Off the Cuff

by JWMelmoth

Summary

The Warblers refuse to help Blaine propose, and Sebastian even goes a step further.

Notes

A commission for a "realistic take on 5x01 where Blaine asks the Warblers for help and they, especially Seb, react with: “are you fucking kidding me?”
Chapter 1

Sebastian was in his dorm room studying when he heard people running in the halls. He frowned and checked his watch. What was going on? It was the late afternoon. Most classes had ended by now, and normally students would be off doing sports or their homework. He got up from his bed and opened the door.

“Hey! You! What’s going on?” he shouted at a small first year who came running past him. The boy halted immediately and turned around, looking a little panicked.

“It’s the New Directions, sir. In the common room!”

Sebastian scoffed. They certainly had a nerve showing up here! He dismissed the young boy with a nod and decided to go and have a look. He straightened his tie and pulled his jacket from the back of the chair where he had hung it after class. The McKinleys might be a rabble of misfits without a dress code (how else would Blaine get away with his horribly colourful outfits?), that didn’t mean he could slack off when representing Dalton. He was still captain of the Warblers, after all.

As he made his way down the marble staircase, he could already hear the ruckus coming from the common room. They were singing - Blaine’s voice clearly audible over the boom box and the chirp of his little public school background singers. Sebastian scowled. There’d better not be any Warblers in there dancing along.

He entered the common room flanked by Gavin and Marcus, the two upperclassmen who were chosen to form a new Warbler Council with him after Hunter had been expelled. Everyone had deemed it better to go back to the system of a triumvirate instead of letting one Warbler make all the decisions—not that Gavin or Marcus ever contradicted him.

To his relief, none of his Warblers had joined the New Directions. They were standing in a large circle around the McKinley students, who were dancing around freestyle in an unorderly fashion. Blaine was standing on top of a lacquered table, his ugly loafers making dark skidmarks on the wood. Close to him, his second in command with the weird lips and the bad haircut was air guitaring to a part of the music without any guitars in it.

Sebastian caught Nick’s eye. He was closest to the boom box. The other Warbler nodded and switched it off. The loud snap of the switch echoed in the room. The New Directions froze in their places. Blaine kept singing for a few moments, lost in his own performance, before he too noticed the music was gone and the rest had stopped singing. He looked up.

“Hey Sebastian,” he said happily, and jumped off the table. It nearly toppled over, but several hands quickly shot from Dalton blazers to steady it. “What’s with the buzzcut?” Blaine grinned jovially.

Sebastian didn’t return his smile. “Juvie,” he said, his tone clipped. “Twelve days, before my father managed to convince them I was not in league with Hunter Clarington.” He crossed his arms over his chest. “What are you doing here?”

“Dude, you went to jail?” Blaine’s blond friend asked. “What was that like?”

“Not now, Sam,” Blaine hissed. Then he focused back on Sebastian. “We’re here to ask for your help.”

“Our help?” Sebastian repeated incredulously.
“Yes. I am going to ask Kurt to marry me, and-”

“I thought he had broken up with you?” Sebastian interrupted.

“They got back together, like, yesterday,” Sam supplied helpfully.

“Yes, Kurt and I are back together and now I want the Warblers to help me propose, right here at Dalton,” Blaine finished, smiling again.

“Huh.” Sebastian looked at Blaine for a moment and waited for Ashton Kutcher to jump out from behind something to yell ‘Punked!’

“Well, what do you say?” Blaine asked eagerly. “I was thinking by the staircase would be a great place to-”

“What do I say? I don’t know, what do we say, guys?” Sebastian asked, looking around the room at the Warblers. Most of them were looking confused or irritated. Trent looked extremely uncomfortable, even though none of the Warblers blamed him for ratting them out anymore.

“What do we say when the guy who is responsible for having us forfeit Sectionals, who ruined our school choir’s reputation, got all of us on academic probation and nearly caused some of us to be expelled and have our college acceptances revoked, asks for our help?”

“You…you used illegal substances,” Blaine sputtered. “That’s not my fault.”

“No, it isn’t. But instead of handling that discreetly by going to the board, or, I don’t know, talking to us and giving us a fucking chance to get rid of Hunter, you went to the police, and the press, and the show choir governing board and god knows who else- you probably sung a few solos about it in Glee Club as well.

“You knew we were being pressured into Hunter’s schemes, and yet you put it out there like we were all guilty, setting us up like lambs to the slaughter. And now you come to ask for our help?” Sebastian shook his head. “I have a question for you in return, Blaine. Are you fucking kidding me?”

He heard some of the Warblers murmur their agreement behind him.

“I just thought, 'Once a Warbler…’” Blaine trailed off, looking from Sebastian to Jeff, then Nick, and Trent.

“That lost its meaning when you betrayed us,” Sebastian said. He looked around. None of the Warblers seemed to want to say anything in Blaine’s favour. He uncrossed his arms and put his hands in his pockets. The decision was made, now he just needed to get them out of there before they started singing again.

“Anyone feel free to correct me if I’m wrong, but I think these kids are trespassing,” Sebastian announced. He saw Gavin, to his side, nod, and Marcus was putting a hand on the doorknob to show he was moments away from calling a teacher. Sebastian turned back to Blaine.

“You don’t go to school here anymore, Blaine. Maybe you should pack your little gang up and leave.”

He briefly glanced over the new New Directions, his eyes resting on a handsome brownskinned boy. If he recalled correctly, he was the one who had been doing most of the dance solos for them during their Sectionals song right before the thin chick passed out. Those had been some fine moves…but alas. Now was not the time. He was about to send them away when Blaine spoke again.
“Come on, Sebastian, why can’t you just let bygones be bygones?” he pleaded. “I mean, clearly none of you were really expelled, well, except from Hunter obviously, so there’s no harm done, right?”

Sebastian raised an eyebrow. No harm done, indeed. If that was true, he’d still have hair.

"I really think that the more people I get to help me propose-“ Blaine continued.

"-The more difficult it will be for Kurt to say no?“ Sebastian finished.

"No, that’s not– He's not gonna say no. We love each other. I just want it to be romantic.”

“Well, good luck with that. But you’re gonna have to find another location. And another show choir.”

Blaine’s expression turned cold. “Fine,” he spat. “Fine, I will then. I bet Vocal Adrenaline will help me. You’re not the only school with a show choir in Ohio.” He turned on his heels, made a few dramatic hand gestures at his friends, and stalked out of the room.

For a moment, no one spoke.

“If it wasn’t for that ruined table, I could have sworn this was just a bad dream,” Sebastian remarked.

Then everyone started talking at once. Some of the Warblers were angry, others just annoyed. Younger Warblers were asking what this had been about, who those students were, and had the captain of the Warblers really been to jail?

Sebastian didn’t want to hear it. He told Gavin and Marcus to get the others to settle down while he returned to his dorm. It was hard to believe Blaine had actually showed up with his posse and pretended like nothing had ever happened. Sebastian took off his jacket, putting it back on the chair before letting himself drop on the bed with a sigh. Blaine and Kurt getting married…a year ago he might have believed it, but now? He wondered why Blaine even wanted to- at the rate he was burning through their mutual facebook contacts it didn’t seem like he was ready to settle down.

Feeling a little curious, Sebastian looked up Kurt’s profile on Facebook. It still said “single” at his relationship. Hmm. So Blaine was going to propose, when Kurt hadn’t even updated his profile to their new dating status yet? This could only end badly. He scrolled through Kurt’s picture gallery. Damn. He had certainly done some growing up in New York! If he compared him to Blaine, who seemed to have aged backwards with his primary colours and his high water chinos, it seemed like a waste. Why did they even got back together? Surely Kurt could get something better in New York now that he finally hit puberty?

He could get something better in Ohio, for that matter.

Suddenly, Sebastian decided that he could really use a Lima Bean coffee to help him study. And if he happened to pass Kurt’s place on the way there…well, that would just be a coincidence, right?

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“Kurt, one of your friends from Dalton is here to see you!”

“Thanks, dad, I’ll be right down!”

Kurt’s father nodded at Sebastian and left him in the doorway to return to his flickering screen in the living room. To kill time, Sebastian looked at the framed photographs on the wall by the staircase.
He smirked. Yes, that was the doe-eyed Kurt he remembered from high school; overly coiffed, wearing something extremely flashy with too many accessories that distracted from his figure. And look, there he was too, younger and round-cheeked, proudly holding up a pair of Power Rangers in what appeared to be little hand-made suits. Sebastian smirked. Those Power Rangers were outfitted like mini-Kurts.

He was interrupted by a pair of long legs coming down the stairs, halting mid-way. Sebastian followed them up and saw Kurt glaring down at him.

“I can’t believe I got dressed for this,” Kurt said, not moving from his spot halfway down the stairs.

“You really shouldn’t have,” Sebastian replied. “I prefer my men undressed anyway.”

“I’m not your man,” Kurt snapped, “and I wasn’t naked- I was just relaxing.”

Sebastian eyed Kurt’s skinny jeans and knew what he meant. He could barely walk in those pants without being castrated, let alone sit comfortably. Sebastian wondered what kind of outfit Kurt wore to relax in- most guys he knew would have no problems receiving guests in sweats.

“When you are done staring at my crotch, you might want to tell me why you’re here,” Kurt remarked drily.

Sebastian blinked and focused on Kurt’s face again. Then he put on a smile. “I just wanted to be the first to congratulate you on your upcoming marriage!” he said cheerfully.

“Excuse me?” Kurt replied, cocking his head.

“Well, I heard you and Blaine got back together so surely you’ll be tying the knot any day now…”

“What!? Of course not. Are you insane? We only got back together yesterday!” Kurt replied, throwing up his hands in an exasperated gesture. “Honestly Sebastian, if this is the best you’ve got these days-”

Sebastian smirked. At least Kurt’s point of view on his and Blaine’s relationship was quite clear.

“It’s not about what I’ve got for you, Kurt,” he said. “It’s about Blaine. And he’s got a box with a ring and a couple of show choirs, all waiting for you to say yes and swoon.”

“What?” Kurt asked again, sounding less angry and more insecure now.

“I’m serious. He showed up at Dalton today asking for the Warblers’ help to propose to you. He’s pretty convinced you’ll accept.”

Kurt looked taken aback. “Why would he do that?” he said quietly. “When we talked yesterday, I wasn’t even sure I wanted to take him back at all. If he hadn’t agreed to sign Oprah’s non-cheating contract-”

Kurt looked at Sebastian and quickly added “Don’t judge me. What do you know about loyalty anyway?”

Sebastian rolled his eyes a little, but he had to admit Kurt had a point. Still, he doubted that a piece of paper would stop Blaine, whether it was an anti-cheating contract or his wedding papers.

“And in public, too,” Kurt continued. “He knows I hate that. When we watched The Bachelor together we even talked about how horrible it was when that happened. Everyone’s watching.
There’s so much pressure, and it’s virtually impossible to say-” he broke off.

Sebastian gave him a pointed look.

Kurt swallowed, and sank down on the steps. Sebastian winced a little for the sake of his manhood in those jeans, but Kurt had other priorities. “It’s not supposed to be a choice, is it?” he whispered.

Sebastian leaned against the banister. “Is it ever?” he asked. “I mean, even if you’ve been together forever, and your partner asks you to marry him, isn’t saying ‘no’ basically a ‘fuck you, I don’t trust our relationship’?”

“A little, I guess. Though two people can be together and trust each other without getting married, just as people can cheat while they are.”

Kurt was quiet for a moment. “I do want to marry Blaine,” he stated after a few moments. “I mean, I love him, so...and he said he wouldn’t cheat again.”

“October 4th,” Sebastian said.

Kurt blinked. “What?”

“That’s when you broke up last year, wasn’t it?”

“How d’you- what?” Kurt stared at him with wide eyes.

“I had a dentist appointment that day,” Sebastian replied.

“Huh?”

“I had my wisdom teeth removed-”

“I’m surprised you even had any.”

“Ha ha. Anyway, I was completely hammered on painkillers, and that night, guess who knocked on my door, fresh from the airport?”

Kurt still stared. “And he...told you about our break up?”

"Ah, yeah, something like that,” Sebastian replied, smiling wryly.

“You slept with him,” Kurt concluded.

“Actually, I didn’t,” Sebastian replied. “Wisdom teeth, remember? I was in serious pain.”

Kurt rolled his eyes.

“What?” Sebastian said defensively. “You were broken up, anyway. It wouldn’t have been cheating.”

“Then what happened?”

“He threw a little tantrum and left. I’m not sure where. It was the middle of the night- I don’t even know how he had managed to get into the Dalton dorms that late at all. Maybe he stayed with Eli till morning.”

Kurt looked at him from his seat on the stairs. “You know Eli C.?”
Sebastian shrugged. “I know some parts of him more intimately than others…”

Kurt made a face, and Sebastian found himself feeling defensive yet again. There was something about Kurt’s judgemental expressions that made him feel bad about himself, even though he knew he had done nothing wrong. He was single, Eli was offering. No harm, no foul. “Look, everyone at Dalton knows Eli C.,” he added. “At least the guys who swing that way. And the guys who want to experiment or are bored.” He had to keep himself from snorting as he remembered Hunter proudly claiming he wasn’t ‘even remotely bi-curious’. He had definitely been Eli-curious.

“Please stop,” Kurt said softly. “I don’t want to hear any more about that.” He was silent for a moment. “Did you introduce them to each other?”

“I thought you didn’t want to hear any more,” Sebastian replied. Kurt’s eyes flashed with a warning. Sebastian relented. “No, I didn’t. It’s not like me and Blaine hung out. We were still connected on facebook, that’s all. When he showed up at my dorm, all needy and horny, it was the first time we’d seen each other since Regionals. I guess he just met Eli the usual way.”

“The usual way?” Kurt echoed.

“Oh, come on, you went to Dalton. Surely you must know about the equipment shack by the lacrosse field?”

Kurt shook his head. He was looking paler than before, and Sebastian was starting to doubt if he should be telling Kurt all of this. Maybe in this case, ignorance was bliss. “Well, it’s not for equipment,” he said simply.

Kurt stared straight ahead, his eyes a little glassy. “So all those times he drove to Dalton after school to hang out with his old friends…”

Sebastian shrugged. “I don’t know about that,” he admitted. “He might have been telling the truth.”

“Might,” Kurt repeated dully. “I think I’m gonna be sick.”

“Look, I don’t want to defend him or anything, but that was a year ago. Maybe if he signed that Oprah thing for you, he’s really serious this time. I just wanted to give you the heads-up about the oncoming surprise proposal.”

Kurt looked up at him. “Why would you do that?”

“I dunno. Because I like ruining surprises?” Sebastian tried half-heartedly, but making fun of Kurt was losing its appeal without Kurt firing back. “I don’t think you should marry him,” he confessed.

“Why, because you want him for yourself?” Kurt scoffed.

“Please, the last thing I ever wanted was a relationship with Blaine Anderson,” Sebastian replied.

“Right. You only wanted to sleep with him.” Kurt looked nauseous.

“Well, yeah. And that was only because the guys at Dalton kept talking about him, making him up to be this big teenage dream, you know?”

Kurt sighed. “I know.”

“So I told them, ‘I bet I can get this guy in the sack before the year is out’, ” Sebastian concluded. “And I almost did. But… I meant it when I said I quit playing games after I heard about David
Karofsky. I didn’t want to break you two up and be responsible for…something like that happening again.” He diverted his eyes to the pictures on the wall. He knew Kurt didn’t- couldn’t- know about the mean things he had said to David right before he tried to kill himself, but it somehow felt like Kurt would be able to see the guilt in his eyes.

“I thought about it,” Kurt said quietly.

“Huh?” Sebastian turned back to look at him. “What?”

“When Blaine and I broke up. I felt…dead inside. And I thought about what it would be like to die.”

Sebastian didn’t know what to say. All he knew was that he was simultaneously grateful that he had ceased pursuing Blaine when he had, and ashamed that he ever had. He had often wondered if that whole Eli thing would have happened if he hadn’t put thoughts in Blaine’s mind. Would he have been partly responsible if Kurt had hurt himself over that?

“That’s…kind of scary,” he admitted. “I never felt like that.”

“I have,” Kurt said. “Back in school. When the bullying just wouldn’t stop, and people were suggesting the world was better off without me.”

Silence hung between them like an invisible barrier. Sebastian wanted to break it, but how? Thankfully, Kurt was just as uneasy with this sudden intimacy and forced a wry smile onto his lips.

“So, what was the bet?” he asked, leaning back. “Was it a car, like in that movie Cruel Intentions?”

“Bet?” Sebastian repeated, his mind still playing all of his insults to Kurt in highschool on repeat and wondering if they had contributed to Kurt’s depression.

“Oh!” He smiled, grateful for the change of subject. “You know, I saw that movie. That Sebastian’s really a sympathetic character. Must be the name. But no car, unfortunately. Just fifty bucks. I believe they went into the collection basket for David when I forfeited.”

Kurt shook his head. “Fifty dollars. That’s all it took for you to make my senior year miserable?”

Sebastian shrugged. “It can’t have been that miserable. It didn’t work, did it? You still had Blaine, and you guys won Nationals…though if I recall correctly, you did end up working at the Lima Bean…” He hoped to lighten the mood, but Kurt wasn’t smiling.

“And every time Blaine’s phone had an incoming message, I wondered if it was you,” Kurt added. “Trying to take Blaine away from me.”

Since it probably had been, at least quite a few times, Sebastian only nodded. “Well, like I said, I wouldn’t have kept him,” he argued feebly.

“So what’s the real reason you don’t want me to marry him, then?” Kurt asked. He looked genuinely interested.

But after the things Kurt had just shared with him, Sebastian’s plan of swinging around to pick him up for a one night stand seemed so wrong, that Sebastian found himself -again- at a loss for words. He had thought to flatter Kurt out of his pants, or at least convince him to come to Scandals for a ‘pre-engagement stag night’, but he suddenly realised that if Kurt deserved someone better than Blaine, he deserved someone better than him, too.

“I just…don’t think you’ll be happy with him,” he said instead. Outside, a car door slammed.
Kurt looked at him for a moment, then shook himself out of his thoughts. “You have about 30 seconds to get out through the back before Finn comes in and kicks your ass,” he announced with a hint of pleasure in his voice. “He still hasn’t quite forgiven you for that photoshop trick.”

“That way?” Sebastian asked, and nodded at the hallway.

“Yes. Through the kitchen. I’ll stall him.”

“Thanks.” Sebastian wasn’t quite sure why Kurt was helping him, but he was grateful. The last thing he wanted was running into Kurt’s large, football playing stepbrother. Once he was safely outside, he looked up at the windows on the first floor and wondered which room was Kurt’s. Well, you’ve lost your chances of ever seeing the inside of that place, he told himself, and it left him in an unexpectedly bad mood for the rest of the day.

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All the more surprised was Sebastian, when he got Kurt’s message the next day.

I messed up. I let everyone down. I’m a horrible person. And it’s YOUR fault! KH

Sebastian frowned. How did Kurt even get his number? Still, it wasn’t a message he could ignore.

-I think you have always been a horrible person :-P What happened?

Kurt’s reply took a while, and Sebastian briefly worried if Kurt didn’t catch the emoticon in his text. But then it came, and it was something Sebastian hadn’t expected.

Blaine proposed to me. I said no.

Sebastian sat back on his bed, staring at his phone. Kurt, who had been so territorial of Blaine as to use couple plural when they first met and actually took Blaine back even though he had cheated on him, had really said no? Suddenly texting seemed inadequate. He pressed ‘dial’ and waited. When he heard the soft click of the receiver, he immediately asked: “How is that my fault?”

There were a lot of other things Sebastian wanted to say (like “congratulations”), but before he did, he wanted to know if Kurt was angry with him.

He heard Kurt breathe out.

“Blaine proposed to me at McKinley, with half the school and two other glee clubs watching. My dad drove me to the proposal and gave me a big speech about how he wished he had married my mom sooner. My friends basically congratulated me before I even said anything…” He paused. “If it wasn’t for you, I would probably have been so overwhelmed I would have said yes.”

“And that would have been better?” Sebastian asked.

“Yes. No. I don’t know,” Kurt sighed. “I just hate letting people down.”

“You’ll get used to it. I let people down all the time, it gets easier the more you screw up,” Sebastian joked.

Instead of laughing, Kurt asked: “You think I screwed up?” He sounded vulnerable, and it would have been very easy- too easy- to throw in a cruel remark and crush his spirit. A year ago, Sebastian might have done it, just out of spite, but he found he couldn’t do that anymore.
“No. Actually, I think you did the right thing.”

“Hmm.” Kurt paused. “I can’t believe I’m actually talking to you about this.”

Sebastian shrugged, even though he knew Kurt wasn’t able to see him. “It doesn’t sound like you have many other options.”

He was quite sure he heard a quiet sob on the other end.

“That’s true. I don’t,” Kurt agreed, his voice a little shaky.

“Where are you now?” Sebastian asked, checking his watch. It was still a few hours until Dalton curfew, and also - fuck curfews, right?

“On the roof.”

Sebastian blinked. “What?”

“On the roof of the school,” Kurt clarified. “I needed to get out of there and I didn’t want to go home. I used the fire escape. I… didn’t want Blaine or the others to find me.”

“Why, are you afraid they’re gonna drag you to the altar kicking and screaming?” Sebastian chuckled a little.

Kurt didn’t say anything.

“That was a joke,” Sebastian clarified.

“Yeah,” Kurt replied vaguely.

For the first time, Sebastian wondered why exactly Kurt had said no. Was it just the timing of it all, or the cheating… or something else?

“So… you want some company on that roof?” he asked.

“My flight to New York leaves in a few hours.”

Sebastian wasn’t sure what to make of that, but he got up and grabbed his bag anyway. “Okay. We’re coming over.”

“Wait… we?”


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It was easier than he expected to get to the school’s fire escapes. It seemed the whole school was in the court yard, standing around a colourfully dressed group of people that Sebastian recognised as having seen in show choir competitions before. Right in the middle was Blaine, looking desolate. (or maybe he just looked constipated- Sebastian always felt it was hard to tell since those two expressions were so similar on Blaine). It was probably the first though, having just been rejected and all.

Sebastian swung his bag onto his back and climbed the fire escape. As he got to the roof, he could see Kurt sitting on the edge with his legs dangling down, looking at the courtyard.
“Bigger audience than some of the malls the Warblers sang at,” he commented.

Kurt startled and turned around to him. His shoulders slumped a little when he recognised Sebastian.

“I thought you said you were bringing someone,” he said, eying the fire escape wearily and straightening his hair just in case.

“I did,” Sebastian said, and reached inside his bag to pull out a half-full bottle of whisky. “Meet Jack.”

Kurt rolled his eyes, but even he couldn’t repress a chuckle. “Could you be any more clichéed if you tried?” he mocked.

Sebastian shrugged. “Just thought you might want a drink. I would, after that spectacle downstairs.” He nodded at the courtyard.

Kurt sighed. “Yeah well, even if I did drink, I wouldn’t do it on school premises, Sebastian.”

“Not your school anymore though, is it?” Sebastian put the bottle back into his bag.

“Nope,” Kurt let out, forming his lips around the last letters and making them pop. "Not my school…not my boyfriend…"

“So you guys broke up again?” Sebastian asked, walking up to the edge to sit down next to Kurt.

Kurt nodded. “It was like you said. You can’t say no to a proposal without giving the message that you don’t want to be together.”

“So what did he say?”

“At first he didn’t understand, and then he got angry. He said not to embarrass him with so many people watching.”

Sebastian scoffed. “Then he should have proposed in private.”

Kurt turned a little to glance at him. “That’s what I said,” he agreed softly. He watched Sebastian for a moment before turning back to look at the crowd below. “I’m glad I said no,” he stated. “So…why do I feel so horrible?”

At least five jokes popped into Sebastian’s head; something about Kurt’s choice in outfits on top of his list- but it felt too much like kicking a dog when he’s down. “I guess it’s harder for someone like you to let people down.”

Kurt frowned. “What do you mean, someone like me?”

“I mean someone who actually cares what people think of him,” Sebastian explained. “You want to be liked. You want to be loved. The easiest way to achieve that is to give people what they want.”

It was Kurt’s turn to scoff now. “I guess you don’t have that problem?”

“No, I don’t. They can take me as I am, or fuck off.”

Kurt shook his head a little. “I tried being like that,” he said. “But there are only so many dumpster dives and slushies you can take before you realise no one is going to ‘take you as you are’.” He nodded at the group in the courtyard. “One of the first things Blaine ever said to me was to tone it down.”
Sebastian smirked. “You mean you were even more flaming before?” he teased. “Just kidding. I know that’s not possible.”

Kurt faced him, his eyes blazing. Sebastian chuckled nervously.

“I’m sorry. I just… old habits die hard, okay?”

But Kurt wasn’t smiling.

“No. It’s not okay. That is exactly the kind of thing I’ve been having to go against my entire life,” Kurt protested. “Every single day, from all sides, I am told that I dress too girly, that my voice is too high, that I shouldn’t spend so much time watching Grey’s Anatomy- that everything I am is a joke to people and that the only way I can fit in is to accept whatever scraps people throw at me and be grateful for them. Well, you know what? That is not okay.” Kurt was nearly breathless when he finished, and tears were gleaming in his eyes.

Sebastian was a little taken aback. He realised he had just seen a small glimpse of the hurt he and so many others had done to Kurt under the guise of a joke. His stomach dropped as he thought of David, and suddenly, he began to feel very uncomfortable with Kurt sitting on the edge of a building. “You’re right,” he said hoarsely. “It’s not okay. I’m sorry. I really am.” He cleared his throat. “Can we… go somewhere else? I’m afraid I might make another stupid joke and you’ll push me off.”

Kurt didn’t say anything for a while. “It’s tempting,” he finally said.

“I know.” Sebastian bit his lip. “Look, Kurt, I know I’ve said a lot of horrible things to you in the past, but you should know-”

“Could you drive me to the airport?” Kurt interrupted him.

“Uh. I guess?” Sebastian replied.

“Good. Because I just realised there’s something I want from you more than whatever apology you were about to give me.”

Sebastian swallowed. “What’s that?” he asked, trying hard not to flash-forward to joining the mile high club.

“Your credit card. You’re taking me binge shopping.”
They managed to get off McKinley grounds without arousing any suspicion, as everyone at the school was still busy consoling Blaine. Sebastian quietly wondered why no one was even looking for Kurt, not even his so-called friends, but sharing this with Kurt seemed cruel, so he kept his mouth shut. They got into his car.

“Nice,” Kurt commented, shifting a little on the leather of the passenger seat and looking over the dashboard.

“It’s alright,” Sebastian said, shrugging. “It has trouble starting in winter and getting new parts is a bitch.”

“That’s what you get for wanting to show off with a European car,” Kurt remarked. “Are you using a fuel conditioner?”

Sebastian looked at him from the side. Kurt rolled his eyes. “Just ask next time you fill her up. It’ll help.”

“Yeah? What do you know about cars?” Sebastian asked. They pulled out onto the highway.

Kurt looked out of the window. “My dad owns an auto shop. I used to help him out after school.”

“Wow.”

They drove in silence for a while. Then, Kurt shifted in his seat again to look at Sebastian. “What do you mean, ‘wow’? Is it really that hard to imagine I might actually be interested in something guys like?” He sounded defensive.

Sebastian blinked at Kurt’s sudden passion. “I just meant wow. I never had a job after school.”

Kurt huffed. “Surprise, surprise,” he mumbled.

“Yeah, and you’re not judgemental at all,” Sebastian replied under his breath. Then he sighed. “Look, I tried to apologise just now and you wouldn’t have it- which is fine, I know I treated you like crap – but you have to stop assuming that everything I say is another insult, because it’s not, okay? I got the message: that stuff is not cool. No more prejudices, no more jokes. Can you please take what I say at face value from now on?”

Kurt was quiet for a moment.

“There’s a joke about your face in there somewhere but I guess I should lead by good example,” he offered lightly.

“Thanks,” Sebastian said. He was really starting to realise that he couldn’t shake off his past, no matter how he tried. First with Blaine assuming he had stolen their Nationals trophy, then with everyone assuming he was the brains behind the doping scandal, and now this. It was like no one believed him when he said he had bettered himself after David. *Maybe that’s exactly what you deserve*, a voice in his head told him- and that voice sounded suspiciously like Kurt.

The real Kurt, however, had put on the car stereo and was humming softly to the music. It was nice, Sebastian thought; better than trying to hold a decent conversation anyway, so he kept quiet the rest of the way and just listened.
When they reached the airport, Kurt was practically out of the car before Sebastian had parked properly. “Come on, we only have three and a half hours left!” he said eagerly. His enthusiasm was kind of infectious, though Sebastian did hope there’d be enough left on his credit card to last him the rest of the month.

When they got into the main hall, Kurt’s shoulders slumped. “Ugh. I forgot most of the good shops are actually behind check-in.” He glanced at the check-in counter. “You’re eighteen, right?”

Sebastian blinked. “Of course. I was held back a year after transferring from Paris.” He looked at Kurt from the side. What did that have to do with anything?

“I thought so. Come on,” Kurt said, looking determined, and took Sebastian’s hand.

“What the–?” Sebastian started to say, but Kurt silenced him with a single look and pulled him towards the counter. As they got there, Kurt put on a sugary sweet smile and beamed at the woman behind the desk.

“Can I help you, gentlemen?” she asked politely, her eyes sparkling a little as she looked down on their entwined hands.

“I hope so,” Kurt breathed. “I’m flying to New York in 3 hours and we really, really need an extra ticket on that flight.” He reached into his coat and put his ticket on the counter.

“Kurt!” Sebastian protested, but Kurt squeezed his hand hard.

“Oh, I’m sorry, that flight is completely booked,” the woman replied, looking sympathetically miserable for them. “Maybe a later flight for you both–?”

“No, you don’t understand. We have to get there as soon as possible,” Kurt insisted, and stood on his toes to lean over the counter and whisper into the woman’s ear. “We’re eloping.” He dropped back onto his heels. “My boyfriend’s father- I mean, my fiancé’s father,” he corrected himself, and he offered Sebastian an adoring smile, “is hell-bent on stopping us, but we’re both of age so there’s really nothing he can do if we can just get to New York…please, you have to help us. I’m scared of what he will do.” Kurt sounded genuinely upset.

The woman sighed. “Maybe if I put your fiancé on stand-by,” she muttered, and started tapping away on her keyboard.

“That would be perfect,” Kurt replied. He turned to Sebastian. “This is so romantic,” he sighed dreamily, and Sebastian just stared at him. Those acting classes at NYADA were worth every penny of Kurt’s tuition. The way Kurt looked at him almost made him believe Kurt actually wanted him to come with him to New York.

“This is the best I can do,” the woman said apologetically as she slid over the stand-by ticket. “If you don’t get on, it’ll help with your chances for the next flight.”

“Thanks,” Sebastian mumbled, pulling out his credit card. He tried not to think about how many Dalton cafeteria meals this ticket had just cost him.

Mistaking his short reply for worry, the woman offered Sebastian a reassuring smile. “We have really good airport security here,” she said. “And once you’re checked in, your dad won’t be able to get to you unless he buys a stand-by ticket too. And if he asks, I’ll just tell him the waiting lists are too long already.” She sounded very pleased with herself.
Kurt let out a happy squeak. Sebastian managed a grateful smile.

“This is wonderful. Thank you so much!” Kurt exclaimed happily, and he threw in a hug around Sebastian’s shoulders for effect. “This is it, honey, we’re really doing this.”

“I can hardly believe it,” Sebastian muttered.

“I wish you all the happiness in the world,” the woman said fondly.

Kurt didn’t let go of Sebastian’s hand until they were out of sight of the counter. “I should have kept Blaine’s ring,” he mused, wiping his palm on his jeans. “Would have made it even more convincing.”

“It was pretty convincing already,” Sebastian assured him, still thinking of the way Kurt had looked at him, and the brief hug they had shared. Was that what Kurt was really like when he was in love?

“I know. I’m good,” Kurt stated. “Now let’s get started.”

**

As soon as they entered the first shop, Sebastian looked out for the ‘boyfriend couch’; a seat by the changing rooms where bored spouses could sit while their partners shopped. But when he spotted it, Kurt shook his head. “No, no, no. You’re not getting off that easily. You’re going to help me, Sebastian. I’ll need someone to fetch me new sizes of things so I don’t have to get dressed every time.”

Sebastian opened his mouth to say something, but then changed his mind. There was something about the idea of Kurt getting undressed that made him realise this might not be the worst job in the world.

Half an hour later, however, he had already changed his mind. This was horrible. The only bare part Sebastian got to see of Kurt was his arm as it thrust clothes hangers at him through the changing curtain, ordering a size smaller of this, a different colour of that. Sometimes he’d give directions to where he had found the stuff, but most of the time he simply let Sebastian walk through the store aimlessly until he found the right rack.

Every now and then, Kurt would push the curtain open and show Sebastian what his latest delivery looked like on him. Bored out of his mind and not sure if his job-description involved praise or not, Sebastian would just nod politely—causing Kurt to narrow his eyes and reject outfit after outfit. One thing Sebastian noticed as he fetched new sizes of everything, was that the things Kurt was trying on kept getting smaller.

“You know, this one has even less fabric than the last one, but it’s twice as expensive,” Sebastian commented as he pushed a pair of metallic skinny jeans through the curtain. “How is that logical?”

He didn’t really expect Kurt to answer, but after a few moments, a reply came.


Sebastian frowned. What the hell was he doing in there?

Before he could ask, Kurt opened the curtain and revealed himself. Sebastian’s mouth went dry. The jeans fit Kurt like a second skin, making his thighs and calves shimmer and sparkle. The light from the dressing room reflected almost blindingly off the bulge in his crotch.
“Um…wow,” Sebastian said, unable to come up with anything more articulate.

Kurt spun around and looked at himself in the mirror, giving Sebastian the opportunity to check out his outfit from behind. It was getting harder for Sebastian to breathe. He sucked in his lower lip and chewed it desperately.

Kurt caught his eyes in the mirror. “Yes, I think I’ll take this,” he said, sounding satisfied.

From then on, his game plan began to show. More tight jeans followed, combined with tank tops, sheer shirts and one exceptional mesh piece with several leather straps and buckles (which he asked Sebastian to do up on his back). Sebastian didn’t even care what he was spending now. Kurt was presenting him with so much bedroom fantasy material that it beat any monthly internet porn fee. He handed his credit card over to the delighted store managers over and over without hesitation.

“I think I’m done,” Kurt announced as they exited another boutique.


“Yes, I think we’ll find you something to wear now.”

Sebastian froze. “Me? I don’t need anything.”

Kurt raised an eyebrow. “Yes, you do. You won’t be at Dalton forever, you know.”

“I do have other clothes than my uniform,” Sebastian protested. The thought of getting undressed right here and now was a little daunting.

Kurt snorted. “Yeah. Polo shirts. Come on. I know what I’m doing.” He lead Sebastian into one of the last shops on the airport’s shopping boulevard. A store manager with dollar signs in her eyes eagerly offered to let them deposit their other shopping behind the counter so they’d be free to look around, and so Sebastian found himself being pushed empty-handed into a changing stall.

“Stay here. I’ll be right back,” Kurt commanded.

Sebastian took the moment of privacy to remind himself (and the situation in his pants) exactly why he was there. This was all a favour to Kurt, something to make up for his shitty behaviour from the past. If Kurt wanted to give him a make-over, so be it. He’d probably look ridiculous in the end, but once Kurt was in New York, he wouldn’t be able to check if Sebastian ever wore the things he’d make him buy anyway. He’d just have to get through the next hour or so without making a douchy move, and then Kurt would be on his way, and Sebastian’s conscience would be clear.

“Ohkaay, try this, with this shirt and this jacket,” Kurt said, pushing a few hangers into Sebastian’s hand, “and after that the jeans and the vest. But show me first.” He pulled away from the swinging door of the changing stall.

Sebastian looked at the clothing in his hands. The blazer jacket had a rather flashy pattern on it that reminded him of pictures from his parents in the 80s, but the slacks were plain and the shirt looked passable too, a simple off-white with a rolled sleeve and a V neck. Maybe he could wear them without the jacket sometimes. He slipped out of his uniform and into the new things, steeling himself before putting on the jacket too. He looked in the mirror and winced.

“You’re out there waiting with your phone, aren’t you?” he asked Kurt through the door. “You want to put this on the internet to embarrass me.”
“No, I’m not,” came the answer. “Just come out.”

Sebastian took a deep breath and stepped out of the stall. “I look like WHAM,” he said.

Kurt cocked his head. “Hmm.”

“What?” Despite his personal misgivings, Sebastian had thought Kurt would at least be happy about his own choice.

Kurt turned on his heel and stalked to a rack with accessories, returning with a belt. He looked so serious Sebastian briefly wondered if he should be looking for cover. But Kurt simply walked up to him, pushed the jacket out of the way a little, and started threading the belt through Sebastian’s belt loops, taking no more notice of him than if he were a modeling dummy.

Sebastian straightened up and put his arms out to the side, giving Kurt more room to reach around him. He realised he was holding his breath a little, but breathing out now would mean breathing into Kurt’s hair, so he kept it in. Kurt reached the last loops on the front and tightened the belt buckle over Sebastian’s clenched abs. Sebastian was about to breathe out when a slim hand brushed his stomach and tucked the tshirt into the front of his slacks. He let out a frustrated huff. It was like Kurt was daring him to say something about it, to be inappropriate, just so he could prove that Sebastian hadn’t changed.

He tried very hard not to rise to the bait, but although he kept his tongue under control, the rest of him wasn’t so obedient.

“So?” he asked, as Kurt stepped away to view his handiwork.

Kurt narrowed his eyes and shook his head. “No. It’s too Dalton. We need to get you away from the blazers entirely. Try the jeans, I’ll get you a scarf or something for the vest.”

Sebastian couldn’t help but feel a little disappointed, but he stepped back into the stall and started putting on the jeans. He didn’t get far. “Um, Kurt? Are you there?” he asked. There was no reply. With the opened jeans halfway onto his hips, Sebastian peeked out of the door. Kurt was coming his way, seemingly immersed in touching the fabric of a white and blue scarf in his hands. “Kurt,” Sebastian said again as soon as he was close enough to hear. “I need a bigger size of this.”

Kurt wrapped the scarf around his wrist and studied it. “No, you don’t,” he said absentmindedly. “Just try harder.” He glanced up at Sebastian, and Sebastian rolled his eyes. He let the door fall closed and tugged at the jeans. It was impossible.

“If I try any harder I’ll need to enroll at Crawford Country Day,” Sebastian muttered. He heard Kurt sigh dramatically.

The door of the changing stall swung open and Kurt stepped inside, closing the door behind him. He hung the scarf on a hook. There wasn’t much room for the two of them, and with mirrors on two walls, Sebastian felt like he was trapped between three Kurts. The thought wasn’t doing much to further his prospects of fitting in the jeans.

“The trick is in the tuck,” Kurt said, stepping up to Sebastian until they were almost touching. He lifted his chin and his lips curled up in a little smile. He fixed Sebastian with his eyes, and put a hand on Sebastian’s crotch. Sebastian breathed in sharply. He could tell a dare when he saw one, so he said nothing, though his heart started racing. Kurt’s palm was heavy and warm, and it took a lot to keep himself from leaning into his touch.

“Just…push it out of the way of the center seam,” Kurt said in a low voice, his hand tightening a
little as he did just so, “and then hold it down while you pull up the zipper.” His other hand joined the first.

Sebastian bit his lip and frowned. Kurt’s sultry voice was counterproductive to his goal—unless his goal was utter humiliation and a broken zipper. But Kurt knew what he was doing, and very slowly, he was actually getting it to zip up. It was painfully snug, and Sebastian was torn between telling Kurt to hurry up or to slow down and let him breathe.

“No for the button,” Kurt announced, moving his head to the side of Sebastian’s face to whisper into his ear. “Hold your breath.” He brushed his lips over Sebastian’s jaw. Instinctively, Sebastian closed his eyes and let his head fall back. He sighed as Kurt’s slim fingers slipped inside the waistband of the jeans, brushing the sensitive skin of his abdomen—and yelped as Kurt pulled the band tighter with a short jerk, pushing the button through the hole before letting go. Sebastian doubled over and sank to his knees, which only increased the pressure on his stomach and thighs.

Kurt stepped away, pushing the stall open with his back. “I have a plane to catch,” he said. “You should take the jeans. I kind of like this look on you.”

Sebastian looked up at Kurt in disbelief as his fingers dug into the fabric to try and open the button. It felt like the waistband was cutting off all circulation to his legs. As he finally managed to get it open, the zipper followed of its own accord. Sebastian sucked in a deep breath and sighed.

“That was unfair,” he said hoarsely.


Sebastian took Kurt’s hand and winced as he rose to his feet. “I suppose this was a lesson about me making fun of your clothes?” He certainly had a new respect for the stuff Kurt went through to look this hot.

Kurt shrugged mock-innocently. “Maybe. Or maybe I just needed a rebound grope.” He winked. “I should get to my gate. Thanks for the clothes.”

Sebastian watched him walk to the counter and collect his shopping bags. He wondered if he should try to use his stand-by ticket. He had paid for it after all. If he got onto the flight, he could tag along, maybe see if Kurt needed a rebound something else too.

But knowing that even if that happened, it would be once and never again, and he’d have to return back to Ohio and face the consequences of ditching school in the middle of the week (which on his academic probation would probably mean expulsion) made Sebastian cut his losses and let Kurt walk away.

That didn’t mean he’d forget about their afternoon, however. In half a year he’d be graduating. Maybe now was the time to ask his dad if he could pull some strings at NYU and see if they could overlook his record with the application. Once in New York, he could look up Kurt again (if his first year over there was any indication, Kurt would only be even hotter by then) and see if he was interested in something more than a rebound. Until then, Sebastian had quite a few visuals from their shopping spree to keep him company.

Pleased with his plan, Sebastian quickly rid himself of the jeans (which he would not be buying as he wasn’t a masochist) and rubbed his stomach for a moment before reaching for his clothes. Maybe he should buy the scarf. Kurt had seemed mesmerised by its fabric. He slipped into his uniform trousers.
and, for the first time since starting at Dalton, really appreciated their loose fit. Just then, he felt his phone vibrate. It was a text.

_Do you want to come to Scandals? I know you’re still angry at me but you owe me a chance to make up. Drinks on me? ~B._

Sebastian smirked. Apparently Blaine had decided he needed a little more than the platonic comfort of his groupies. For a moment, wild plans shot through Sebastian’s brain of getting Blaine into a compromising position and sending pictures of it to Kurt to further solidify the notion that he had made the right choice in dumping him. It would definitely have been something he would have done half a year ago. But then he realised it would probably hurt Kurt more than it would help.

Sebastian draped the scarf over his arm and typed a reply.

_I don’t owe you a thing. I’m blocking this number. P.S. I told Eli you have crabs._

Satisfied with his answer, Sebastian went to the counter to pay.

**

A few days later, the first picture showed up on Kurt’s newsfeed. It showed Sebastian, standing next to his car and pointing at the sign of Hummel’s Tires & Lube. The caption said: _Fuel Conditioner._ He was wearing the scarf. Other pictures followed. The Warblers backstage at a local competition, Sebastian with the scarf tucked into his uniform pocket. _Lucky Charm._ A few hours later, the first prize cup with the scarf tied around it like a bow. In the weeks that followed, the pictures always had a similar theme.

By the time Sebastian uploaded a picture of himself wearing the scarf and holding his application letter to NYU, he didn’t need to check his phone to see who had ‘liked’ his status first. It was always Kurt.

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