

Broken Dreams

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/19130365) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/19130365>.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	The Producers (2005)
Relationships:	Max Bialystock/Leopold "Leo" Bloom , Roger De Bris/Carmen Ghia
Characters:	Max Bialystock , Leopold "Leo" Bloom (The Producers) , Carmen Ghia , Roger De Bris
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-06-07 Words: 1,977 Chapters: 1/?

Broken Dreams

by [LobbyLane](#)

Summary

Some words stay with you forever. Leo made one mistake and has to take the consequences.
Leo/Max , the Producers (c) Mel Brooks

The heavy rain pelted against the huge windows. With the pale light the gray unkind nightly city threw at them, they looked more like ghostly portals and the enormous dark clouds rolling past made their shadows appear more like spooky cobwebs than windows.

The walls were silent. As were everything inside the rooms.

Leo sat on the old leather couch in the middle of the office and tried hard to hear anything apart from his own breath and his thoughts, which bellowed loud as thunder inside his head.

His gaze was upon the floor. His eyes were teared open wide. And even though he tried his very best, he just couldn't stop his eyes getting wet again and again.

"This is just not true," a small voice in his head tried desperately to tell him once more. "It's not as that. It's a bad dream. Once you open your eyes again, it'll all be as before..."

But as much as he tried and as hard as he wished, he just couldn't deny his eyes. His ears. And that painful feeling in his guts telling him deep inside this was the reality... A certainty he would never be able to escape from.

What about all these years? About all the things he had said and done? And about everything he had chosen not to see? The red flags you choose to ignore in the beginning are your wounds tomorrow they say. And, oh, how much truth there was in that.

So what now?

Leo leaned back and felt his tears running down his burning cheeks. They would have felt cool compared to the heat of his face, if only he was able to feel anything apart from that unspeakable pain which almost burst his chest open with every heartbeat.

"It could have been anybody. You've been just the first available!"

Leo almost collapsed as Max's voice echoed through his head repeatedly.

He could not grasp it. How could he have changed this quickly? It was a second only. One darn second. Compared to ten years. After all they had been through.

....

"Where are you going?"

Max looked up from his books only to find Leo almost sneaking up to the front door, his hands already on his coat.

"I-I just need a little fresh air," he smiled at him. Obviously he felt caught somehow.

Max raised one eyebrow. Something about Leo's behavior was strange. More than strange actually. He acted like that for quite some time now and Max couldn't really believe he

thought he'd come through with it without anybody noticing. Of course he'd noticed. It was hard not to, if he was honest.

Leo was restless. Leo was distant. And far away in his mind somehow. Max had forgotten when it had started exactly. But this went on for weeks now and slowly it started to scare him. Scared? Max Bialystock? Why yes. He'd given it a good deal of thought. It had kept him awake night after night and it only led to one conclusion. He was in fact scared. This wasn't the Leo he knew. The Leo he loved.

Usually the young man would share his thoughts with him. Heavens, it was hard to shut him up from time to time. He had this strange ability to speak about everything that went on in his mind; at any possible time. It had always been something Max was secretly proud of, for it took years for Leo to go that far. And even though he only did it whenever his partner was around, Max had always felt touched in a way. Leo'd changed so much. For him. With him. Because of him?

No wonder though. After all they've been through together they'd grown to be quite a team. As a couple, as best friends and as two lovers standing against the world. They were engaged, for God's sake!

But now...

Leo hardly spoke to Max anymore. And he avoided his eyes. It had been just a feeling at first. A little discovery Max had put as a tiny paranoia somewhere in the farthest corner of his mind. And yes, it had grown. He'd tried to ignore it at first. He'd put it on Leo feeling a little alone maybe.

After all Max was pretty busy lately. He'd tried his best to be there for Leo whenever he was home but of course knew himself that spending time alone with him was rare. Ever after he'd become the owner of the Pembroke Incorporation -a funny little coincidence he sometimes even doomed- he'd got his hands full with work. Every day.

And Leo had complained about it. But there was nothing he could do really. Even though Leo had his job there too and couldn't exactly speak about having too little to do, he usually was home long before Max and of course grew to be dissatisfied about the whole situation. Mostly he would be asleep already when Max came back late at night or, as lately, he would vanish in the evenings. Sometimes even in the mornings. It was cursed somehow. Almost as though he was fleeing.

"Fresh air?" Max bid his lips but it was too late. The question whizzed through the room and the sudden stiffness of Leo was the right indication he had heard it.

Quickly, Max gave a little cough and turned his gaze down. He felt his face flushing but tried hard to focus on the letters in front of him which started to blur in an instance.

"Yeah, I...," he heard Leo's voice; quiet and almost hesitantly. "I just..."

"You need to walk. I got that," Max snapped back. Damn. He sounded angry but didn't intend to. And now he couldn't take it back.

Leo turned his head away and closed his eyes, but still stood completely petrified.

"I'm sorry," Max murmured and wished he could hide behind his desk right now. "It's just... You're doing that a lot lately and it kind of ... well, it makes me wonder a bit."

He heard Leo taking a deep breath. But no answer followed.

"Sorry," Max repeated. "Just... Forget it, okay? I'll be waiting here until you come back."

"I'll hurry," Leo smiled slightly now. It looked so forced. "I promise I'll be back in no time."

Watching it made Max almost shiver. This was kind of like talking to a stranger right now.

But then, he shook his head more to himself than his partner. He was being ridiculous. Surely he was just misinterpreting it. Yes, this must be it. This was nothing.

If Leo wanted to take some fresh air, let him. There was nothing about it.

Max almost felt comfortable with that thought again, when he felt the weight of the younger man slowly pressing himself closer to him while his hands found their way around his chest in a tight hug.

"If you don't want me to go I won't," Leo whispered.

And somehow a little of that tension was gone. Max couldn't explain it himself. But he sensed Leo meant it. It was like a bad conscience surfacing right there. Or maybe he really just was beginning to get paranoid.

"No," Max spoke a little calmer now. He felt embarrassed somehow having reacted like that. It had been stupid. This was Leo after all. And he'd never done anything to worry Max. At least not on purpose.

"I'm sorry," he repeated, but his voice was more a whisper now. "Just go. Have fun whatever you're doing out there."

He forced himself into a smile too. No fights! He didn't want that and never intended it to escalate. So, calming down was an essential part right now.

"I'll be back soon," Leo smiled cheerfully when Max turned and finally their eyes met again. "I will."

"I know that," Max answered a little irritated.

"What is it then?" Leo asked and suddenly sounded worried himself.

"I...uh..," Max looked at his partner once more but then sort of swallowed his sentence. Quickly he shook his head and broke into a loving smile. "It's nothing. Forget it, will you?"

Leo sighed and let go of him.

This was new. All of it. The whole situation. Max being away that often. And the many times they didn't see each other. And now he was ...what? Jealous? Suspicious? In a way different, that was clear. And it made him feel bad about leaving now. But on the other hand he had the burning urge to go. Right now! This wasn't the right time to discuss it.

So he turned slowly; fighting the battle of staying or going silently in his head. It took him an eternity to finally move towards the door. Well, not moving. It was more tip-toeing.

"Leo?"

He'd already reached the doorknob and stopped again, hearing Max's voice almost shyly behind him. He turned halfway only to see his partner staring back at him with one the most desperate looks he'd ever seen on him.

And then there was silence for an awfully long time. A silence that if it were screams would turn anyone within five miles deaf.

Until Max straightened up...

"Are you seeing someone else?"

Leo held his breath. He could almost see the two of them standing there from an outer point of view. And he silently cursed himself for not answering right away. He even doubted he'd heard right. And he felt his eyes growing to a new dimension while cold sweat ran down his back immediately.

And then Max coughed.

"Forgive me," he said quickly and turned away from him, fixating his shoes. "That was stupid. I... I shouldn't ...have..."

"No," Leo answered sincerely.

"So?" Max asked hoarsely.

"No one else," Leo repeated once more, but didn't dare to look up. "I'd never do that to you."

"I'm sorry."

"Don't worry," he exhaled and raised his head again. "I'll see you when I am back."

Thus, he turned and left the apartment, closing the door softly and without a sound behind himself.

Max felt his body collapse on the desk and slammed his head to it several times.

"I'm so stupid. Stupid. Stupid!" he told himself and his voice grew louder with every word. What's gotten into him anyway. He never meant to ask it. It just happened. It had slipped his mouth just as though he'd had no control over his body anymore. And it had shocked Leo

beyond words. Those eyes. He couldn't believe it. Never would he have thought he'd accuse Leo of anything as unspeakable as that. And he could tell Leo never imagined it either.

It had been just stupid. STUPID!

Maybe he needed to rest, that was all. Nothing more. He was beginning to miss the wood for the trees.

But one thing was certain. He would wait for Leo to return and then apologize a thousand, a million, heck... a billion times for that silly, childish, jealous and absolutely outrageous notion.

....

"How did you get away?"

"I said I needed a walk..."

"Again?"

Leo nodded but wasn't really listening. He simply sat there on the edge of that bed. In that shabby old dump and his bad conscience was eating him up alive.

He should have told him. Or no, maybe not that. But he should have stayed there and he should have told him something. Anything. Why the hell did he go? Why did he feel the urge to having to do this? What was the freaking matter with him?

"Is it wrong what we're doing?"

"Yes."

"Do you think we should stop?"

Leo lifted his head and looked at Carmen who looked not less clueless than himself. And even though he shook his head and stared at the floor as well, it didn't take him long to answer.

"We probably should..."

~To be continued~

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