To Save the World (Tick Tock Remix)

by littledust

Summary

Kurt feels trapped in a worsening bullying situation at McKinley—until his friends intervene and a certain boy starts texting him.

- Inspired by The Time The Glee Club Tried Subtlety And Totally Rocked It by galaxysoup

Romeo and Juliet was two years ago, but Kurt scribbles my only love sprung from my only hate in the margin of his trigonometry notes anyway. The bell is about to ring in five minutes and gripping the pencil helps keep his hands from shaking. His situation isn’t much like Juliet’s, but it's funny how he’s met the perfect boy because some repressed football player has taken it upon himself to be Kurt’s personal tormentor. Funny in the way that Romeo and Juliet is funny, where the end result is a bunch of dead teenagers.

It’s possible that this whole situation is making him a little morbid.

Just before the bell rings, Kurt slides his most important papers into a plastic folder. Would that Marc Jacobs bags were so easily waterproofed, or slushie-proofed, rather. He shoulders his burden and walks out into the hallway, head held high, the word courage echoing in his head loud enough to drown out whatever else is underneath.

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"Kurt, I gotta draw the line at a heart-healthy wedding cake,” his dad says, looking pained at the cake images spread before him. "Most of the things you've been making for dinner have been great, but cake is supposed to be cake."

"Much like how meat is supposed to be meat," Kurt says dryly, but he collects the photographs one
by one. He'll be able to change Carole's mind once he has enough time to put together an actual
tasting, and an actual tasting will definitely change his dad's mind as long as he has no idea what he's
eating. Right now he's tired from a long day of rehearsing yet another set of songs that will never
make it to Sectionals, although Mr. Schue's theme weeks provide an occasionally compelling
glimpse into weird, weird obsession.

His dad claps him on the shoulder and asks, "Hey, kid, are you doing okay? You say the word and
we'll get an actual wedding planner."

"No, I want to do this." Kurt looks up, and thank God his phone vibrates in his pocket, because then
he doesn't have to force the smile. "Just a sec, Dad, I should take this."

"Uh-huh," his dad says, raising an eyebrow. Kurt refuses to blush; in fact, he refuses so hard that he
flees the kitchen to the sanctuary of his bedroom.

i've never twirled so much in my life. how was ur day?

Kurt smiles as he texts back, Pretty much the same. All work and no play for a high school
student/singer/wedding planner.

Dont u ever get tired of having so many things to do?

Kurt pauses long enough that Blaine sends a follow-up text: hey r u ok?

No, Kurt types, but then backspaces twice and then changes the subject to something more
innocuous, the merits of Stephen Sondheim, anything but the only real answer to such a simple
question.

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They say bad things come in threes, but apparently so do good things: in the same week that the
entire glee club decides that they should walk Kurt to class and Kurt wins an eBay bidding war on a
vintage scarf, Blaine makes an off-handed reference to preferring brown hair. Kurt manfully resists
the urge to interrogate him about what shade of brown, precisely, and exact length, cut, and style.
He's heard just enough of Quinn's horrifying upbringing to know better than to try to change himself
to suit someone else, but it makes for idle daydream material.

I am the lord of eBay. Others tremble before the might of my right index finger, Kurt texts to Blaine
in the hallway, trusting Brittany and Mike to keep him from bumping into anyone. Needing an escort
should be humiliating, but the source is too weirdly sweet to resent, like a hyperactive and pitch-
perfect Doberman. He tried to thank them all during rehearsal, but Rachel just rambled about
protecting his voice and Mercedes said, "Also, we love you." Then there was a group hug, during
which Kurt saw what was almost certainly Santana grabbing Brittany's ass.

"Heads up," Mike says suddenly, and Brittany twirls Kurt out of a slushie's trajectory just in time.

"They haven't gotten me yet!" Brittany says with a grin.

"You are a goddess," Kurt informs her, just as his phone vibrates.

lol :) want to grab coffee this weekend? ill be done with my project.

Good things come in fours, then.

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There's definitely something off about Tina's story about her cousin wanting New Directions to perform at a college party, but Kurt can't argue with how much fun rehearsing the number is, especially with the benefit of Brittany and Mike's choreography. He gets into the drama of the dancing spies theme after one nonstop two-hour session, adding in a move where he drinks a pretend martini in his best Bond manner.

"Dude, you have to keep that in!" Mike says. "Everybody loves an international man of mystery."

"And underage drinking," Puck says, giving Kurt a fistbump.

"From the top, people!" Rachel says, shooting Puck a look. He responds by slinging her over his shoulder and making a noise that two years ago signified that "Puckzilla" was about to go on a dumpster-tossing rampage.

"What Puck is trying to say is that we need a break, Rachel," Artie says.

"None of the five habits of highly effective leaders includes capitulating to tyranny!" Rachel shrieks, but she's laughing with the rest of the club. Finn reaches out a hand and she pulls herself out of Puck's grip with a dainty little hop. "Take fifteen, everyone. Make sure to hydrate!"

"Amen," Kurt says, because life is too short not to moisturize.

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"Where'd you go?"

Kurt snaps back into sudden awareness, mortified at having managed to drift off into thought while on something that might, possibly, maybe be a date. He laughs apologetically, flexing his now-unfrozen fingers around his cup of coffee and says, "Just thinking, sorry. I've got a lot on my mind."

"You said that things are a little better at school, right?" Blaine has on an atrociously patterned sweater, but somehow it makes him more adorable.

"The slushies will be a part of McKinley until the teachers develop some idea of how to run a school, but Karofsky's--leaving me alone." Kurt shakes his head. "Even saying it out loud makes me feel like I'll jinx it, but I think Santana did something permanent to him, judging from the way he flees in terror whenever she approaches."

"Send a bully after a bully," Blaine says, grinning. "Is she really as scary as your stories make her out to be?"

"You have no idea. Had you told me a year and a half ago that any of the Cheerios had a marshmallow center, I would have laughed in your face. There's some merit to Rachel's theory that the magic of song and dance have brought us all together--when we're not fighting, that is."

Blaine drums his fingers against the middle of the table. If Kurt reached out, he could take his hand, take the ambiguity of their relationship now and try to shape it into something more. He consciously loosens his hands from their death grip around his coffee cup, but otherwise does nothing. They exchange tentative smiles in the abrupt silence, and then the moment passes. Kurt minds the loss, but for now, the potential is enough. It's more than he ever thought he'd have.

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And all of a sudden, he's gone from preparing to sway in the background to onstage with his friends, performing a duet for a cheering audience, a pissed off Mr. Schue, and the boy of his dreams. Thank
God the notion of Rachel Berry giving up a solo is so preposterous that he doesn't have time to get nervous before he struts onstage, already channeling the power of Justin and Madonna (or so he hopes). He tosses back the imaginary martini through sheer muscle memory, grinning as he belts out, *The road to hell is paved with good intentions.*

When they get to the second chorus, with the entire club spinning and jumping around him in sunglasses (minus Finn, who's lumbering around with no shades) it finally hits Kurt: this whole ridiculous number is the club's statement of solidarity. *Everyone*—Puck wailing on an air guitar, Brittany and Santana throwing Quinn up in the air, Mike and Tina facing off in a mock shootout, Mercedes and Sam and Rachel shimmying in perfect sync, and Artie swerving to avoid running over Finn's feet—everyone is here for him.

It's hard to get the last *tick tock tick tock* out over the lump in his throat, but Kurt manages because he is a born performer, thank you very much.

After "4 Minutes" and "Valerie," it's really no surprise when they take first place. The only surprise is that Mercedes shoves him away when he goes in for a hug.

"Somebody else has first dibs," she hisses, nodding in Blaine's general direction.

"You were amazing," Blaine says, smiling and holding out his arms.

When Blaine's arms wrap around him, Kurt doesn't swoon, he doesn't, but he feels light-headed anyway, like at any moment he could take flight.

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