end. It was worse when he had a need to be out of therapy early as it seemed to be fate that they would run late. And,

sure enough, when Kurt's eyes darted involuntarily to the clock, it was twenty minutes past five and Kurt was late.

"Are we done?" he asked as he lowered his leg back to the floor, careful not to put any weight on the aching limb.

The nurse glanced down at the sheet she had in her hands, perusing the results of Kurt's progress in the sessions and pursed her lips before nodding.

"Yes, but you need to do five of the straight leg raises a day between now and your next appointment. Are you still doing the step ups?"

"Yes," he grunted and, for once, he wasn't lying just to get her to shut up. If he had done things his way, he only would go through the repetitive, tiring exercises under the nurses' watchful eyes, but ever since Blaine had researched why physical therapy was important, he was jumping down Kurt's throat—and not in the good way—and pestering him constantly to do them.

"Good. I don't think that you need to do those any more, your leg is almost back to full strength." She looked up from Kurt's papers to smile at him. "Still avoid running or anything that will put too much pressure on the limb, but I think you'll be done these sessions soon."

"Great. Can I go now?" he said impatiently, glancing at the clock again. Of course the one time he actually *really* needed to get out of the session he had to run this late.

The nurse nodded and handed over his crutch.

"Be careful driving home," she said with a kind smile.

Kurt didn't reply as he tucked the crutch under his arm and hobbled into the hall. Being able to drive again had many perks, the first of which being that Kurt could do things without the constant presence of Blaine, and that made it a lot easier to arrange things in secret. It had taken a lot to convince Blaine to let him drive himself to and from that Friday's session, but he'd finally managed to get him to agree to meet him afterwards at his house, promising that he'd make up for and that there wasn't much they could do at the doctor's even if it *was* their anniversary.

His phone rang just as he was unlocking the car door.

"Where are you?" Rachel hissed into his ear as soon as he answered. "Blaine's going to be here soon and we haven't even started setting up. When you asked me to help you be romantic, I thought you were going to be a bit more dedicated to it!"

"Physical therapy ran over," Kurt said angrily. "I did tell you that might happen; it's not my fault that your ego stops you from hearing anything that's not about you."

"Whatever. Hurry up and get home because you need to let me in so I can start cooking the meal."

"I'll be there in ten," Kurt said before hanging up and clambering into the car, throwing his crutch onto the backseat.

Rachel was sitting on his porch when Kurt got back. There were shopping bags around her and she was fiddling with her phone in boredom.

"Finally," she said as he shut off the engine and got out of the car. "I hope you realise that I only have half an hour to cook vegan paella and that's almost impossible?"

Kurt rolled his eyes at Rachel's dramatics. "I'm sure you'll find a way."

He unlocked the door and pushed it open, picking up one of Rachel's bags in his free hand and carrying it to the kitchen for her. Rachel smiled her thanks as he dumped it on the kitchen counter.

"So, what am I doing?"

"You're setting the scene in the dining room." She handed him a bouquet of roses. "Arrange these, and you'll need candles and soft lighting and romantic music playing at an appropriately low volume. Pick something good, but that will fade into the background when you two are complimenting my cooking abilities before you descend into soft confessions of love while your feet and playing footsie under the table and your hands will be clasped over the candles as you stare into each other's eyes..."

"Blaine will set fire to himself if I put the candles near him, so that's not going to happen. Besides, if we do everything you just listed, I'll throw up from the cheesiness. My angle was 'romantic' not 'tacky and clichéd'."

Rachel crossed her arms over her chest and glared at him. "Who's the person in here who has the knowledge of these things? Me. Who has been Blaine's best friend since he transferred and therefore knows exactly what his dream date is? Me. Candles, roses, music. Go."

Kurt opened his mouth to argue before shutting it with the pressing knowledge that, yes, Blaine was the type of boy who appreciated the romantic-comedy clichés and that he had asked Rachel for her help for a reason. He grabbed the vase that Blaine had used when he had given Kurt flowers before the dance and walked into the dining room.

There was a cupboard in the corner of the room where Carole kept the fancy plates and cutlery. Kurt had begged her permission to use them a few days ago due to Rachel's insistence that a mismatched table set would throw off the atmosphere of the room completely. She had agreed, but only after Kurt had sworn not break anything.

He pulled the plates and heavily silver utensils out of the drawers, carrying them one-by-one to the table and strategically arranging the candles around the plates so they were mostly out of the reach of Blaine's sleeves—no matter how romantic Rachel promise they were, Blaine was the type of person who would somehow manage to accidently set himself on fire and Kurt wanted to avoid that.

"Rachel," he yelled after inspecting the rack of CDs next to the stereo, "would Michael Bublé be appropriate? Because that's the only name other than Metallica that I recognise here."

"That would be perfect," she answered.

Kurt pulled the disc out, realising that it must have been from his dad and Carole's wedding. Kurt had never been particularly fond of Michael Bublé, but the wedding had given him a new appreciation for his music, though he would never admit it outside the confines of the house.

"Time check?" Rachel called from the kitchen and Kurt glanced up from where was trying to arrange the cutlery so it was perfectly aligned on the table.

He glanced at the clock and cursed. "Ten minutes," he called. "Although you should probably leave in around five because Blaine's sometimes early."

There was a grunt of acknowledgment from the kitchen and then the sounds of something frying in a pan. Kurt hurried upstairs to grab his old lighter from where he had thrown it carelessly into a drawer so he could light the candles.

"If it's not completely cooked, it's because you put me under a time limit," Rachel warned as she arrived in the dining room, carrying a steaming bowl with oven mitts.

Kurt shrugged. "Not my fault. That smells pretty good though."

She set it on the placemat in the centre of the table before inspecting the room. "You've done a good job here too," she conceded. "Just dim the lighting a little and it will be perfect. Your parents are still away for the entire weekend?"

"Yes. Finn's staying at your house, right?"

Rachel nodded and smiled. "Okay then, I think you're ready."

Kurt took a deep breath and nodded. "Yeah. You should leave now. Thanks for, um, cooking and helping."

"You're welcome," Rachel said, looking pleasantly surprised by his gratitude. She smiled. "You know, you're not actually too bad, Kurt."

Kurt raised his eyebrows as he pushed Rachel towards the door. "We're not going to be BFFs after this, Berry."

"No, definitely not," Rachel agreed immediately. "My best friends have to have a degree of talent and interest in all of my favourite areas to keep up some healthy competition between us. You are sadly lacking in both."

All fond feelings he had been growing for the girl vanished. "And your lack of knowledge in fashion and sex actually offends me, so this would never work between us. Out."

"Don't mess this up," she hissed in warning before pulling the front door shut behind her.

It was three minutes to six, which would mean that Blaine would be arriving soon. Kurt's fingers tapped nervously against his thigh as he glanced around the room, looking for anything obviously wrong. It

looked pretty good if he did say so himself. Whatever Rachel had cooked was wafting steam and the aroma of the food was mingling with the scent of the vanilla candles, creating a heady atmosphere that Kurt had to admit was quite nice. Maybe Rachel had known what she was talking about after all.

He heard a key turning in the front door and immediately stood up straighter, his hands clenching around the back of one of the chairs.

"Kurt?" Blaine called as he let himself in.

"In the dining room," Kurt called out, his eyes sweeping over the table one last time, checking that everything looked okay before turning to the door and listening to Blaine's approaching footsteps.

Blaine paused in the doorway, his hand still resting on the door handle as he stared at the room. "Kurt... what's this?"

"Happy anniversary!" Kurt squeaked, cursing his nerves. He'd almost died a few months earlier and yet he was freaking out about his boyfriend's reaction to a simple dinner. But Blaine didn't make his anxiety subside as he remained standing in the doorway, still staring at everything in shock. Kurt fidgeted uncomfortably as Blaine looked at him. "I... I, um, don't actually know what the food is – some vegan thing that Rachel made. She promised it tastes really good. She, um- Well, I asked her to help with all of this because I can't do the romance thing but I saw how much it meant to you and I wanted to surprise you a- and she made the dinner. She can be okay sometimes; I can sort of see why you put up with her." Kurt twisted his hands nervously in front of him as Blaine still didn't say anything. "If this is too much then we can watch a movie or something. I just wanted to do something for our anniversary when I saw how upset you were the other day and-."

"Kurt, be quiet." Blaine looked at him, his face lighting up like the sun. "This is amazing. You did this for me?"

Kurt ducked his head but couldn't stop an answering grin spreading across his face. He didn't even care that if Puck ever found out about this he would probably castrate Kurt because Blaine made looking like an idiot worth it.

"I wanted to do something romantic for you. I know you like this stuff," he looked up apprehensively. "Is it okay?"

"Is it okay?" Blaine asked incredulously. He crossed the room in three steps, wrapping his arms around Kurt's waist and burying his face in his neck. "Kurt, this is perfect." He pulled back to kiss him sweetly. "I love you so much."

Kurt sagged in relief. "I love you too. Happy five month anniversary," he said with a smile, stepping out of Blaine's hold to pull out a chair for him.

Blaine grinned and allowed Kurt to tuck his chair in and grab the napkin off his plate and spread it onto his lap before taking his own seat.

"How long have you been planning this?" he asked as he dished himself up some of Rachel's food.

Kurt shrugged. "Since you brought up that today was our anniversary. I...I know this is important to you, but I didn't have a clue what I was meant to do so I enlisted Rachel's help."

Blaine's hand found his on top of the table and he squeezed it. "It's amazing. You're amazing."

Their hands stayed entwined on the table for the rest of the meal, both of them suffering through the awkwardness of eating one-handed.

"I had to veto some of Rachel's suggestions, of course," Kurt said as they both finished their plates; he poured a little more wine into their empty glasses.

"Like what?"

"Like the one where she wanted to stand in the corner and serenade us while we ate. I told her that that would ruin the intimacy."

Blaine snorted. "I don't know, having my best friend stand in the corner and stare at us while we kiss seems perfectly romantic to me."

"Do you have an exhibitionist streak I don't know about, Blaine?" Kurt teased. "The way you acted on Monday said otherwise."

Blaine kicked him lightly under the table as they laughed. Without really realising he was doing it, Kurt twisted his foot around Blaine's ankle and kept it there. Blaine grinned at him and retaliated by allowing his foot to trail up the inside of his calf.

"Oh is that how we're playing it, huh?" Kurt asked as Blaine's toes slipped into the crease of his knee.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Blaine said innocently, eyes sparkling over the rim of his goblet as he took a sip of wine.

"You're playing a dangerous game, Anderson," Kurt said, pointing his fork at him warningly. "There will be consequences."

"Mmm?" Blaine hummed thoughtfully and set down his glass. "Do you mind telling me what those consequences may be? Just so I'm forewarned, of course."

"It works much better if I just show you," Kurt said, pulling their entwined hands up so he could brush his lips across Blaine's knuckles.

"That doesn't seem like a very serious outcome," Blaine said with a teasing grin, his foot slipping across the seam on the inside of Kurt's pants.

Kurt's eyebrows shot up, and Blaine's grin widened before he winked, eyes slightly out of focus from the wine. Kurt didn't both keeping up the flirtatious pretence any longer as he got to his feet and moved around the table, swinging his leg over Blaine's chair. He straddled Blaine's lap, his arms wrapping around Blaine's shoulders as he kissed him properly, his tongue licking across Blaine's open mouth as his hands dug into Blaine's t-shirt, keeping him close. Blaine gasped– his fingers curled into Kurt's hair – when Kurt pulled away.

Their cheeks were flushed red from the wine and warmth of the room and Kurt's hands slipped down from Blaine's shoulder to rest on his hips. Blaine brushed his fingertips slowly over Kurt's temple and down the side of his neck.

"Thank you," he murmured. "For all of this. You know you didn't have you to it."

"Of course I did," Kurt said, fiddling with the soft curls at the nape of Blaine's neck. "It's what you wanted."

"What made you change your mind?" Blaine said curiously. He looked suddenly anxious. "You didn't feel like you needed to do it, did you? After what I said."

"No, not at all," Kurt said, combing his fingers through Blaine's hair. "I guess...I just realised how much you've put up from me and...you deserve better than that. I can be a bit of an ass. No...no, I'm *always* an ass."

Blaine chuckled softly. "No you're not," he mumbled. "And I don't mind that you're not into this sort of thing. The fact that you're willing to do all this when I know you hate it. Well...thank you."

"Thank *you* for putting up with my assholery," Kurt said with a small grin as Blaine laughed.

Blaine's smile softened and his eyes flicked down to Kurt's lips for a split second before lifting to Kurt's eyes again, suddenly wide and vulnerable. "We should go upstairs," he said quietly.

Kurt's heart stuttered in his chest at the look in Blaine's eyes, his breath catching in his throat as a sudden, shocked sort of numbness expanding from his gut to the tips of his fingers.

"Wh-what?" he breathed. "Y-you want...you want to..." His stomach knotted up nervously as Blaine nodded, never taking his eyes off Kurt's.

"Are you s-sure?" Kurt said, clearing his throat when his voice cracked with nerves. "I m-mean, we don't have you just because of this. A-and we *did* have wine and--"

"Kurt," Blaine said gently, laying his index finger on Kurt's lips. "I want to. I did the second I walked in. Knowing you're willing to put up with all of this for me when you didn't have to...it feels like the right time, you know?"

"If you're sure," Kurt said, biting his lip.

"Kurt, you're actually asking to make sure it's what I want instead of just trying to rip my clothes off," Blaine said with a grin. "I'm sure."

Excitement sparked up Kurt's skin as Blaine tilted his head up and caught his lips in a sweet, lazy kiss. He hummed softly into Kurt's mouth, his hands sliding up under the back of Kurt's shirt and over his bare skin, warm and slightly calloused.

Kurt shifted his hips to scoot up Blaine's thighs and sit flush against his lap, groaning quietly at the friction as he hardened in his jeans, Blaine's hands pressing harder against his back to pull him closer.

Blaine pulled back with a small gasp, panting lightly and nuzzling against Kurt's cheek, his breath warm over Kurt's wet lips.

"Let's go upstairs," he breathed, kissing the corner of Kurt's mouth.

"Yeah," Kurt said, suddenly nervous again. "Okay."

Blaine pressed another long, gentle kiss to his lips before lifting his hands from his back to let him stand up. Kurt stumbled a little as he stood from the wine and current weakness in his knees and Blaine caught him around the waist, smiling and kissing the side of his neck as he got to his feet.

"C-candles," Kurt mumbled, dropping his head back and shivering as Blaine sucked lightly on his pulse point.

Blaine nodded and pulled away from him, hands sliding slowly down his sides as he did, to quickly blow out the candles scattered around the room. Kurt hooked his fingers in Blaine's belt loops and pulled him back into a hungry kiss the second he was finished, slotting their hips together and grinding slowly against Blaine's thigh, a tremor running down his body at the friction.

Blaine dipped two fingers into the waistband of Kurt's jeans and tugged as he stepped back, forcing Kurt to follow him towards the stairs. They stumbled a little as they went, struggling to keep their lips connected. Blaine pushed the hem of Kurt's shirt up his stomach, pressing his palm flat across the warm skin and pulling back for a few seconds to allow Kurt to tug the fabric over his head and toss it aside, where it landed across the banister.

Kurt twisted his fingers in the hem of Blaine's shirt, grinning as he pulled him up the stairs, not quite kissing him so he was forced to chase his lip.

"Who's the tease now?" Blaine murmured, though he was smiling as well.

Kurt hummed in amusement, rucking the hem of Blaine's shirt up his sides, Blaine lifting his arms up to allow him to take it off as they reached the top of the stairs. They staggered into Kurt's room, giggling a little when their feet caught together and they nearly tumbled back onto the bed as they fumbled with

belts and buttons and zippers until they were stripped down to their underwear, jeans pooled around their ankles.

Blaine pushed back on Kurt's chest as he stepped out of his jeans and Kurt grabbed his wrists, pulling back from Blaine's lips and breathing heavily.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" he whispered, searching Blaine's eyes closely.

"Yeah," Blaine said, nodding. "Yeah, I'm sure." He paused, running his hand lightly down Kurt's chest until his fingertips were playing across the waistband of his briefs. "I love you."

Kurt smiled. "I love you too," he said, dipping his hands down the back of Blaine's boxers and squeezing his ass. He saw Blaine's throat bob as he swallowed, blushing faintly.

"Do you have, um-?"

"Yeah," Kurt said, "Um, h-hold on."

He turned away from Blaine and pulled open the drawer of his nightstand, pulling out the new bottle of lube and one of the condoms he'd bought after Blaine had said he was ready for sex. When he turned back around, his knees nearly gave out at the sight of Blaine lying back on his bed, propped up slightly on his elbows and completely naked, smiling nervously.

Kurt took a deep breath to try and calm himself down. He'd done this with plenty of guys before, he shouldn't be this anxious, he knew that. But this was Blaine. He actually cared about what Blaine thought about him, what Blaine *felt* about him. And he was sure that Blaine was trying not to think about how many other men he'd already been with and, fuck, he was starting to panic. He turned away from Blaine, raking his fingers through his hair and struggling to catch his breath.

"Kurt," Blaine said gently, sitting up and reaching for his empty hand. "Kurt, calm down."

"I'm calm," Kurt squeaked. He coughed.

Blaine stroked his hand soothingly and pulled him to the edge of the bed.

"I love you," he said softly. "And I want this. And I know you do too."

"I don't want to screw this up," Kurt said, "I don't want to hurt you." He knew Blaine knew he wasn't just talking about sex anymore.

Blaine smiled understandingly and wrapped his arm around Kurt's waist, kissing his chest. He dipped his thumbs in the waistband of Kurt's briefs and slid them down his hips and thighs so they dropped to the floor around his ankles.

"Come here," he said, sliding back the bed and pulling on Kurt's hand.

Kurt climbed onto the bed with him, setting the bottle and condom on the sheets next to him. Blaine lay back against the pillows, combing his fingers through Kurt's hair and smiling softly. He spread his legs slightly, allowing Kurt to press their hips together.

Blaine sighed and groaned as Kurt ground his hips down slowly, holding himself up on his shaking arms, watching Blaine's face carefully. Blaine clutched at his shoulders, pushing his head back into the pillows and biting his lip, eyes squeezed closed as he pushed his hips up into Kurt's. He bent his knees up, planting his feet wider on the bed.

Kurt kissed slowly over the hot, sweaty skin of Blaine's throat, feeling his pulse beating against his lips. He rolled his hips down again, groaning as their cocks rubbed together, slick with pre-come. He felt dizzy with pleasure and alcohol, Blaine's fingernails digging into Kurt's shoulders.

"K-Kurt," Blaine breathed in his ear, hot air blowing over Kurt's skin. "Kurt, please."

Kurt lifted away from his neck and stared down at him, searching his eyes. Blaine returned his gaze steadily, stroking his back reassuringly.

Kurt nodded, fumbling with the bottle of lube as he sat up on his knees. He popped the cap open and squeezed a small amount onto his fingertips, warming it up as he tossed the bottle onto the mattress. He lowered his fingers between Blaine's legs, glancing up at him questioningly.

"Are you—"

"Kurt," Blaine said, smiling. "I want this." He skimmed his fingers lightly down Kurt's forearm.

Kurt hesitated for a moment before pressing his slick fingertips against Blaine's entrance, rubbing in slow circles across the tight muscle. Blaine groaned and arched off the bed, scraping his fingernails over Kurt's arm.

"K-Kurt."

Kurt continued massaging gently, grazing his other hand along the inside of Blaine's thigh as Blaine whined and twisted his head from side to side.

"Kurt, *please*."

Kurt pressed his index finger slowly inside him, pausing when he winced at the burn. He waited for a few seconds before sliding in further, bending and crooking his finger inside him.

Blaine suddenly let out a choked shout of pleasure as Kurt's finger grazed against his prostate, his legs shaking and his hips lifting off the bed for a split second.

Kurt rubbed the bundle of nerves until Blaine was mewling and whimpering beneath him, turning his head from side to side. Kurt slipped his finger out, Blaine whining at the loss until he added a second finger, pausing to allow Blaine to adjust to the stretch, twisting gently and occasionally brushing against his prostate. By the time he'd added a third finger, Blaine was sobbing weakly and pushing back against his fingers.

"K-Kurt, please," Blaine groaned, chest rising and falling with each shallow gasp.

Kurt pulled his fingers slowly from the tight heat and Blaine immediately tugged him down into a hungry kiss, lapping at his tongue as their teeth clacked together.

Kurt broke away, smiling as Blaine brushed his fingers over his temple, pushing back the sweat-damp fringe of hair from his forehead. Kurt kissed him gently before sitting up, picking up the condom and tearing open the wrapper with shaking fingers. He tossed the wrapper aside and rolled the condom onto himself, drizzling extra lube onto his fingers and pumping his cock a few times. He lowered himself between Blaine's legs, positioning the head of his cock against Blaine's slick entrance.

"Let me know if you need me to stop," he said quietly, looking up at Blaine.

Blaine nodded, closing his eyes and breathing slowly as Kurt pushed the blunt end of his cock slowly inside him. Blaine winced, fingers digging into Kurt's arm. Kurt swore softly, eyes rolling back at the pressure around him.

"Jesus christ, Blaine," he groaned, glancing up to see Blaine's face screwed up in pain. "Are you okay?" he said anxiously, stopping immediately.

"Yeah," Blaine choked, nodding. "Yeah, 'm'fine. Keep going."

Kurt hesitated a moment before pushing the rest of the way into him until his hips were flush against Blaine's ass. He stroked Blaine's temple with his trembling fingertips, watching him closely as he opened his eyes, looking wrecked and dazed.

"How do you feel, babe?" Kurt whispered nervously.

"F-fine," Blaine said, smiling and cupping Kurt's cheek, lifting his head off the pillow and pulling him down into a slow kiss. "I love you, Kurt," he murmured against his lips.

"I love you, too," Kurt breathed.

"Y-you can move," Blaine said quietly.

Kurt nodded anxiously, pressing another short kiss to Blaine's lips before rocking his hips slowly against him. Blaine moaned, one leg wrapping around his waist as his eyelids fluttered closed. Kurt pulled out and pushed back in, groaning at the drag of tight muscle around him.

"F-fuck, you feel amazing, Blaine."

Blaine whimpered in reply, pushing back on his cock and grabbing at his shoulders, fingers dragging down the sweaty, taut muscles as Kurt picked up a steady pace, the bed shifting slightly under them. Blaine arched and stretched back, chest gleaming with sweat, lips parted and eyes closed in ecstasy. He looked incredible like this, laid bare and desperate and perfectly exposed, stripped down far beyond what either of them could simply say.

Kurt reached between their bodies and wrapped his fingers around Blaine's cock when he felt himself getting close, the heat coming off their searing skin stifling and heavy on the air drenched in the smell of

sex and sweat. Blaine whined brokenly, his leg tightening around Kurt's waist and his blunt fingernails digging roughly into his shoulders.

Kurt ghosted his lips over Blaine's neck, whispering low words encouragement against his skin.

"That's it," he murmured, pumping his fist in smooth, quick strokes. He growled quietly and Blaine whimpered. "Fuck, you feel good. Come on, babe...god, I'm close."

Blaine's breath caught in a quiet gasp, his hips jerking up as he came across Kurt's fingers and his own stomach, hot air stuttering over Kurt's cheek. He clenched down around Kurt as he shook, the change enough to send Kurt over the edge, thrusting roughly through his orgasm and moaning low against Blaine's neck.

He swore, panting heavily and blinking away the fuzziness in the edges of his vision, head spinning and arms barely holding him up. He lifted his head just as Blaine's eyes fluttered open, immediately finding Kurt's as he smiled.

They stared at each other for a moment as they tried to catch their breath, Blaine wincing slightly as Kurt carefully pulled out of him and collapsed onto the bed at his side. Kurt's arm flopped across the pillows behind Blaine's head and Blaine turned on his side to face him, eyes glazed over and forehead shining with sweat. His curls hung damp across his temple and Kurt reached over absently to push them back.

"How do you feel?" Kurt said quietly, praying he didn't regret it because, not only had that been the most amazing sex he'd ever had, he'd never cared this much about making sure that the person he was with was happy, too. He needed to know that this had lived up to Blaine's expectations of him, and sex in general. He started to panic as it sank in that he'd really just taken someone's virginity, someone who meant more to him than anything or anyone else in his life at the moment. What if Blaine had hated it? What if he broke up with him? What if-

"Perfect," Blaine said quietly, leaning over to kiss him softly, catching his lower lip between his own before laying back down, looking sated and sleepy. "It was...perfect, Kurt."

"Really?" Kurt said, his anxiety draining away as Blaine nodded.

"Really," Blaine repeated, smiling. He scooted over to rest in the crook of Kurt's arm, kissing his jaw and running his fingertips lightly down his chest and to his navel, where he let his hand rest flat across the hot skin.

"I love you," Kurt said quietly, swallowing hard as a lump started rising in his throat.

Blaine looked up, eyes full of concern at the tremor in Kurt's voice.

"I love you, too," he said gently. "This was perfect, Kurt. This whole night was perfect. I swear."

Kurt smiled and nodded, vision blurring a little as he blinked back the tears suddenly welling in his eyes.

Blaine combed his fingers slowly through Kurt's hair a few times before curling against his side and sighing contently. Within two minutes, he was fast asleep, eyelashes curled against his cheeks and lips, still red and shining, parted slightly.

Kurt, careful not to disturb him, reached down to pull off the condom off his softening cock, tying the end and tossing it in the trashcan beside his bed. He shivered a little as the sweat dried on his skin and wrapped his arm a little tighter around Blaine to soak in more of his warmth. The combination of sweat and come on his skin was slightly uncomfortable and tight, but he wasn't about to wake Blaine up just to clean up when he looked so peaceful sleeping with his head resting against his shoulder.

He smiled, stroking his fingertips over Blaine's temple and cheek, down over his neck and across his collarbone. He'd never felt this open or close to another person before in his life, so vulnerable to the possibility that Blaine might change his mind or reject him or just stop loving him altogether.

Well, no one but Mark.

He shook his head to clear away thoughts of his ex. Mark and Blaine were two completely different people and trying to compare them was ridiculous. Blaine would never do what Mark had done to him. Blaine was different. Blaine wouldn't hurt him like that.

That's what you thought about Mark, a tiny voice in the back of his mind said.

"No," he said sternly into the silence.

Blaine wasn't Mark. Blaine loved him and had already put up with more from him than anyone else. Blaine wouldn't turn on him like Mark had. Blaine would *never* hurt him.

Would he?

Chapter Twenty-Three

Kurt woke up first the next morning, his head pillowed on Blaine's chest and Blaine's fingers curling in his hair, subconsciously twisting a few strands around his fingers.

He felt safe. Warm and safe.

The heady atmosphere of love still seemed to cling to the duvet and pillows, and wherever Kurt turned, he was greeted by *Blaine*. There was still a small, niggling doubt in the back of his mind left from last night, but Kurt tried not to pay any attention to it as he turned his face into Blaine's chest and moulded his body to Blaine's side, choosing instead of focus on the memories of how *perfect* the previous night had been.

There was a quiet sigh above him and Blaine's fingers were slipping from his hair and wrapping around his waist. Kurt propped himself up his elbows and smiled at Blaine, who blinked at him sleepily.

"Good morning," he breathed, craning his neck to kiss him, his tongue sliding into Blaine's open mouth almost immediately.

"Hi," Blaine said shyly and Kurt had to admit that the small blush that formed on his cheeks when his eyes darted down to their – incredibly naked – bodies was adorable.

"How did you sleep?" Kurt said, tracing over Blaine's collarbone with his fingertip.

"Like a log; I haven't slept that well in months," Blaine said with a faint smile.

Kurt hummed happily as he scooted up the bed so he was lying on eyelevel with Blaine. "Would that be because I tired you out last night?"

"Most likely," Blaine mumbled, blush deepening.

"Maybe I should do it more often, then," Kurt said with a smirk. "After all, I do care greatly about your wellbeing, and if that's the only way for you to get a good night's sleep..."

"You're so thoughtful," Blaine cooed teasingly, kissing the end of his nose. "And so selfless."

"It's one of my best features." The glowing green numbers in the corner of his eye caught Kurt's attention.
"Oh *crap*."

"What?"

"Finn's going to be back in half an hour. That means I can't remind myself of how amazing you were last night."

Blaine laughed at Kurt's pout. "I'm sure we'll have plenty of time in the future to remind ourselves," he said.

Kurt's smile froze momentarily on his face. The way Blaine could talk about the future in such a blasé manner was mind boggling; as if he was one hundred percent sure that they *would* still have opportunities to do things together and that he knew that they weren't going to break up. Kurt wished that he could have the same level of security in his opinions that Blaine did.

He didn't voice any of that, of course, he merely threw a leg over Blaine's thighs and kissed him hard for a minute, biting and nipping at Blaine's lip. Just as Blaine was getting desperate and little moans and sighs were escaping his throat, he slid completely off him and got to his feet, grabbing some clean clothes out of the dresser before heading towards the bathroom.

"Kurt," Blaine whimpered behind him. Kurt turned on his heel to smirk at Blaine, completely unashamed of his nakedness as Blaine blushed. "You can't leave me."

Kurt's smile grew as he shrugged. "I have to, babe, Finn'll be home soon. Consider that an incentive to organise some more alone time with me." He winked as he slid into the bathroom and shut the door behind me.

He heard the muffled groan of frustration from his bedroom and the soft *thump* of Blaine collapsing back onto the bed and laughed to himself before tugging on a pair of clean boxers and attempting to control his sex hair in the mirror.

When he came out, Blaine was still sulking on the bed, though he had pulled on his jeans and boxers from yesterday. Kurt laughed at his put out expression when he saw that Kurt was wearing clothes, and picked up his crumpled t-shirt from the foot of the bed to chuck at Blaine's face.

His phone beeped with a text on his bedside and he checked it as Blaine tugged the shirt over his head, watching sadly as the last inches of his chest were covered up once more.

Just sent Finn back. He should be home in ten minutes? – R

A warm pair of arms wrapped around his waist, lips mouthing lazily at the soft juncture of his neck as Blaine pressed his body flush against his back. Kurt sighed and allowed his head to fall back, giving Blaine better access to the sensitive skin.

"Do I have to go?" Blaine murmured into his skin.

Kurt turned in the circle of Blaine's arms and tilted Blaine's head up to kissing him, his hands winding into Blaine's shirt to keep him there and make sure he couldn't move as he trailed his lips down to the underside of Blaine's jaw, sucking and biting on the skin there, licking the sore spot with his tongue every once and a while to take the pressure off – not that Blaine's moans suggested he needed to.

Once he was satisfied, he pulled away, nodding to himself in approval of his handiwork. Blaine's fingers brushed against the mark and he smiled at Kurt, rolling his eyes.

"Trust you to like leaving hickeys," he muttered.

Kurt shrugged. "What can I say? I like people seeing that you're mine."

"You never answered my question," Blaine said, pouting.

"Huh? Oh, right, yes, Finn will be home in ten minutes, so yeah, you do."

Blaine sighed and cuddled closer to Kurt for a moment longer, letting his head rest on Kurt's shoulder.

"I don't want to," he grumbled petulantly.

"I don't want you to, either... We could just keep having sex, regardless of my step-brother?"

It was a long shot at best, and Kurt was hardly surprised when Blaine laughed and pulled away, his lips brushing against Kurt's cheek for the smallest second.

"No, I really should go. I still have homework to do for Monday as well, so..."

Kurt pushed him away. "Go home then, nerd."

Kurt followed him down to the front door and held out his coat patiently as he toed on his shoes. Just as Blaine was straightening his jacket, there was the sound of a car pulling up in front of the house and Kurt pushed him lightly against the wall to kiss him, suddenly regretting sending him away.

"Are you *sure* you don't want to stay?" he murmured, sliding his thigh between Blaine's legs. "Finn owes me for all the times I've covered for him, so he wouldn't actually say anything when he hears us..."

"Him being in the same building is enough to put me off," Blaine said. He looked from the door to Kurt sadly before sighing and kissing him again. "Bye."

"Bye."

Kurt pushed Blaine out of the door just as Finn was sliding out of his car. The two boys nodded to each other as Blaine hopped into his, an unspoken agreement not to talk to each other about why they were leaving their significant others' house early in the morning.

Kurt backed away from the front door to let Finn stumble into the hall with his overnight bag, quickly opening the curtains in the living room to watch Blaine drive away, just managing to catch the momentary wave his boyfriend gave before disappearing down the road.

Suddenly, without Blaine, that creeping sensation of being alone was crawling back up his spine. Raking his hands through his hair, Kurt turned away from the window and grabbed the remote off the couch, flicking to the first mindless channel he found and trying to lose himself in a world that didn't bother with the triviality of emotions.

Despite the nagging feelings of *what if* following him constantly throughout the rest of the day, Kurt was determined to be happy when he strutted into McKinley on Monday morning. A large grin worked its way across his lips when he saw Blaine leaning against his locker, already holding all the books Kurt would need for the morning as well as a cup of coffee.

"Good morning," Kurt greeted as he reached him, kissing him quickly before opening his locker again so he could shrug off his coat and shove the garment inside.

"Morning," Blaine chirped, handing over the coffee and the books. "How are you feeling?"

"Wonderful." He sipped the coffee and his eyes widened in surprise when he discovered the liquid was still hot. "How fast did you have to drive from the Lima Bean to get this here before it cooled down?" he asked incredulously, taking another gulp and moaning in pleasure as the hot liquid hit the back of his throat.

"I... um... broke speed limits," Blaine admitted.

Kurt glanced up in confusion at Blaine's stuttering and found his boyfriend's eyes were slowly travelling up and down the length of his body. He smirked as Blaine looked up and blushed when he realised he'd been caught staring.

"You, um... You look good today," Blaine offered.

Kurt preened. "That would be my post-sex glow," he teased and Blaine's blushed deepened.

In all honestly, Kurt had specifically dressed that morning with Blaine in mind. The skinny jeans and tight top under a leather jacket combined with his carefully ruffled *I-just-had-sex* hair were all there for Blaine's benefit.

And also for Kurt's amusement as he watched Blaine's mouth fall open slightly as he took in his overall appearance, and the flush spread from just his cheeks until it completely covered his entire face.

"Well, I think that's enough ogling on your part, mister," Kurt said in mock sternness. "I'll see you at lunch."

"Wait, Kurt!" Blaine called as Kurt sauntered off, pushing his books into his bag and swaying his ass a little more than normal.

He turned and raised an eyebrow in question as Blaine quickly skipped to his side and planted a kiss on his lips before quickly pulling away and stepping back, glancing around to see if anyone was looking.

Kurt merely laughed and reached forward to wrap an arm around Blaine's waist – careful not to let the coffee in his hand spill – and tugged him close, kissing his nose before pushing Blaine's face up with a hand under his chin. He licked across Blaine's closed mouth before he opened it with a groan and Kurt could let his tongue trail across Blaine's as he took the chance to explore his mouth.

Blaine was the one to break the kiss, breathing heavily as he rested his forehead against Kurt's. Kurt smiled as he brushed his lips against Blaine's nose and took a step away so he could straighten Blaine's clothes where he had been pulling them.

"You're a terrible influence on me," he joked. "I'm going to be late to my class now."

Blaine grinned impishly before turning and hurrying away, allowing Kurt to walk to his first lesson uninterrupted by urges to skip school entirely and drag Blaine back to his empty house.

There was a constant stream of texts from Blaine throughout the day. They saw each other at lunch, but only for a second before Blaine was dragged off by the girls for god knows what; Kurt hardly wanted to imagine the kind of inane chatter that happened in those sessions. He remembered his manners and smiled politely at Rachel when she came near, after all, he did technically have her partially to thank for the weekend. She beamed back at him before grabbing Blaine's upper arm and dragging him over to the girls' table, whispering something in his ear that made me blush scarlet and glance back at Kurt.

Kurt picked moodily at his cafeteria food after that, none of it looking nearly as appealing when Blaine wasn't there to steal grapes from his tray.

They won't stop pestering me about Saturday night – B xxxx

Just tell them the truth: that you were fantastic and I can't wait for a repeat ;) – K xxxx

They want to know how you were though! – B xxxx

Well it should go without saying that I was utterly amazing too – K xxx

"So I heard you and Blaine had an empty house this weekend," Puck said when Kurt dropped his phone back onto the table. "And Anderson's been glowing like the sun all day, so I take it you two finally did the deed."

"You're very interested, Puckerman," Kurt said lightly, folding his hands under his chin.

Puck shrugged. "I'm happy for you, bro; you needed a good lay, you were—"

Puck paused as the bell signalling the end of lunch cut over his voice. Around them, kids moodily got to their feet, dumping their trays and picking up textbooks, still chatting loudly. Kurt just caught sight of Blaine being whisked away by the crowd, twisting to wave and grin cheerfully at Kurt over his shoulder as he walked to English.

Puck and Kurt followed the rest more slowly, dawdling aimlessly as they put their trays away.

"So how was it?"

"Way better than that sloppy handjob you gave me over summer at that party," Kurt said with a smirk.

Puck yelped and punched his shoulder. "Dude! We agreed not to talk about that ever! And I was drunk so it doesn't count."

"Then butt out of my sex life." Kurt slowed to a stop next to the door to history.

"I'm just glad that you now *have* a sex life for me to butt out of," Puck said. "It was getting pathetic."

Someone cleared their throat and Puck and Kurt turned to see Mark standing next to them, a stack of worksheets in his hands as he stared at them, the expression on his face unfathomable.

"Hey, Mark," Puck greeted amiably.

"Is that really appropriate conversation for school hallways?" he asked. "Especially when you both should be in class."

Puck grimaced. "I keep forgetting you're a TA and need to be 'responsible'. It's unnatural, dude."

"Just trying to get a job and earn some cash," Mark said with a smile on his face.

Puck seemed to accept that as a reasonable statement and tipped an imaginary hat before strutting down the hallway to his own class. But Kurt knew Mark well enough to recognise his fake smile that was made all the more obvious when he turned back to Kurt and it slipped straight from his mouth.

"Could you stay after class, Kurt? I want to talk to you about something," he said, adjusting the papers in his arms.

Against his better judgement, Kurt nodded before following him into the class, desperately hoping that the lesson would drag by as usual so he would have time to prepare.

Of course, because life seemed determined to be crap for Kurt Hummel, he only seemed to be sitting down for a minute before the clock was signalling that half an hour had passed without him noticing.

Kurt still hadn't even managed to write down the date on the top of his page because he could stop his eyes drifting to where Mark was sitting at the front of the class, grading papers. Occasionally he would look up and stare aimlessly around until his eyes met Kurt's and he would smile before looking away.

His phone buzzed and his pocket and he pulled it out, shielding the screen behind his textbook.

Meet you for glee? – B xxxx

Sure :) I might be a few minutes late though, but meet by my locker? – K

Sounds good – B xxxx

Kurt smiled at the little 'x's for a moment, stroking his thumb over Blaine's name at the top of the screen. A year ago, hell, five months ago, he never would have put up with something so sentimental as signing a text message like that. Then again, five months ago he didn't have Blaine. He really was growing on him.

When he tucked his phone back into his pocket, it was to see Mark staring straight at him with raised eyebrows. He stared defiantly back, watching him as he pushed himself up from his desk and walked towards Kurt.

"Phone, Mr Hummel?" he said and Kurt could hear the amusement in his voice as he held out his hand expectantly.

"Sorry?"

"You were texting," Mark said, the corner of his lips twitching. "You know the rules about that."

"Fu-"

"Mr Hummel, hand over your phone," the teacher cut in, crossing the room and glaring down at Kurt until he reluctantly placed it in Mark's waiting hand.

As soon as she turned away, Kurt gestured rudely at Mark who just chuckled and walked back to his seat, throwing Kurt's phone into a drawer.

By the end of the lesson, Kurt was no further in his work than he had been at the beginning and he couldn't even hazard a guess at what the topic of the lesson had been. All he knew was that he was significantly more pissed off than he had been before.

It also meant that he couldn't run out straight away, as he was considering. Instead, he hung around by his desk as everyone else filed out as soon as the bell rung, leaving him and Mark alone.

"So, the almighty virgin gave it up, did he?" Mark asked after a minute of silence.

Kurt glared at him. "Shut it, Mark."

"Oh wow," Mark said with a startled laugh. "He actually *did*. I thought Puckerman was just teasing you."

"I don't know what you're hoping to accomplish here, Mark," Kurt stated, his arms crossed over his chest as he leaned against the wall. "It would be better for the both of us if you left me and Blaine alone."

"It wouldn't be better for me, Kurt," Mark, pushing himself up from his desk and moving towards him. "I still love you."

Kurt laughed with derision and turned to walk out, stalking past Mark. Unsurprisingly, Mark's hand shot out to grab his arm and stop his attempted escape.

"Let go of me, Mark," Kurt snarled, trying to wrench his arm away.

"No," Mark said in a surprisingly calm voice. "Not until you admit to yourself that there's still *something* between us."

"There *isn't*," Kurt insisted, trying to pull away from his hold. "I love Blaine now."

"Maybe you do," Mark said, stepping a little closer to him. "But can look me in the eye right now and tell me you don't still feel something for me too?"

Kurt raised his gaze to stare defiantly at Mark, determined to wipe the smug look of his face. But the words caught in his throat as he stared into Mark's grey eyes, the dirty blonde locks of hair falling across his forehead haphazardly.

Kurt used to brush away the strands so he could kiss Mark's forehead tenderly as he ran his fingers back through his hair to cup the back of his head. Mark had always teased him about those little romantic gestures that he was intent on doing, but Kurt knew from the dopey smiles and slow, passionate kisses whenever he had wrapped an arm around Mark's waist or straightened his jacket for him that Mark actually appreciated them.

"Kurt." Mark closed his eyes for a moment, regret shining behind them when they opened again. "Kurt, I miss you. So much. I can't take this anymore. I came back for you and you can't say you don't still love me."

"Y-yes I can," Kurt stammered.

"Then say it," Mark whispered.

Kurt couldn't reply. He swallowed, watching as Mark took a few steps closer; unable to do anything except stare into those eyes and relive the moments in their relationship that had made Kurt feel so special, so treasured, so *loved*.

Because he *had* loved Mark. He'd loved Mark *so much*. He'd managed to forget the way his heart used to swell whenever Mark entered the room, the way he blushed when Mark smiled at him; Kurt had carefully replaced all of those memories with the feelings of heartbreak and loss because it was easier to accept it all that way.

But it was impossible to forget any of that completely, because Mark was his first love. And you can never forget your first love, no matter how many nights you spend clutching your pillow to your chest as you try to cry quieter in the dark.

That was, strangely, a comforting thought to Kurt. The agonising pain that ripped through his heart whenever he thought about Mark after their break up was awful, yes, but at least Kurt had already lived through it. He knew how much pain Mark could cause him, and he knew he would live through it. There wasn't any unknown with him like there was with Blaine, still untested as to how much he may hurt him.

Kurt couldn't see anything except Mark's eyes as they flickered down to Kurt's mouth and back up. Kurt's eyelids fell shut as warm, dry lips pressed against his own. They still tasted faintly of cigarettes and the mint gum Mark chewed constantly.

A wave of nostalgia rushed through him for the Friday nights spent curled up in Mark's arms in someone else's back yard, exchanging lazy kisses as they swapped the cigarette they were sharing, staring up at the stars with the thrumming noise of a party behind them. Wrapped together in a blanket, naked bodies pressed together and slick with sweat as they nuzzled into each other.

He didn't know when he started doing it but suddenly he was kissing Mark back, fisting his hands in his shirt and pressing against. Mark pushed him back against the wall, forcing his thigh between his legs and grinding against his hip, moaning rough in the back of his throat.

The friction sent a rush of lust through him and he had a thousand memories running through his mind of times they'd been together like this, flush and hungry for one another, blood pumping with adrenaline and testosterone.

But that was it. There were no fireworks, no blood pumping through his veins so loudly Kurt could hear it, his heart wasn't swelling to twice its usual size, he wasn't floating away with the sensation of the kiss like he did when it was Blaine.

Blaine.

Kurt planted his hands on Mark's shoulders but wasn't pushing him away fast enough as the classroom door swung open.

"Kurt, are you—"

Mark pulled back before Kurt could shove him away, turning to look at Blaine, who was standing in the doorway, staring at them with an unfathomable expression, frozen and wide-eyed.

Mark smirked, licking his lips as he slowly pulled back from Kurt.

"Whoops," he said under his breath.

Kurt pushed past him and took a step towards Blaine, heart hammering in his chest.

"Blaine, it—"

Blaine seemed to gather himself, shaking his head as his expression fell into hurt and disgust, eyes suddenly swimming with tears.

"Blaine, don't—"

Blaine turned and left without so much as another glance in Kurt's direction, slamming the door behind him as he went.

"God fucking *dammit!*" Kurt shouted, punching the wall and immediately regretting it as pain shot up his arm. "*Fuck!*"

"Kurt, come on, don't—" Mark tried to reach out for his hand but Kurt shoved him away hard and he stumbled back into the nearest desk.

"This is *your* fault!" Kurt cried, voice cracking as a painful lump started growing in his throat. "I hate you! God, just *leave me alone!* I don't want you!"

He kicked a chair and ran from the room after Blaine, panic rising up in his chest and clawing at his throat, leg already starting to ache from the vibrations he'd sent shooting up it from kicking the chair.

"Blaine?" He hobbled down the hallway, swivelling his head from side to side as he searched for Blaine in the classrooms as he passed them.

He finally came across him turning the corner towards the choir room up ahead, his movements stiff and almost mechanical as he walked straight-backed away from him.

"Blaine, wait!" Kurt gasped, clutching his throbbing leg as he broke into a run.

Blaine stopped and turned, obviously reluctant, and Kurt felt a sharp pain in his chest at the sight of his tear-stained face.

"What?" he snapped.

"Blaine—it's not—it wasn't—"

"Not what it looked like?" Blaine said coolly. Kurt nodded lamely. "Because it *looked* like you had your tongue down your ex's throat."

"Blaine, I—"

"Listen, Kurt, I get it," Blaine said, voice rising and eyes flashing. "I was all just some joke to you."

"No, Blaine—"

"Well, haha, you won. I can't *believe* I thought you would actually change. Rachel warned me. They all warned me that you didn't know how to be in a healthy relationship but I ignored them. I was so *fucking* patient and put up with all your crap and doubt and I gave you *e-everything*." His voice broke and he took a moment to compose himself.

"Blaine, p-please," Kurt cracked. "I swear, he kissed me and...and it didn't mean anything. I didn't *feel* anything. No like I feel for you, Blaine. I-I *love* you."

"Stop," Blaine said, shaking his head and holding up his hand to silence him. "Just...stop. You're not making this any easier."

"Making what any easier?" Kurt said in a low, timid voice, suddenly terrified by the resigned look in Blaine's eyes.

"I can't do it anymore, Kurt," Blaine said with a defeated look. "I can't keep putting one hundred percent of myself into this relationship if you're only going to give me ten back. I thought it would get better and...and I thought it *was* and then you have to go and do...do that. How could you, Kurt?"

He looked so shattered, so crushed and hurt that Kurt couldn't think of any response but—

"Please don't...don't do this," he pleaded. "*Please*, Blaine, I'm sorry, I don't *want* him. I thought maybe part of me did because...because of what happened but I *don't*...I want *you*, Blaine. Please. I don't want to lose you."

Blaine gave him a long, searching, steady look before replying in a flat tone, "You should have thought about that before you kissed him back."

He turned and walked away without another word, straight past the choir room and towards the main doors, Kurt staring after him in disbelief. There was a loud whine building in his ears, something heavy pressing hard on his chest and tightening around his lungs.

His legs gave out beneath him and he stumbled against the lockers, sliding down onto the floor. A quiet whimper broke the silence and it took him a moment to realise that he was the one who'd made the sound.

"No...no no no no, this can't be h-happening."

He dug his fingernails into his scalp, tugging his roots, feeling completely lost and desperate, and hating himself more than he ever had in his life.

Chapter Twenty-Four

Kurt was pretty sure his heart was being torn out of his chest. His fingers tightened into fists, pulling his hair painfully as he gulped in sharp breaths between clenched teeth. He'd ruined *everything*, he *always* ruined everything.

"I take it that didn't go well?"

Kurt jerked his head up to see Mark standing at the end of the hallway, watching Kurt with a bemused expression.

"*Don't* talk to me," Kurt snapped, pushing himself to his feet and stumbling a few steps away as if he was a rabid animal. "Don't even *look* at me. You've fucked everything up."

"You kissed me back," Mark pointed out, attempting to approach Kurt, who backed away further, tightening his fists by his sides to try and stop his hands from shaking. Mark held his palms open in front of him and stopped. "Look, I'm sorry, it wasn't as if I *planned* for him to walk in on us, was it?"

"It doesn't matter what you *planned*, it happened like *that* and now *everything* is ruined." Kurt shook his head in disgust.

"Kurt," Mark said softly, his hands falling to his sides as he shrugged, "I'm sorry that you're hurting over him. But you shouldn't be. He's just some kid; you deserve so much better than him, babe. Come back to me, and I'll make you forget him. We can be happy again, like we used to be, remember?"

Kurt stared at him for a long moment. Mark met his gaze with a cocky smile and his hands spread ever so slightly as if waiting for Kurt just to fall back into them.

He remembered, alright, he remembered the anxious nights waiting at home with his phone clutched in his hand because Mark was at a party doing *god knows* what and Kurt just needed to know if he was okay; he remembered the times when he walked in on Mark with his arms around another guy's waist and lips dangerously close to their faces before he blew it off with "we're just *friends*, Kurt, stop being so damn clingy"; he remembered the parties he'd been dragged to against his will and the drinks and cigarettes pushed into his hands; and he most of all remembered the nights when Mark *wasn't there* and Kurt was left alone in a cold bed that seemed too empty as he cried himself to sleep.

Unaware of what was racing through Kurt's mind, Mark advanced with open arms and a small smile playing at the corner of his lips, obviously taking Kurt's silence as acceptance that Mark had won.

Kurt let him come close until he was only a foot away and he could hear his steady breath in the silence of the corridor. He looked up through his lashes at Mark's victorious expression, his grey eyes lit up with happiness and a grin stretching across his face.

Contentedness spread through Kurt as he pulled back his fist and punched him squarely in the middle of his face, satisfaction seeping into his veins as Mark's nose broke under the blow and he stumbled back to fall hard on the ground.

"You are a fucking dick," Kurt said, his hand still curled in a fist by his side as he watched Mark groan in pain on the floor, "and I swear to every single fucking deity that if you don't leave me and Blaine alone, I will make it so you can't even--"

"Kurt! What are you doing?"

Kurt looked up in surprise, oblivious until that moment to the fact he had an audience. He took a few steps away from Mark as Mr. Schuester stormed down the corridor; taking in the scene of Mark's wrecked face and Kurt's bloody knuckles.

"Principal's office. Now."

The silence in the car was oppressive. Kurt stared straight out of the windscreen, his eyes locked on the road ahead as he tried to pretend he couldn't feel the anger rolling off his father in waves. He couldn't see his phone but he knew it was in his father's pocket after watching it being handed over by Figgins in front of his eyes: his one connection to Blaine being given to the only man who won't bend to Kurt's tantrums.

"Dad," he tried, breaking the quiet for the first time since they left school.

"Don't even try to talk your way out of this," Burt interrupted immediately and Kurt lapsed back into silence as he bit his lip and looked out of the window, trying to figure a way to get what he *needed*.

He had to talk to Blaine. If he couldn't call him, then Kurt would fucking *walk* to his house to get Blaine to listen to him. Kurt couldn't let him slip through his fingers because of one stupid mistake that was never going to mean anything more than what Blaine saw. He couldn't let Blaine go so easily; shit, Kurt couldn't

let Blaine go *at all*. He was so in love with him and his ridiculous obsession with bow ties and school rules and he was definitely far too devoted to his hair gel, but it was still the Blaine that Kurt wouldn't mind spending the rest of his life with.

Why hadn't he said any of that to Blaine before? Why had he just stood there while Blaine glared at him with those huge eyes that were unnaturally full of tears and hurt and anger instead of falling to his knees and begging Blaine to understand how much he loved him?

He wouldn't mess it up again, he decided with a steely determination. The next time he saw Blaine, he was going to do that; he had to make Blaine *listen*.

However he still had no convincing reason he could use on his dad to persuade him to give Kurt back his phone so he could make any of that happen. His fingers were anxiously curling on his lap and he tried to think of *anything* that would make the situation better as the car stopped in front of their house and Burt got out, slamming the door shut behind him. Kurt ran a hand through his dishevelled hair in frustration before slipping out of the car and following his dad into the sitting room.

Burt was pacing in front of the TV restlessly but he stopped when Kurt threw himself down on the sofa and stared up at him.

"You got *suspended*," he started. "*Suspended*."

"I know; I was there when Figgins did the big reveal, remember?" Kurt said before realising that perhaps sarcasm wasn't the best route to take when Burt slowly went red.

"This isn't the time for joking, Kurt! I thought you were over all of this; I thought you were done with the parties and the fighting and whatever else you've been getting up to for the past two years. This year was going so *well* for you."

"So *well*?" Kurt repeated, sitting up straight. "I almost fucking died and I've spent practically all of the year in casts because of my broken bones, how the hell has this year gone *well*?"

"You know that's not what I meant and watch your language, Kurt, you're in enough trouble as it is—"

"Then what way did you mean it?" Kurt interrupted, springing to his feet and glaring at him. "Because I can't see any way that this year has been any fucking better than before. I almost *died*, I had to quit

smoking, I've given up partying and having *fun*, I've barely talked to Puck or Santana, my asshole of an ex-boyfriend arrived back in town and, on top of that, the school blatantly disregards the fact that a teacher *kissed* me, so I'm suspended and he's let off free of charge."

"Kurt, language! Now sit and calm down, and let's have this talk like adults, unless you want me to ground you for an extra month."

Kurt shut his mouth but pointedly remained standing in front of the couch, his arms crossed over his chest as he waited for his father to read the riot act.

"Now, I can't just let this pass, Kurt. I've been ignoring your behaviour because I thought that all teenagers have rebellious stages and it would be best if I just let you get it out of your system, but I'm not letting you get away with punching a teacher and I'm definitely not going to let your education go to waste."

"Whatever," Kurt muttered under his breath.

"So, along with your school suspension, you're grounded. You're not allowed to go to parties or wherever you went with Puck and Santana all those times, and your curfew is eight. If you do need to go anywhere, you have to ask me first. You've also lost driving privileges so either Carole, Finn or I will need to take you. On weekdays, you're not allowed out at all during the hours that you would normally be at school, and I'm disconnecting the internet except for when you need it to work... And your phone is mine for at least the rest of the week."

"No," Kurt said immediately.

"Kurt..." Burt sighed.

"No, Dad, if you're keeping me locked up in this house like some fucking fairy tale princess then you need to give me phone."

"You need to get it into your head that today wasn't acceptable and the only way you'll learn is—"

"You can't *do that*!" Kurt yelled, interrupting Burt's lecture. "I need to talk to Blaine *today* because otherwise he's never going to forgive me and I'm not going to fucking let him go like that!"

Kurt could see his father waver for a second before tightening his mouth into a thin line and shaking his head. "You can have it back in a week."

"Oh, *fuck you!*" Kurt screamed, turning on his heel and storming across the living room, kicking a small coffee table and sending it, and the family photos, tumbling to the ground. The glass frames shattered but Kurt paid no attention to it as he stumbled up the stairs to his room, slamming the door shut and pushing a chair in front of it in childish retaliation.

If his father wanted him to never make contact with the outside world then *fine*, Kurt would oblige.

He threw himself onto his unmade bed with a growl on frustration, burying his face into his pillow to muffle the noise. His hands were clenched into tight fists, the pain of his nails digging into his hands only helping to partially alleviate the horrible, shaking pressure of anger that was surging through him. He needed a cigarette or a beer or something to take the edge off.

What the fuck was he even doing?

Throwing a temper tantrum worthy of a four year old, the nastier side of his brain prompted as Kurt paced aimlessly around his small room. He ignored it, firmly pushing the thoughts to the back of his mind.

More importantly, what was he *going* to do? He had no phone to call or text Blaine, he wasn't going to see him in school, the suspension extended to all club activities so Kurt wouldn't be able to meet him in Glee, and he doubted Burt would drive to Blaine's house for him.

It was stupid fucking Mark's fault and his inability to do anything except ruin Kurt's life in every possible way.

His fist thudded into the wall, sending shocks jarring up his wrist. His leg was throbbing unbearably and there was a rising swell of emotions that Kurt wasn't used to having to deal with.

He stared blankly at the fist-shaped dent in the plaster before letting his eyes fall shut and he inhaled deeply. His knuckles were throbbing and the overwhelming feelings were topped with an exhaustion that was settling over him like a fog. He turned back to his bed, pushing the covers back before climbing in, not bothering to change out of his clothes other than tugging off his jacket and jeans and kicking them out of the bed.

I fucked it up, he thought to himself as a few tears slid out from under his closed eyes. He turned his face into the pillow and pressed his mouth against the fabric in an attempt to keep the sobs from bursting out.

When he woke, it was dark outside and there was a hand on his shoulder, gently shaking him. He rubbed the back of his hand over his eyes and pushed himself up into a sitting position as he stared up in confusion at his father.

"I thought you might be hungry," Burt said softly, putting the plate of sandwiches he had been holding in Kurt's lap before sitting on the edge of the mattress and letting him eat in silence.

Kurt's stomach was grumbling loudly at the sight of food and Kurt had to devour two of the sandwiches before it quietened.

"What's the time?"

"A little after nine."

That meant that Kurt had been asleep for roughly five hours. The nap hadn't done him any good; he felt like he was tethered to the bed and every small movement was similar to trying to lift a freight train above his head.

Burt didn't say anything as he waited, his eyes briefly resting on the damaged wall and the chair Kurt had thrown quickly across the door in the hope of it acting like a barricade.

"I'm sorry about earlier," Kurt mumbled, following his father's gaze. "I was just..."

"I know," Burt said, resting a hand on Kurt's duvet-covered leg and squeezing comfortingly. "So, are you going to tell me the full story of what happened yesterday? Because at school it just sounded like you punched Mark, and then there was kissing involved and you mentioned Blaine in your screaming fit?"

Kurt bit his lip at the mention of Blaine's name.

"I was texting in class," he started slowly, "and Mark confiscated my phone. Then when I when to get it back at the end of the lesson, he kept reminding me about when we were together and then he kissed me

and I... I don't know, I went along with it. But then it wasn't like kissing Blaine so I pushed him away but Blaine came in at the wrong moment and saw and he ran away and..."

Kurt shut his mouth, biting the inside of his cheek to keep from sobbing at the memory of Blaine standing in front of him in the hallway, his arms hanging uselessly by his side and his whole body slumped in defeat as he just looked up at Kurt with complete betrayal. Burt grabbed his hand and squeezed it gently when a few tears slipped past Kurt's defences.

"He wouldn't listen to me when I tried to explain... And then he just *left* and I don't think he'll ever want to talk to me again."

"And then Mark came back and you punched him?" Kurt nodded sullenly. "You've got yourself into an extraordinary mess there, kiddo."

"What am I supposed to do? I don't know how to fix this, Dad."

"Are you sure you want to?"

Kurt stared at him in confusion. "What?"

"Do you want to?" Burt repeated. "If you fix things, are you going to put in an effort afterwards to keep them fixed? Because Blaine's a real good kid and he doesn't deserve you putting him through all of this more than once."

"I love him, Dad; this isn't some *game* to me, do you think that I'm *really* that cruel?"

"No, I don't but I do know that you're going to be looking out for your own feelings and I don't want you to forget about Blaine's."

"I'm not," Kurt said immediately. "This isn't about me." *I just want him to look as happy as he did this morning when we were talking and kissing outside my locker.*

Burt sighed and dug into his pocket, retrieving Kurt's phone and throwing it onto the bed. "The rest of the rules still stand, but I know you need to call him so this is yours."

Kurt snatched it up before he could change his mind.

"Thank you."

"You really love him?" Burt asked.

"Yes."

Burt pursed his lips and nodded. "Well then you'll have to prove it to him," he said before leaving, shutting the door behind him and leaving Kurt cradling the lifeline to Blaine to his chest.

He stared at the screen for a long moment before scrolling down to Blaine's name, holding the phone to his ear after hitting the call button. His heart skipped with each ring, hands shaking and terrified anticipation building in his gut.

The line clicked and he held his breath, shoulders slumping when Blaine's voicemail message kicked in.

"Hi, this is Blaine, I can't—Kurt, stop it!" Kurt's stomach churched at the laughter in Blaine's voice and his own sniggering in the background. *"I can't come to the phone right now—"*

"He's busy making out!"

"Kurt! But I'll call you back if you leave a message!"

"Blaine, please pick up," Kurt begged, voice cracking as fresh tears spilt down his cheeks. "P-please, I'm so sorry, I swear I didn't mean anything. *Please* talk to me. I can't l-lose you... Please call me back. I love you. I love you so much, Blaine and I'm a...a fucking moron for risking you and I swear I'll go celibate for the rest of my life if you want me to. I just don't want to lose you. I love you."

He hung up and tossed the phone onto the bed beside him, gripping his face in his hands and letting out a shaky breath against his palms.

Lying down and curling into a ball, he clutched his phone to his chest, eyes trained on the screen as he prayed for Blaine's picture to flash across it.

The hours dragged on. Midnight. One in the morning. Three.

He rubbed his eyes and blinked furiously to keep himself awake.

Five. Blaine would be getting up for school soon, he always woke at an ungodly hour. Kurt remembered waking up one Saturday morning after falling asleep curled up with Blaine in his bed, Blaine's fingers combing softly through his hair as he smiled down at him and confessed, blushing, that he'd been watching Kurt sleep for an hour.

Six. He'd be getting ready for school now.

Seven. He'd be on his way.

At nine, when he knew Blaine would be in homeroom, Kurt set his phone down and hugged a pillow to his chest, burying his face in it and letting out a low sob when he smelled Blaine in the fabric from when they'd been tangled up together that weekend. He hated himself, hated that he had to be so damn afraid of getting hurt that he would risk hurting Blaine. His heart ached in his chest, an awful sinking feeling long since settled over him.

He wrapped his arms tighter around the pillow, ignoring when his father knocked on the door to tell him he was going to work and cried himself dry.

By midday, his head was pounding from dehydration, eyes red and raw and he seriously considered simply staying there to die though his pounding head finally convinced him to get up and drag himself to the bathroom to take a hot shower, letting his mouth hang open to catch some of the water as it beat steadily against his skin.

He slumped back to his bedroom, flopping down on his bed and checking his phone hopefully heart sinking when it remained blank.

He considered calling Blaine again when he remembered he was still in school and decided to try texting him instead.

I'm sorry.

I love you.

I'm an idiot.

He waited, staring at the messages and trying to ignore the fact that the last messages Blaine had sent him were the ones that had gotten him in trouble with Mark and started this whole fiasco in the first place.

Please please call me, babe. I need to explain. I don't feel anything for Mark, I swear. Please talk to me.

A text popped up on his screen a minute later and his heart leapt, sinking back immediately when he saw Rachel's name on the screen.

Stop texting Blaine. He doesn't want to talk to you. For good reason.

Kurt scowled. Of course Blaine would have told her what had happened, they were close friends, but it didn't make being reprimanded by Rachel Berry any easier.

Please tell him to text me. I really need to talk to him. I love him and I made a...a stupid mistake. What about when you cheated on Finn, huh? The two of you got back together.

There was a long moment in which he waited, feeling a vindictive sense of pleasure at being able to call her out on what had happened the previous year.

Finn forgave me. I can't make Blaine forgive you.

Dammit, Berry, I love him, tell him to get that through his damn head and call me back.

He threw his phone moodily across the bed, crossing his arms and sulking. Punching his pillow into a more comfortable shape, he rolled onto his stomach, thinking it probably wasn't such a good idea to snap at his one connection to Blaine at the moment and grumbling as he groped for his phone and sent another text to Rachel.

I'm sorry. I'm just frustrated and angry at myself. I don't want to lose him.

Then fight for him.

He stared at Rachel's reply for a long moment before a rush of determination flooded through him. She was right. Sitting around and moping all week wasn't going to get him Blaine back, he had to think of a plan, something that would make Blaine understand just how sorry he was, that he was full aware of his own mistake and more than willing to do whatever it took to fix it.

Regionals were that Saturday and Kurt had spent the entire week frustrated beyond belief that he was cooped up in the house without anyone to talk to during the day. He was resolute though, had convinced his father to let him watch the competition, which was being held at McKinley that year. When he wasn't slouching around the house, bored out of his mind, he was working on trying to find a way to win Blaine back.

He'd spoken to Rachel a few times to see if there was any change in Blaine, though, according to her, he'd been quiet most of the week.

"He misses you," she'd told him when she'd come to visit Finn. "I can tell. He refuses to admit it but every time he thinks someone's not looking he looks like he's about to cry. He's not going to tell us though because he's still angry at you."

"Well, I'll figure it out," Kurt had said determinedly.

And now it was Saturday and he was on his way to McKinley, a bouquet of roses in the passenger seat and a plan set firmly in his mind. He wasn't letting Blaine slip through his fingers, not even if it meant throwing away his entire reputation.

The parking lot was packed when he arrived, shifting the car out of gear and taking a few steadying breaths before climbing out, roses clutched in his hand, already slick with nervous sweat. He paid the admission charge, fighting his way through the crowd toward the hall that led to the room behind the auditorium where the performing groups waited before going onstage, heart flipping anxiously in his chest.

"I'm not coming back to Dalton, Christian. And I'm definitely not coming back for you."

"After what that Hummel brat did to you, are you really saying I'm any worse?"

"Well you physically abused me so, yeah, I'd say you were worse."

Kurt stopped, poking his head around the corner of the hall, anger rising in his gut at the sight of Christian standing outside the greenroom with Blaine all but backed against the wall. He had the sudden urge to run down the hall and shove Christian away, to grab Blaine and kiss him. Had it really been almost a week

since he'd last kissed Blaine? He didn't think it was possible to miss a pair of lips so much, but his own were tingling with the need to press against Blaine's slow and sweet until they both forgot about this whole disaster.

"You were happier at Dalton, Blaine," Christian said. "You had all your friends there."

"I have friends at McKinley," Blaine snapped back, positively bristling with dislike. "And just because I refuse to talk to you doesn't mean I'm not still in contact with the other guys. Dalton's only two hours away, it's not like they live on another continent. I'm not coming back. Not to Dalton and *not* to you."

Christian sighed dramatically. "You always were one to put up a fight," he said shaking his head.

Kurt barely had a moment to register the shift in his expression from exasperation to fury before he was grabbing Blaine by the collar and pushing him roughly against the wall, pressing their bodies together and practically snarling.

"You're coming back to Dalton," he growled. "You're coming back and you're *going* to be with me again, Blaine. You know you're going to so just *stop* with the little games and—"

"Get your damn hands off him!"

Kurt stormed into the hall, fists clenched at his sides, the roses still clutched in one hand.

"Kurt." Blaine sounded faintly surprised, eyes widening at the sight of him, no doubt initially forgetting he was angry at him because of the current situation.

"Are you fucking kidding me?" Christian hissed, releasing Blaine's shirt and rounding on Kurt instead. "Thought you were suspended, Hummel."

"Thought you'd gotten the hint that Blaine's had enough of your worthless ass," Kurt retorted, grinding his teeth together. "Stay away from him. I thought I made it perfectly clear *last* time I kicked your ass. No crutches this time, Christian. I'm fully healed and I don't have any problem using my fists this time around."

Christian sneered. "Well, aren't you cute? Defending Blaine's honour when he hates you. So noble of you."

"Fuck off," Kurt snarled, taking another step forward.

"Yes, please do," Blaine mumbled, massaging his neck where the collar of his shirt had rubbed against it.

Christian's nostrils flared as he glared between the two of them, Kurt's jaw set and his fists trembling as he resisted the urge to drive them into Christian's face.

"Fine," Christian grunted at last. "Good luck, Blaine," he said mockingly before pushing past Kurt and striding back down the hall towards the entry.

A long minute of silence followed, Kurt shuffling awkwardly on his feet and Blaine watching him with an unreadable expression.

"What are you doing here, Kurt?" he said at last.

"I...I wanted to watch you perform," Kurt said. He chewed on his lip for a moment before holding out the now slightly bent roses. "I got these for, um, for you."

Something flashed behind Blaine's eyes and Kurt could have sworn that he saw the corner of his mouth twitch as if he was about to smile, but then the dullness returned and he shook his head.

"No," he said. "I'm not taking those."

"Why not?"

"Because taking them would mean I forgive you," Blaine said. "And I don't."

Kurt's heart sank into his stomach. "Blaine, p-please—"

"I'm not doing this, Kurt," he said wearily. "I told myself I wasn't going to let you pull me back in and I'm planning on keeping my own word."

Kurt's arm fell limply to his side. "I love you," he whispered brokenly.

Blaine's eyes brightened and he blinked a few times to clear it away.

"Don't you still love me?" Kurt said pleadingly.

Blaine didn't reply.

"I'll do whatever it takes, Blaine" Kurt said, not bothering to wipe his eyes as tears trickled down his cheeks. "Anything you want."

"Kurt—"

"I want to sing you something," Kurt said hurriedly. "Please. I-I came here for that too."

Blaine sighed and Kurt was sure he was going to simply turn and walk away. "I don't have much time," he mumbled, sounding reluctant.

"It won't take long," Kurt assured, hope swelling in his chest.

"Fine," Blaine sighed, leaning against the wall and folding his arms with an expectant look.

Kurt nodded, taking a few calming breaths to quiet his racing heart before taking a few steps towards Blaine so he was standing directly in front of him and looking him in the eye as he sang.

*I guess it's safe to say you're never coming back
And I understand why you wouldn't want to
I guess it's up to me to find a way to get to you*

Blaine looked taken aback, lips parting as he listened, some of the anger fading from his eyes, the wall he'd put up falling away, though Kurt could still see the hesitation there.

*And I can't see you
Getting used to
Living in the midst of your perfection
And I'm so lost
How can you trust
Somewhere the sun is always shining*

Kurt's voice shook and cracked on every word and he prayed that Blaine understood just how much he meant it, how sorry he was, how much he regretted his mistake, that he would do anything he wanted to get him back.

*And there's just one last thing that I have to say
As we reflect on the mess of all this that I've made
It was cowardice that made me push you away
I was so afraid cause you were so much better than me*

He hesitated for a moment before reaching for Blaine's hand, heart leaping excitedly when he didn't pull away from the touch, allowing him to take it lightly in his own though he didn't return the pressure.

*I guess it's safe to say you're never coming back
And I understand why you wouldn't want to
I guess it's up to me to find a way to get to you*

Kurt sniffed and scrubbed his eyes with his sleeve, letting Blaine's hand go and holding out the roses with a hopeful look.

Blaine accepted them with a conflicted look.

"Kurt...I can't," he said, shaking his head. "I can't go back to someone who...who did what you did. I told myself that after Christian, I wasn't going to let anyone else hurt me. I let you hurt me enough before and...and I thought you'd changed—"

"I *have*," Kurt insisted, a fresh wave of tears hitting him hard.

"I'm sorry, Kurt," Blaine said heavily. "I just...I don't think I can believe that now."

"Blaine, please..."

"I have to go," Blaine said as the lights above the greenroom door behind them flashed. He held up the roses in an attempt to hand them back.

"Keep them," Kurt said, shaking his head. "I still want to wish you good luck. Even if it's not as your boyfriend."

The word seemed to hit Blaine harder than he'd anticipated, his face falling slightly. He looked down at the roses, gnawing at the inside of his cheek.

"Thanks," he said quietly.

"Sure," Kurt muttered, shrugging. His limbs felt like lead. All week he'd been hoping to simply come in and sweep Blaine off his feet, that everything would be fine again and he would have to feel so damn miserable all the time.

But it wasn't fine. Blaine didn't want him back.

"I'm sorry," Kurt said, hanging his head. "I really...*really* am. I love you, Blaine."

"I know," Blaine said, turning away from him and disappearing into the greenroom where the rest of the Glee Club was still waiting.

Kurt released a shuddering breath, wiping the back of his hand across his eyes and dragging his feet back towards the entry, thinking he could at least watch Blaine perform, even if every second was going to hurt.

"Mr. Hummel."

Kurt looked up at the sharp voice, swearing quietly when Figgins strode across the entry towards him with a stern look. He saw Christian at the doorway wearing a smug smirk as he ducked outside, looking triumphant.

"Er...yes...sir?" Kurt said.

"You're suspended," Figgins said. "That includes school-related activities."

"I just want to watch Blaine perform," Kurt pleaded.

"I'm sorry but you need to go," Figgins said.

Kurt sighed, shoulders slumping in defeat as he glanced at the auditorium doors before making his way outside, hating Christian and hoping that Blaine wouldn't think he'd abandoned him. He pulled out his phone and texted Rachel, knowing she could at least relay the information to Blaine.

Figgins kicked me out because of my suspension. Tell Blaine I'm sorry. I really wanted to watch. Good luck.

He paused before adding at the end.

Tell him I love him.

Will do.

He shoved his phone back into his pocket climbing into his car and punching the steering wheel as anger flared inside him. He let his head fall forward, shoulders shaking with quiet sobs and tears streaming hot and fast down his face.

"Why do I screw *everything* up?" he choked, gripping the steering wheel so tight his fingers hurt.

His phone buzzed in his pocket and he pulled it out, expecting to see another message from Rachel. His stomach clenched in anticipation when Blaine's name flashed on the screen instead and he released a choked laugh at the four words across it.

I'll think about it.

Chapter Twenty-Five

With his suspension ending Monday, Kurt made sure to wake up early that morning, carefully picking out his outfit—tight grey pants, a fitted white shirt under a dark vest that hugged his shoulders and waist, and a pair of black boots that clung tight to his calves.

He examined his reflection in the mirror, his hair swept up neatly rather than the messy, casual style he usually had. If he was going to try and get Blaine to forgive him, he didn't think looking like a hoodlum would help his case.

He hadn't talked much to Blaine since Saturday besides replying to his text with "I swear I won't let you down again". Blaine had sent him a message later telling him they'd won Regionals, to which Kurt had replied with a long apology about not being able to watch the performance because of Christian.

Slipping on his leather jacket and sunglasses, he scooped his keys off his desk, prepared to ride his new Harley for the first time since his father had gotten it for him now that it was starting to warm up.

"Be careful," Burt said severely when Kurt grabbed the helmet Blaine had given him from the shelf and strapped it on reluctantly.

"I will be," Kurt said, resisting the urge to roll his eyes. He made his way to the garage, taking a moment to admire the gleaming chrome and sleek black paint of the bike before swinging his leg over the seat and adjusting his jacket before starting the engine, the low rumble a calming, familiar sound to him that he'd missed more than he realised.

For a moment, he closed his eyes and breathed in the smell of exhaust and oil, smiling faintly as he revved the engine and shifted into gear, pulling slowly down the driveway and out onto the main road, pale spring sunlight streaming through the trees to dapple the pavement with tiny specks of gold.

The dull chill of winter still clung to the air and his fingers were nearly numb around the handlebars by the time he reached the school, though he didn't mind given that he was finally able to ride again. He only had two more physical therapy sessions left over the next two weeks, plus a final check-up the month after, and he'd finally, *finally* be done with everything related to the accident. All he wanted to do was put it behind him.

He slipped off his helmet and checked his hair in the rearview mirror, adjusting his sunglasses as he made his way into the school, smirking a little when a group of freshmen drew away from him when he passed.

"So, I see you've got your strut back," Santana said with a faint grin as she pulled away from the group of Cheerios she was standing with to walk with him. "So are you and Blaine doing it again then?"

"No," Kurt said, mood dipping at the thought of Blaine. He cleared his throat and straightened up. "But soon. I'm going to woo him."

Santana snorted. "Your definition of 'wooing'," she made dramatic air-quotes and rolled her eyes, "is two shots of tequila and a dark closet."

Kurt pulled a face. "Well...I actually care about Blaine," he said tersely. "I think you know it's going to take a lot more than alcohol to convince him to take me back."

Santana hummed in reply, nodding slowly. "Well good luck," she said, patting his shoulder in what seemed to be real sympathy. "He seemed pretty out of it last week. But he kept those flowers you gave him so... Very cute, by the way."

"Hey, Blaine likes that sort of thing," Kurt said defensively.

"Right, well... good luck with that," she said, nudging his elbow and nodding down the hall where Blaine was at his locker chatting with Rachel.

Kurt pretended to look at Santana, though he was actually watching Blaine out of the corner of his eye behind his sunglasses, a thrill of excitement and smugness going through him when Blaine looked past Rachel at him, eyes widening and throat bobbing as he swallowed. He could almost catch him trip on his words as he turned back to Rachel, who glanced over her shoulder, frowning.

"Go away," Kurt hissed to Santana. She rolled her eyes and scoffed quietly but turned and walked in the opposite direction all the same.

Rachel gave him an appraising look before nodding slightly and pursing her lips in a severe line before saying something to Blaine that Kurt couldn't make out and walking away briskly.

Blaine dithered for a moment, trying to call her back, tensing when Kurt leaned against the lockers next to him, pulling off his sunglasses and pocketing them.

"Hey," he said timidly as Blaine returned to pulling his books from his locker and slipping them carefully in his bag. Kurt tried not to be too please about the slight tremor in his hand.

"Hello," Blaine replied brusquely.

"Did you have a good weekend?"

Blaine shrugged jerkily. "It was okay." He paused. "Some guy gave me flowers."

Kurt hummed softly, biting back a small smile.

"I think he has a crush on me," Blaine concluded, pulling another notebook from his locker.

"I think it's more than a crush," Kurt said quietly.

Blaine fumbled his notebook, huffing when it slipped and fell with a soft *thwap* to the ground. Kurt bent down to pick it up, biting his tongue hard when he saw the dark colour rising up Blaine's face.

"Thanks," he mumbled.

"No problem," Kurt said, allowing his fingers to linger on the notebook for a few seconds, the tips brushing against Blaine's for a brief moment.

Blaine kept his gaze connected to Kurt's still holding the notebook out before he seemed to catch himself and looked away hastily.

"Right, well... I have to go to homeroom," he said, looking adorably flustered and making Kurt wish more than anything that he could just push him lightly against the locker and kiss him.

"Right," Kurt said, nodding. "I'll see you later then."

Blaine nodded curtly, shutting his locker and swinging his bag over his shoulder as he strode off.

"I love you!" Kurt said loudly.

"Stop staring at my ass, you're not allowed to do that yet," Blaine called in reply, not looking back at him.

Kurt grinned, biting his lip and tearing his eyes away from Blaine's ass—he couldn't help but look, really, Blaine couldn't blame him—and heading for his own locker with a slight spring in his step.

He planned his path throughout the day to intercept Blaine as often as possible, slipping notes between the slits in his locker whenever he got a chance and watching from the doorway of nearby classrooms when Blaine opened them with a look of mild exasperation, though Kurt could see a small smile tugging at the corners of his lips when he put the pages in his pocket after glancing around to make sure Kurt wasn't there.

At lunch, Kurt sat by himself, shooing away Puck and Santana and ignoring his food as he stared openly at Blaine from across the room. Blaine's eyes flicked in his direction every few minutes, a faint blush creeping up his cheeks when he turned back to Rachel, who was sitting across from him and casting Kurt disapproving looks every few minutes. Kurt sent a few equally scathing glares back at her whenever he was certain Blaine wasn't going to see them – he knew Blaine would disapprove if he was rude to his friends, but Kurt had no doubt that Rachel had been insulting him constantly for the past weeks.

He was distracted by Mike and Tina walking through the doors. He met Mike's gaze steadily, not looking away until Mike sighed in exasperation and nodded before letting Tina drag him to Blaine and Rachel's table. As they sat down, Kurt watched Mike dig into his bag and withdraw a crisply folded piece of white paper, which he handed to Blaine with a few words.

Blaine took it from him, his eyebrows furrowed in curiosity as he unfolded the note before his face smoothed out into the same long-suffering expression he wore every time Kurt managed to slip him another note. However, he didn't hide the way the corners of his lips twitched up as he read the whole letter. By the time he was scanning the bottom of the page, there was something similar to a full-blown smile on his lips.

He looked up and met Kurt's gaze, his cheeks lightly stained with a pink blush until Rachel's hand gripped his arm and drew his attention back into the conversation.

Kurt wondered which part of the note was making him blush. Whether it was the extremely soppy lines that Kurt had stolen from every romantic comedy he had forced himself to watch to get some ideas of how to adequately make it up to Blaine; or if it was the last paragraph that Kurt had spent the whole of English slaving over, trying to make it perfect.

Either way, after Kurt had shoved the last forkfuls of his salad into his mouth, he left the cafeteria with the memory of Blaine's smile and a feeling of achievement filling his veins.

When he arrived at Glee, the choir room was empty. He glanced at the clock to see that it was barely the end of the school – he hadn't noticed that he'd been let out of his lesson early. He walked slowly across the empty the room, his footsteps loud in the silence, before collapsing onto one of the hard plastic chairs.

He slid down the seat so he could rest his head on the sharp, uncomfortable edge and try to nap for the next few minutes; school had taken a surprising amount out of him. Maybe it was because he usually spent the day catching up on lost sleep instead of plotting ways to leave Blaine notes and get him to smile.

The noises from the bustling hallway masked the quiet footsteps, and Kurt started when a sudden voice spoke from only a few feet away, sitting bolt upright in his chair, his eyes flying open.

"Hey."

Blaine stood in front of him, his hands shoved deep in his pockets and his eyes focused on his feet, which were scuffing across the tiled floor nervously.

"Hey," Kurt replied.

"So, I have you to thank for all of these, huh?" Blaine lifted his hands from his pockets, revealing dozens of white slips of paper clutched in his hands. Kurt caught sight of his own handwriting, words like *love* and *sorry* peeking out from between Blaine's fingers.

Kurt smiled hopefully and pushed himself to his feet. His hands hung limp by his sides, his fingers played nervously with the buttons on the pockets on the sides of his pants.

"I... Blaine, I'm so *sorry*."

He tried to get closer to Blaine, but the familiar guarded expression was set on his face and he quickly stepped back, watching Kurt cautiously.

Kurt knew that he didn't deserve Blaine's trust yet, but that didn't stop it from hurting. He just wanted his Blaine back.

"I'm sorry," he said again, his shoulders slumped. "I really, really am. Mark honestly means *nothing* to me, Blaine. What you walked in on... That kiss... It didn't mean anything to me. It's a stupid, *stupid* mistake that I never wanted to happen; I didn't *plan* it or anything like that, I swear."

He took a deep breath and looked up at Blaine, who was still watching him with that damn emotionless mask in place.

"Blaine, I was stupid. The kiss was stupid. All it did was make me see that *you* are the only person that I want to be with like that. You're the only person I *ever* want to be with. I can't... I can't live without you, Blaine, I've been a mess these last few weeks. I'm sorry, and I'll never stop apologising, but please say that you can forgive me? Because I'm not sure what I'll do without you..."

He trailed off, not sure whether he was allowed to say *I love you* to Blaine's face yet. The words were caught in his throat, desperate to burst out but he forced his lips shut and waited for Blaine to say something to break the awful tension between them.

Blaine was looking at him in shock, his eyes wide and his eyebrows raised as he blinked at Kurt.

I love you, I love you, I love you.

"Do you still love me?" Kurt asked quietly, hating how soft and weak his voice sounded.

"I... Yes. Of course I do. I never *stopped* loving you."

Kurt felt like crying in relief. "Can you forgive me enough to be with me again?"

Blaine sighed gently and Kurt was pretty sure his heart stopped beating for a moment until Blaine took a step forward so there was barely an inch between them and reached down to hold Kurt's hand. He looked at the way their fingers fits so perfectly between each other before glancing up at Kurt between his lashes, his eyes glinting with teasing mischievous.

"You're not getting any for a *very* long time," he said eventually and Kurt choked out a laugh, throwing his arms tightly around Blaine's shoulders and burying his face in Blaine's neck.

"I don't even care," he said, the words muffled by Blaine's skin. "I'd taking a fucking chastity vow before I lost you again."

Blaine's hands slid up his arms to separate Kurt from him. Kurt was about to protest before he found himself being pulled down to Blaine's height, his lips soft against Kurt's as his arms wrapped firmly around his waist. Kurt responded in a moment, sinking fully in Blaine's embrace like he had been dreaming about for weeks.

His fingers tightened their grip on Blaine's shirt as he ran his tongue along Blaine's lips until they opened. He moaned softly when he felt Blaine's tongue warm against his and all he could think was how overwhelmingly *right* it felt to be with Blaine again.

"I love you," he whispered, his head resting against Blaine's forehead so he could breathe the words.

Blaine smiled as he kissed him, lingering and chaste and everything that Kurt had been missing so desperately. "I love you too."

When the rest of the Glee club entered the choir room, Kurt and Blaine were gone.

There hadn't been much discussion, but there was a general consensus between them that they weren't going to be able to cuddle up to each other effectively on the plastic chairs in the choir room, and even if they did, neither felt like feeling the rest of the Glee club's disapproving glares on the back on their necks.

So, instead, they found themselves in the backseat of Blaine's car. Kurt was half-sitting, half-lying with Blaine sprawled across his chest, his head cradled in the against Kurt's collarbone. Kurt's hands were carding rhythmically through Blaine's hair, causing him to emit sounds of happiness every once and a while.

This is where I belong, Kurt thought as his eyes slid closed, Blaine's contented sighs vibrating across his chest.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Kurt was trying to contain his excitement as he lounged in his seat, staring at the clouds below him. The only one who knew that he was feeling anything more than boredom was Blaine, who was returning Kurt's iron-like grip with equal pressure.

Of course, Blaine being Blaine, he had no care about dignity and was bouncing up and down in his seat like a five year old, providing a constant stream of quiet chatter in Kurt's ear. Kurt was taking it good naturedly, enjoying Blaine's enthusiasm.

"Vegas, Kurt," he said for the eightieth time since they took off. "I've never been further than Iowa, and that doesn't count because I was only visiting my grandma."

"I know, Blaine, you've mentioned," Kurt said, turning away from the window to smile teasingly at his boyfriend.

Blaine looked guilty as he returned Kurt's grin. "Sorry, I'm just... excited."

"I'm not judging you, I'm just thinking that if you have all of this pent up energy, there are better ways that we could be getting rid of than talking."

As he spoke, he pulled his hand out of Blaine's and trailed his fingertips over the thin line of exposed skin where his t-shirt had ridden up. Blaine flushed but let Kurt's teasing continue until he tried to dip his fingers under his jeans.

Kurt pouted as Blaine grabbed his wrist to halt the slow exploration.

"You're no fun," he grumbled.

Blaine rolled his eyes as his hand slipped down so their fingers were twined together, resting on Blaine's thigh.

"And you're supposed to be concentrating on Nationals, not having sex with me."

Kurt raised an eyebrow and leaned in close so his lips brushed against the shell of Blaine's ear as he spoke. "And how do you expect me to think about anything else when you're just looking so delectable beside me?"

He enjoyed the way Blaine's breath stuttered as his tongue ran lightly across his sensitive ear and how his grip on Kurt's hand tightened until it was almost painful. It had been so fucking long since Kurt had touched Blaine. He knew it wasn't a punishment; he knew that Blaine wanted to make sure that he could trust Kurt not to break his heart like he had last time and he knew that he definitely deserved it, but that didn't stop the sexual frustration from taking over every once and a while.

He lightly bit Blaine's earlobe as he cuddled as close as he could to Blaine's side, his ribs digging uncomfortably against the armrest between them. It was probably his soft moan when Blaine's free hand cupped the back of his neck to keep him close that alerted Santana to their activities.

"Oi, boys, no sex on the plane. There are rules against that."

Kurt pulled away, disgruntled. If it wasn't for the wonders of masturbation and the promise of a hotel room when they touched down then he would probably be reaching over the seats to slap Santana's smug smile off her face.

Blaine squeezed his hand as he slumped back into his chair, settling for giving Santana the finger as he moodily stared out of the window again.

"You're far too obsessed with sex," Blaine said teasingly, nudging Kurt's arm with his elbow and drawing his attention back to his boyfriend.

"Two months," Kurt reminded him. "I'm not built to go this long without sex, Blaine."

"Well..." He blushed as he cast a nervous glance around the plane to check that everyone else was firmly involved with their own conversations before saying, "That is why they invented masturbation." He brightened up as he added loudly, "Besides, we're in Vegas so that will distract you."

"My hand is nowhere near as good as yours," Kurt sulked, slumping down further in his chair.

Blaine simply grinned and grabbed the book Kurt had been attempting to read earlier in the flight, leaning over the armrest to lean his head against Kurt's shoulder. Kurt remained stoic for a few minutes before sighing and resting his cheek on top of Blaine's hair.

Vegas was very flat and very hot. The minibus that Mr. Schuester had ordered to take them to the hotel was cramped and Rachel had somehow snuck onto the bench between Blaine and Kurt and was solidly ignoring Kurt as she chatted to Blaine. Even with the air-conditioning on, Kurt was sweating uncomfortably.

"Puckerman, if you don't get your hand out my crotch then I will cut your dick off!"

"Santana!" Mr. Schuester warned from the front seat.

Kurt grinned as he watched Puck twitch away from Santana in the seats in front of him, obviously just having been pinched hard. He turned back to Blaine and Rachel, hoping to find something of interest there but only succeeding in listening to the tail end of an enthusiastic conversation about graduation which he turned away from moodily.

Instead, he contented himself with staring out of the window at the scrubby bushes, sand and chain link fences until they slowly gave way to tall hotels and restaurants.

Puck had given up annoying Santana and had started playing a game with Finn on who could spot the landmarks before the other and then who could obnoxiously shout it louder.

"Hard rock café!" Finn practically screamed behind Kurt's head.

"Shut up, Finn," Kurt growled, twisting in his seat to fix his step-brother with a sharp glare. Finn cowered back and shut his mouth while Puck sniggered in front. Kurt kicked his seat weakly as he went back to staring out of the window.

At some point, Blaine leaned over Rachel to squeeze Kurt's hand and grin at him excitedly, unbothered by the stuffy, claustrophobic interior of the bus.

"Vegas, Kurt," he mouthed happily before Rachel was demanding his attention again.

Much to Puck and Finn's, very loud, distress they weren't staying at Monte Carlo or Luxor or any of the iconic hotels with casinos (and strippers, Puck added with a pout), but Kurt was happy just to get out of the car and stretch his legs a little. Blaine was standing behind him, his arms slipping around Kurt's waist and pulling him back against Blaine's chest as they surveyed the cream hotel in front of them, ringed with palm trees.

"It doesn't look bad," Blaine noted, "I don't know what they're complaining about."

"The lack of women in bikinis, in Puck's case," Kurt said as they watched Puck stalk round to haul his suitcase out of the van, glaring at unassuming hotel.

Blaine wrinkled his nose in distaste. "Ew. Women in bikinis."

"Don't put it down until you try it, hobbit," Santana said, pinky finger linked with Brittany as they followed Mr. Schuester into the shade of the reception. Blaine's whole face scrunched up and he shook his head adorably as if trying to rid himself of the image of Santana and Brittany together.

Kurt laughed and pulled him forward to grab their cases as well. "Come on, stop thinking about lesbian sex and let's get out of the sun before I burn."

They were last into the lobby where Mr. Schuester was addressing the group.

"-can explore as much as you like, but make sure you're with at least one other person and the rest of the group know where you are. No drinking and no gambling, either." He sent a pointed stare at Puck who held up his palms. "We have four rooms, no fighting about your roommates, and couples can't stay together. Be back at a reasonable time because we're rehearsing tomorrow." He paused as he looked around the group before breaking into a large grin. "Go New Directions!"

"I don't know how you're going to manage to sleep in the same room as Rachel. Aren't you scared she's going to kill you while you sleep?" Kurt asked as he and Blaine wandered down the sidewalk in the centre of the city.

Blaine glared at him. "Kurt," he said warningly, "she's my friend."

Kurt rolled his eyes but refrained from commenting.

"So," Blaine continued brightly, "is Vegas all you wanted it to be and more?"

"It's no New York, and it's definitely a lot less appealing when I can't get drunk and wake up to find myself married, but it's better than Ohio."

"Married, huh?"

"Not like- I didn't mean, like, married to you... Not that that would be awful. It's just- well..."

"I know," Blaine interrupted with a laugh. "I just like watching you squirm. But if you do go on a drinking spree, I would prefer if you marry me than a random stripper. It will be less awkward in the morning and we definitely wouldn't regret the sex."

Kurt smiled and swung their hands slightly as they walked.

"What about you? Enjoying being further west than your grandma in Iowa?"

"Definitely." Blaine was smiling, his face tilted back as if to soak up all of the sun while he could. "Like you said, anywhere is better than Ohio. And we're going to win Nationals in two days, so that's making me happy too."

"You're far too optimistic for your own good."

They walked in silence for a little while longer, exploring the myriad of streets, stopping every few steps to point out something else that they'd only ever seen in pictures. Within half an hour, Blaine's camera and Kurt's phone were full of pictures of the two of them posing cheesily outside of all the landmarks they could reach (and many more that Blaine had snapped surreptitiously of Kurt being Kurt, laughing and carefree, but he wasn't going to let Kurt know about those or he knew he would find them all deleted within the day).

They all gathered at the end of the day and stopped at one of the massive buffets on the strip for dinner, Kurt picking at a salad and bowl of fruit as Blaine tried vainly to sample everything only to give up after his first plate, sighing longingly at the chocolate fountain in the corner of the room.

"You know," Kurt muttered, leaning across the table towards him. "If you want, we can take some of that chocolate with us and you could lick it off me." He waggled his eyebrows suggestively and Blaine rolled his eyes though his cheeks tinged pink.

"Are you done?" Kurt said, pushing his own plate away.

"Yeah," Blaine said, sounding mildly dejected and glancing at where Puck, Finn, Sam, and the other boys were stuffing their faces without any semblance of dignity or table manners, the girls sitting on the other end of the room and flashing them disapproving looks.

"Let's get back to the hotel before anyone else is finished," Kurt muttered, tugging Blaine's hand and pulling him towards the door after hastily paying for their meal. He hailed a taxi and they both climbed inside, Blaine pressing his hands against the window and gaping at the flashing lights of the strip as they rode along, Kurt trailing his fingers hopefully along Blaine's thigh and back.

Blaine was still in wide-eyed awe when they reached the hotel chattering on about something he'd seen, Kurt too distracted staring at his ass to pay much attention.

"Well, we should probably get some sleep," Blaine said when they stopped outside the door of the room he was sharing with Rachel, blinking owlishly and yawning.

Kurt opened his mouth to protest, angry and horny and annoyed, but closed it quickly and nodded, reminding himself that he couldn't force Blaine to trust him no matter how much he missed sex.

"Alright," he sighed, "I'll see you in the morning." He leaned forward to give Blaine a quick kiss, yelping in surprise when Blaine grabbed the hem of his shirt and pulled him into the room, kicking the door shut behind him.

"You really think I'd give up an empty hotel room in Vegas just because I'm tired?" Blaine said, sounding amused as he teased the buttons on Kurt's shirt before popping them open and pushing him towards the bed.

"Oh my god, I love you," Kurt groaned, nerves already buzzing excitedly as he sat down hard and pulled Blaine into his lap to kiss him, grabbing the back of his head in one hand to hold him in place, fingers tangling in his hair, and squeezing his ass with the other.

Blaine gasped and jumped in his lap and Kurt pulled back anxiously.

"Sorry, I—too much?" he said, hand hovering over Blaine's lower back.

"Shut up," Blaine groaned, yanking his shirt over his head and shoving Kurt back onto the mattress, mouth latching onto the side of his neck to suck hard.

"Jesus...fuck." Kurt bucked his hips up, hands smoothing over the shifting muscle on Blaine's back. He slid his hands up to grip Blaine's face and pull him up from where he was nipping over his neck to look at him.

"I missed you," he said seriously.

Blaine's face softened a little as he smiled, humming against Kurt's lips when he kissed him firmly.

"I missed you too," he murmured, nuzzling Kurt's cheek. "But talk later."

Kurt laughed, dropping his head back as Blaine ground his hips down before fumbling with his belt and lifting himself up to try and pull off his jeans only to fall onto the bed next to Kurt with a shout of laughter.

Kurt tugged off his own jeans before climbing into Blaine's lap and wrapping his arms around his neck. Blaine shimmied out of his jeans and kicked them away before pulling Kurt flush against his lap and raking his nails lightly over his lower back.

"What do you want?" Kurt murmured, kissing along Blaine's jaw and up to his ear. "Tell me what you want, Blaine. Anything. I swear, I just... don't leave me, please, I—"

"Kurt," Blaine said gently, cutting over his nervous babbling. "Stop."

Kurt blinked a few times and looked up away from him "Sorry," he muttered. "Being... stupid."

"It's not stupid," Blaine said, stroking over his cheek. "He's gone to a different school and we don't have to worry about him or Christian anymore, okay?"

"I'm sorry I screw up so much," Kurt mumbled.

Blaine sighed softly and kissed the underside of his jaw.

"C'mere," he murmured, cupping his chin and kissing him gently, coaxing his lips open with his tongue and sliding his hand up the back of his shirt to splay his warm fingers across his spine.

Kurt sighed and ran his fingers up the nape of Blaine's neck, pushing into the kiss and breathing sharply through his nose. Blaine dropped his other hand between their bodies and shaped it loosely around Kurt's half-hard cock, rubbing and squeezing gently until Kurt was whining into his mouth and rutting against his lap.

Kurt tightening his arms around Blaine's shoulders and Blaine wrapped both arms securely around Kurt's waist to pull him even closer so their cocks rubbed together, the rough friction of the fabric making Kurt shiver and dig his fingers into the back of Blaine's neck.

Blaine pulled back to lean his forehead against Kurt's, watching him with a soft smile and mouthing 'I love you' before kissing down his jaw and burying his face in his neck as their bodies moved together, Kurt's legs wrapped around Blaine's waist Blaine panted against his neck, whispering nonsense and groaning until his fingers sank into Kurt's back.

Kurt rocked against him a few times before Blaine whimpered at the over-sensitivity and dipped his hand into Kurt's briefs to wrap around his cock and pump his fist lazily, watching him through hooded eyes and breathing heavily. He squeezed the base of Kurt's cock and twisted his wrist, catching Kurt's lips against his own as he worked him through his orgasm.

Kurt slumped in his lap and rested his forehead against Blaine's shoulder, closing his eyes and kissing the hot skin of his neck.

"Love you," he murmured.

Blaine hummed and kissed his ear in reply, slipping his hand free and wiping it clean on the towel draped across the chair next to the bed.

"I need to make sure housekeeping gets that before Rachel accidentally uses it," he muttered absently.

Kurt laughed silently against his shoulder before straightening in his lap and smiling softly

"We should, um... clean up," he said "Before the others get back."

Blaine nodded but didn't loosen his arm around his waist.

"Blaine, I need to get up," Kurt said, laughing when Blaine tightened both arms around him and buried his face in his shoulder, shaking his head. He sighed after a moment and let his arms fall to his sides, pouting when Kurt climbed off his lap, grimacing at the stickiness in his underwear, which he peeled off and simply threw in the trash.

"I'm taking a shower," he said, slipping off his shirt as he made his way to the bathroom. He stood under the cool spray for a few minutes, washing off the dust and grime of the day and feeling an immense sense of relief that Blaine was beginning to fully trust him again. He's missed sex, there was no denying that, but more than anything he'd missed being close to Blaine.

He stepped out onto the bathmat, toweling his hair absently as he made his way back to the bedroom, water cooling on his bare skin and making him shiver.

"I just don't see—*why are you naked?*"

Kurt jumped and fumbled to try and wrap the towel around his waist, Rachel hiding her face and turning away from him.

"Why are you in our room?" Rachel shouted.

"I was visiting my boyfriend," Kurt snapped, finally managing to straighten the towel so it was slung low around his hips. "And I like to shower after sex, Berry."

Rachel sputtered and Blaine groaned with embarrassment. Kurt simply smirked as he pulled on his shirt, letting the towel slip to the ground before tugging on his jeans. He walked past Rachel, ignoring her and wrapping one arm around Blaine's waist to give him a kiss, letting their lips smack together loudly before pulling away and giving his ass a rough squeeze.

"See you in the morning," he muttered, gathering up his shoes and phone before making his way out into the hall, stifling a laugh when he heard Rachel reprimanding Blaine.

Finn wasn't in the room when he arrived, stripping out of his clothes and changing into pajamas before climbing into bed, his phone toning with a new message.

Jerk.

He laughed and tapped out a reply, smiling and burrowing into the pillows. around him.

I couldn't resist. How angry was she?

She said I should have made you wait longer after what you did. Also, she was mad we did it on her bed.

Oh my god, that was her bed?

...I wasn't really paying attention to what bed we ended up on.

I really love you, you know that?

I know.

No, Blaine. I really do.

I know, Kurt. I love you too. :)

I'll see you in the morning.

Kay.

Sweet dreams.

You too.

Kurt flipped off the lamp on the side table, tugging the blanket up to his ears and ignoring the sounds of the other boys racing each other up and down the hallway as he tucked his phone against his chest, smiling to himself and gradually dropping off to sleep.

Chapter Twenty-Seven

They won Nationals.

That in itself would have been enough to make Kurt happy for the next month, however when combined with the post-victory high making Blaine extremely open to most forms of sexual activity, Kurt wasn't sure if he would ever stop smiling.

"Shh." The noise was murmured against Blaine's neck as Kurt mouthed his way up to his lips. He kissed Blaine deeply, trying to muffle his desperate gasps as Kurt's hand moved steadily around Blaine's cock. "You'll wake Puck."

Kurt had rejected Puck's invitation to down several bottles of celebratory beer in favour of inviting Blaine to his room so they could enjoy some privacy without fear of interruption from Berry, who was still determined to cockblock them at every opportunity. Puck had marched back through the door half an hour ago, completely drunk and unaware to fact he was in the wrong room as he face planted onto Finn's empty bed and promptly fell asleep. Blaine had immediately frozen under Kurt, waiting until Puck's deep snores had permeated the silence before relaxing again.

Blaine bit his lip to muffle his moans as he came across Kurt's hand. His eyes were wide and unfocused, his cheeks flushed and his mouth pink and swollen from being bitten and kissed so often.

"You look positively debauched," Kurt said with a grin as he wiped his fingers clean on the duvet.

Blaine had regained enough of his senses to roll over, pushing Kurt so he was lying on his back as Blaine straddled his legs.

"You're the one to blame for that," he murmured. Kurt didn't answer, the words catching in his throat as Blaine's hand slipped south from his nipple, raising goose bumps on his chest and stomach as he trailed his fingers down to grasp Kurt's cock. "Let me return the favour."

The flight back to Ohio was equally as boring as the one to Vegas. Despite Blaine's change in attitude towards sex, he still wouldn't let Kurt do anything fun, and Sky Mall wasn't a very good reread. Instead, Kurt had opted to close his eyes and attempt to tune the others out and sleep for a few hours.

However Rachel Berry wasn't the sort of person who could be tuned out.

"It's going to be so much better to graduate with a Nationals trophy in the choir room," she was saying to Finn. "We're going to leave school in a few weeks with the knowledge that we accomplished something in our final year."

Kurt frowned, turning his head towards the window and trying to ignore the conversation.

Finn's enthusiastic agreement still managed to filter into his head. "And you'll get, like, bragging rights at NYADA and in New York," he added.

Rachel's squeal was unpleasantly high. "I can't wait, it's going to be amazing!"

"Kurt?" Blaine dragged his attention away from Rachel and Finn.

"What?"

"You just look kind of... angry," Blaine said tentatively. "Are you okay?"

"Fine."

Kurt turned away, his arms crossed over his chest and his face lined with a scowl. He was probably the very picture of not okay, but Blaine had the sense enough not to push for the rest of the flight.

That didn't mean that he'd forgotten it though. They stuck to the more pleasant conversations of winning Nationals and spending the summer together as they landed and met their parents with hugs and shouts of 'congratulations' echoing from everyone. Blaine's mother had swooped down on Kurt as he tried to leave with his family, inviting him over for dinner that evening, which was accepted as soon as Burt had nodded his permission.

"So," Blaine said as Kurt collapsed onto his bed, his mother having shooed them up to his room while she started cooking, "what was up on the plane?"

Kurt waved his hand. "Nothing important compared to the fact that we're alone in your bedroom right now, and not having sex would be a waste of a wonderful opportunity."

"My mother's downstairs."

"We'll be quiet." Kurt smirked and sat up, reaching forward to grab Blaine's hands in an attempt to pull him down onto the bed.

Blaine resisted, stepping back and perching on the edge of his chair instead.

"You looked upset, though. I don't want to ignore that."

Kurt rolled his eyes up to the ceiling. "Listening to Rachel and Finn wax lyrical about how great graduation is going to be just set my teeth on edge."

Blaine's whole demeanour seemed to soften and Kurt wished that he wouldn't look so fucking understanding.

Trust Blaine to be the one to get that although he'd never shown it outwardly, Kurt had been looking to graduating. That he'd been looking forward to getting out of school and its suffocating rules and regulations. Hell, Kurt had just wanted to leave the stupid, backward hick town behind him for good.

Despite his grades, he'd never actually considered that he wouldn't make it and, suddenly, he found himself facing another year. An entire twelve months of the same god-awful repetition without Puck or Santana. They'd both made it out.

Even the knowledge that he'd have a wonderful boyfriend to be with him didn't dull the sting of failure that jolted through him every time he remembered.

"Hey," Blaine said softly and crossed the space between them that had seemed to grow colder as the silence lengthened. He nudged Kurt's legs open so he could stand between them. "You know that it's not your fault, right? I mean, yes, you shouldn't have been riding so fast or carelessly, but it isn't because you aren't good enough to get out."

"You always know what to say."

"I'm serious. You'll be graduating next year. With me. And then we'll go wherever we want."

Kurt hummed in agreement. "And I've already done the beginning of senior year so I won't even need to go into classes for first few months."

Blaine glared at him and Kurt sighed.

"Fine," he relented, "I'll sit through lessons. But only because I'll be holding out for a quickie in the janitor's closet at lunch."

"Kurt," Blaine chastised, but Kurt could see the hint of a smile.

"Possibly between classes, too. But you'll have to work hard because, as you know, my stamina is impressive."

"Kurt," Blaine laughed this time, all the severity lost.

He reached up to wrap his arms around Blaine's waist and tug him down so he was kneeling on the corner of the mattress and his lips were in kissing distance.

Just in time for Blaine's mother's voice to echo upstairs. "Blaine! Kurt! Come down for food!"

Blaine smiled as Kurt just groaned disgruntledly.

"Later," he promised, sealing it with a sweet kiss.

Kurt managed to keep his mouth shut through most of dinner, answering Blaine's mother politely when she asked about the competition or what their plans for the summer were-he didn't think it would be apropos to tell her that he planned on fucking her son on every surface imaginable over the next few months and instead said he was going to be helping his father at the shop for extra cash. Blaine watched him with his usual big, lovestruck eyes, smiling softly and pinching his hand under the table every time it trailed a little too far up his thigh. Eventually they finished eating and, after helping Blaine's mother clear the dishes and say goodbye-she was going to Columbus to see a show with some of her friends, though Kurt caught the knowing smile she gave him as she slipped out the front door-he was finally able to drag Blaine back upstairs and into his bedroom to collapse on his bed in a tangle of limbs.

"You really don't waist any time, do you?" Blaine said, grinning as he watched Kurt sit up to slip his shirt over his head.

"Mmm, why would I when you look so good lying here waiting for me?" Kurt murmured, leaving a few short, sucking kisses along Blaine's jaw.

"Keep talking like that and you'll be the one waiting for me," Blaine teased. "Alone. On the couch."

Kurt scoffed quietly and worked at unbuttoning Blaine's shirt, biting gently at his chest as he went and shimmying down his legs until his mouth was level with the waistband of his jeans. Mouthing softly over the shape of Blaine's half-hard cock through the heavy fabric, he smirked when Blaine's legs spread apart under him. He hummed and yanked Blaine's belt free, sitting up on his knees fumbling to undo Blaine's jeans so he could cup him through his briefs, kissing his hip as he pumped his fist slowly.

"Kurt." Blaine whined and twisted his hands in the blanket, all trace of teasing gone from his voice and his face already flushed with colour and heat. "Kurt... wait."

Kurt paused, sitting back on Blaine's legs and rubbing his thumbs along Blaine's thighs as he waited. Blaine rubbed his hands over his face, digging his palms into his eyes and taking a heavy breath. He propped himself up on his elbows and stared down at Kurt anxiously.

"I, um-"

"If you're not ready to have sex yet, we don't have to," Kurt said, hoping he didn't sound as put out as he felt, though he blamed most of that feeling on the erection straining at his jeans.

"What, no, that's, erm... that's not what I meant," Blaine said, flushing with embarrassment and frowning at the ceiling. "It was actually something about... that that I wanted to, um, talk about."

"What about it?" Kurt said, relaxing and sliding his hands up to squeeze Blaine's hips.

"I wanted to, um, to switch," Blaine muttered, now squinting at Kurt's shoulder.

"Switch?" Kurt said, lifting an eyebrow. "What, like, you want to top?"

Blaine nodded, throwing Kurt a nervous half-glance.

"Is that it?" Kurt said, frowning.

"I-yeah?" Blaine said with a confused look. "I thought you didn't, um, that you wouldn't want to."

"Why wouldn't I?" Kurt said. He smirked. "As long as I get to come, I don't really care."

Blaine frowned at this and Kurt reached up to brush his hand over his temple.

"Hey, I'm just... that was a joke," he said. "You know how I feel about you."

"You could say it," Blaine said in a would-be innocent voice, the corner of his mouth twitching.

Kurt sighed dramatically. "I love you," he said, rolling his eyes while Blaine beamed and tugged him down into a kiss that ended up being too much teeth due to the fact that they were both still grinning.

They rolled around on the bed for a few minutes, kissing and touching and tugging off the rest of their clothes. At some point their giggles turned into sighs and groans, hot skin pressed together and beading with sweat as Blaine mouthed at the side of Kurt's neck, muttering apologies and 'I love you's in between kisses as he stretched Kurt open with his slick fingers. Kurt squeezed his eyes shut and buried his face in the crook of Blaine's shoulder, nails digging into his back, as Blaine pushed into him. They stopped, breathing raggedly, Kurt's legs tangled loosely around Blaine's waist, Blaine pressing soothing kisses to his temple as he waiting for the dull ache to subside.

"Kurt?"

"I'm fine," Kurt mumbled, letting his head fall back into the pillows and smiling. "It's just, um, been awhile."

Blaine adjusted his arms carefully so he could comb his fingers through Kurt's hair, now damp with sweat at the fringe, and dropped a tender kiss to his lower lip.

"I love you," he murmured against Kurt's lips, smiling and pressing short kisses over his mouth.

Kurt dug his heels into Blaine's back to force him closer and they both gasped, Blaine groaning softly against Kurt's cheek, his breath hot over his skin. Blaine took the hint and started thrusting slowly, rolling his hips and occasionally whispering in Kurt's ear or moaning into his skin, his breath harsh and shallow.

Kurt rocked his hips up to meet Blaine's movement, soaking in the sounds and the smell of heavy air that drenched his lungs, the taste of Blaine's skin on his tongue as he mouthed at his throat until it was stained with tiny pricks of red and purple.

It didn't take long after Blaine reached between them and started stroking his cock for him to arch of the bed and come across his stomach. He felt Blaine shudder against him a minute later, his mind fuzzy and his whole body pleasantly warm and loose. He shivered when Blaine pulled out and lifted off of him, the air suddenly chill against his damp skin without their combined body heat. Eyelids drooping, he half-watched Blaine toss the condom in the trash and wipe the drying mess of his stomach, kissing his forehead when he squirmed and giggled sleepily.

His arms latched automatically around Blaine's waist when he crawled onto the bed next to him and tugged the blanket up their chests.

"Me too."

"Hmm?"

Kurt nuzzled Blaine's collarbone and tucked himself closer to his chest.

"I love you too," he said, yawning.

He could practically feel Blaine's smile.

Graduation wasn't as hard for him to stomach with Blaine sitting next to him, squeezing his hand encouragingly as he watched his classmates walk across the stage to collect their diplomas.

"This is stupid," he grumbled, folding his arms moodily as he watched Finn and Rachel try and eat each other's faces while the rest of the graduated threw their caps up with a loud cheer.

"We'll get to get our diplomas together next year," Blaine said, patting his thigh gently.

"I was talking about Berry and Finn but okay," Kurt said, shrugging and scowling at his shoes.

"Kurt." Blaine sighed and slipped his arm around his waist, resting his chin on his shoulder. "I know you're not happy about not graduating but we get another year together and I can annoy you enough to make sure you get good grades this time around."

Kurt rolled his eyes, though he couldn't stop the small smile turning up his lips.

"I guess it'll be nice," he said, shrugging. "Getting to redo this crappy year."

"It wasn't all crappy though, right?" Blaine said, pressing a kiss to Kurt's cheek.

"Hmm, yeah, I guess I got a new bike out of it," Kurt said, smirking as Blaine clucked his tongue.

"Maybe next year you'll learn how not to be a jerk," Blaine muttered.

"You love that I'm a jerk," Kurt said, standing up alongside his father and stretching his arms over his head. "Admit it, Anderson, you've got a thing for badboys."

"I've got a thing for the ones who are big softies but refuse to admit it," Blaine said, poking him lightly in the ribs.

"I have no idea what you're talking about," Kurt sniffed haughtily.

"Mhmm," Blaine said. He rolled his eyes and took Kurt's hand in his own as they made their way towards the stage behind his father and Carole to where Finn was standing with the rest of the seniors.

Blaine stopped beside him and Kurt turned with a questioning look.

"This is it, isn't it," Blaine said, more a statement than a question. "You and me?"

Kurt looked down at their hands, swinging gently between them.

"Do you want it to be?" he said, looking back up at Blaine, who smiled shyly, shrugged, and nodded. "Then yes. Let's just hope we don't have another year like this one because I don't think I can stand anymore damn drama."

Blaine's fingers tightened around his own and the tension in his shoulders and smile faded.

"Now let's go," Kurt said, tugging at his hand. "The sooner we pretend to care about Finn and Berry going to New York the sooner we can go to the movies and make-out in the back."

Blaine laughed brightly and followed him through the crowd, their fingers loosely tangled together and Kurt fully prepared to admit that, for once, he was actually content with how his year turned out and, even more unusual, was looking forward to doing it again, though he was glad to have Blaine by his side the second time around. He knew he'd always be happy to have Blaine by his side, rolling his eyes and being overly affectionate and simply loving him even when he made a mess of everything, for as long as he was willing to be there.