Problems and Solutions

by whatstheproblembaby

Summary

anon prompted: Au where Kurt and Blaine are college/uni professors (from their late 20s to 30s) and Kurt made it clear he doesn’t do work romance but Blaine still flirts and does romantic gestures, basically does everything possible to get him on a date(literally everything) and one day Kurt gives in and realizes it’s the best decision he’s ever made

Tweaked the ending a bit, but they end up together, of course!

Notes

The song they duet on is supposed to be Lay All Your Love On Me from Mamma Mia!, jsyk.

Kurt had only one rule at his job (outside of the school-mandated policies, of course): No Workplace Romance. He had seen too many colleagues get burned by mismatching expectations or the inability to leave personal problems at the door when they started teaching, and he was not going to follow in their footsteps if he had anything to say about it. For one, they all had terrible taste in footwear - too many orthopedic shoes for such a showy (no pun intended) department.

He was highly tempted to reconsider that rule when Blaine Anderson began working at Tisch, however. How was he expected to resist a gorgeous, charming, kind man who was blatantly interested in him? It was like karma wanted to get the chance to kick his ass.
Kurt stuck to his guns, though, and told Blaine firmly but politely that he wasn’t interested in workplace dating, and Blaine had been surprisingly respectful. He’d backed off immediately, leaving them to form a cordial working relationship. They weren’t best friends, but they hadn’t let Kurt’s rejection turn them into enemies, either - they were somewhere in the gray area between coworkers and actual friends, genuinely interested in talking to each other but too afraid of crossing the line to really let loose and spend any time together outside of lunchtimes and school functions.

At least until Flirty Blaine decided to make a comeback.

“Morning, Kurt!” Blaine called as he unlocked his office, conveniently across the hall from Kurt’s own. “That shirt looks fantastic on you, by the way.”

“Wh- Thanks,” Kurt said, almost doing a double-take at the unusual (though not unflattering) comment. “You’re chipper today.”

“The sun’s shining, the semester’s almost over, and I’m in close proximity to a very cute man,” Blaine said, beaming. “I’ve practically got it made.”

At that, he entered his office and started prepping for his classes, leaving Kurt to nearly choke on his own saliva in peace.

Jesus, where did that come from? he thought, straightening a stack of rubrics mindlessly. He knows I don’t do workplace relationships, I told him that almost five years ago. I mean, I kind of regret saying so, because Lord knows he’s only gotten better looking since then, but still! Did he suffer amnesia over the weekend?

“Hey, do you mind if I stop by after my morning class?” Blaine asked from the doorway, breaking Kurt’s reverie. “I need to ask a favor.”

“I’m just doing finals prep til my afternoon classes start, stop by whenever,” Kurt said, a bit breathless from surprise.

“You’re the best, Kurt. Thanks so much,” Blaine said before dashing off.

“It’s gonna be an interesting day, isn’t it?” Kurt muttered, suddenly feeling the need for coffee.

“Thanks again for agreeing to this, Kurt,” Blaine said, reaching out to squeeze Kurt’s hand once as they waited onstage for Blaine’s students to file in.

“I’m just flattered you chose me,” Kurt replied, trying not to focus on how nice Blaine’s hand had felt on his.

“You’ve gotta put the musical part of that musical theater degree to use sometime,” Blaine said, shooting Kurt another one of those butterfly-inducing smiles. “And you’ll be much more fun to sing with than Annette. She’s old enough to be my grandmother. Maybe even my great-grandmother.”

Kurt acknowledged Blaine’s point with a nod, well aware that Blaine’s departmental colleague was notoriously old-fashioned and bad-tempered. If he were in Blaine’s shoes, he would’ve tried to pick one of the campus maintenance people over her for his lesson on duets.

“Afternoon, everyone!” Blaine said, walking downstage and projecting out so the whole class could hear. “As you know, part of your final grade is based on how well you perform a duet with another one of your classmates, so today I’ve asked Professor Hummel from the acting department to help
me demonstrate. Once we’re done, I’ll ask for some volunteers to report on what they thought made us so good - or anything we could’ve done better, don’t be afraid to give us some constructive criticism! Okay?”

Murmurs of assent echoed throughout the auditorium.

“Great. You ready, Kurt?” Blaine asked. At Kurt’s nod, he headed over to the opposite side of the stage, where he nodded to the person in the sound booth to start their track before beginning to sing. Kurt nearly broke character at the intense look in Blaine’s eyes, unused to seeing them so dark and focused. Thankfully, his entrance was soon after, allowing him to fix Blaine with a sharp look of his own as he took the chorus and verse two.

Their rudimentary choreography helped keep Kurt from getting too lost in Blaine as well, as they’d decided to set up a sort of cat-and-mouse game - apart and coy on the verses, pulling together as if magnetized for the choruses. Kurt used the moments they were separated to clear his head, both enticed and terrified by the delicious smell of Blaine’s cologne and the heat of his body. The final two choruses got a little more physically intense than before, full of quick spins away from each other and brief, seemingly intimate touches to reel the other back in before culminating in a final pose that pressed them up against each other at center stage, Kurt’s hands wrapped around Blaine’s shoulders with one digging into his hair at the nape of his neck and Blaine’s arms bracketing Kurt’s waist, solid and inviting.

They were both breathing a little too hard when they stopped singing. Kurt was barely aware of the applause surrounding them.

“Um. So,” Blaine said, breaking away a bit reluctantly to face his class. “Reactions?”

“That was hot,” a deep voice yelled from near the back.

Kurt blushed crimson, noting that a similar blush cropped up on Blaine as well.

“No quite what I was hoping for, Terry, but thanks?” Blaine said, pointing for a girl in front to answer.

“You and Professor Hummel have, like, blazing chemistry,” she said, fanning herself a little. “And that was a great song choice. How are we supposed to live up to that?”

“You’ll do just fine, Arielle,” Blaine said kindly. “Anyone else?”

Kurt slipped out as the rest of the class responded, afraid of what else they might say. He was just beginning to work out his feelings for Blaine for himself - he didn’t need an overly perceptive sophomore to expose Kurt’s burgeoning crush to the room.

“No workplace romance! he reminded himself as he walked back to his office. Even if it’s with a guy who clearly likes you back and has amazing sexual chemistry with you. Even if he’s the one person you like talking to most on this entire campus. Stay away, Hummel!

His arguments rang hollow even to himself, but he kept repeating them anyways, trying desperately to convince himself that going out with Blaine would only end badly.

It would have worked better had his brain not also been picturing what it would have been like to kiss Blaine after they’d finished their duet.
“Knock, knock,” Blaine said the next morning, appearing outside Kurt’s office with a coffee cup in each hand. “Thought I’d bring you a thank-you present for yesterday.”

“You didn’t have to do that,” Kurt said, but he smiled all the same. He gestured for Blaine to come in and take a seat. “I was glad to help.”

“Still. It wouldn’t be right to let our ‘blazing chemistry’ go unrewarded,” Blaine said with a smirk, handing one cup to Kurt with a lingering brush of fingers.

“Were all the comments like that? I felt awkward just hanging around after we finished, so I snuck out the back,” Kurt said. He let out a happy sigh when he sipped his drink and realized it was his favorite, a white chocolate mocha.

“More or less. And I noticed that you left!” Blaine said. “I was going to offer to walk you back while my kids brainstormed duet ideas, but you hightailed it before I got the chance.”

“You didn’t need-”

“I wanted to,” Blaine interrupted, smiling gently. “It’s not like I get many opportunities to spend time with you.”

“We have lunch together in the staff room,” Kurt said weakly.

“Yeah, us and half the department,” Blaine said, scoffing a little. “Great for connecting with each other.”

“Blaine - we’re coworkers,” Kurt said, losing the thread of his argument when Blaine reached across the desk and took his hand.

“Not for much longer.”

“What?”

“I got offered a job at Juilliard,” Blaine said, rubbing a thumb over Kurt’s knuckles. “And I’m taking it. The dean’s going to announce it next week, but - I can’t wait any longer to tell you.”

Kurt was stunned silent.

“So now that we’re almost not coworkers any more, would you-”

“Do you want to grab some dinner tonight?” Kurt interrupted.

“Like to go out with me sometime? Yes,” Blaine said, clearly not expecting Kurt to beat him to his own proposal. “Yes, I’d love that.”

“Fantastic,” Kurt said, grinning so hard he felt the corners of his eyes crinkle. “I can hardly wait.”

“Me neither,” Blaine said, staring into Kurt’s eyes earnestly.

Kurt was pretty sure he was going to be useless in his classes that afternoon.

Four months later, Kurt grumbled about not getting to see Blaine at all now that they taught at entirely separate schools and Blaine’s new job being the dumbest idea ever.
Blaine just laughed, leaned in to kiss Kurt’s pouty bottom lip, and started looking up apartments that were as equidistant as possible from their respective campuses.

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