

## So you can keep me

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/19739794) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/19739794>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Not Rated</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings</a>
Category:	<a href="#">M/M</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">The Producers (2005)</a>
Relationship:	<a href="#">Max Bialystock/Leopold "Leo" Bloom</a>
Characters:	<a href="#">Max Bialystock</a> , <a href="#">Leopold "Leo" Bloom</a> ( <a href="#">The Producers</a> )
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-07-09 Words: 1,774 Chapters: 1/1

# **So you can keep me**

by [LobbyLane](#)

## Summary

A little Leo/Max fluff, I felt like writing :) Leo/Max The producers (c) Mel Brooks

He couldn't stand that look on his face. Each time it was the same.

Leo sat on that leather couch; his head turned away from Max, with a slight smile disguising his thoughts. He stared outside and the sunset let his brown eyes shine even more. And God knew how much Max loved these eyes.

If he'd die that very day and on his deathbed was asked what he loved most about this dark, sinister, unfair world, his answer would be: these eyes.

It hurt him to know this wasn't true. That smile which was the only thing in the world capable of melting his heart was a fake that moment. And he knew he was responsible for it. Responsible for Leo being forced to wear this masquerade.

He was aware of how hard this was.

"It's only for a week," he spoke so softly, it was nothing more than a whisper but he knew perfectly well Leo understood perfectly. He could tell by him flinching slightly and closing his eyes while his smile grew to be even wider.

"I promise it won't be any longer," Max continued, trying to stay unimpressed. "I'll be back in no time."

Still no reaction.

How he hated this. Ever since he'd taken over to run the Pembroke Incorporation, he was barely at home at all. Endless working hours and appointments were on their schedule now every day. Mostly he was gone before Leo even got up. Sure, they worked together but since their duties had become quite different, they barely saw each other the whole day. And if they did, it was usually only for a few short minutes. There simply was no room for private talk or little breaks, where they could go sit somewhere and just be close to each other as they had done so many times when they were what Max liked to call 'still working in the mediocre section of Broadway producing'.

This was different. Everything had changed. They were finally where they'd always wanted to be. On top. Nothing less. Only trouble was, it meant a lot more effort and a whole bunch of workload more than before. Sometimes it was hours past midnight when Max silently entered the office and always tiptoed down the long hallway behind the official reception room. He then would silently open the door to their bedroom and glance inside, only to find Leo being asleep. Possibly for hours already.

Sometimes, he would sit down on the edge of the bed just to watch him sleep and listen to his peaceful breaths for a moment or two. This way it felt less like being separated from him all the time. He would stroke away a streak of his hair from his forehead and smile, knowing deep inside why he did all this.

"I'm sorry," he would whisper, before kissing his cheek once. "But this is for you. All of this is."

And true, financial worries were in the past ever since. They were able to get everything they ever wanted. They were out every other night, attending yet another opening party or dining with important backers. And Max paid close attention on not giving too much work to Leo. He knew perfectly well, he would work until his eyes would be so heavy, he'd fall asleep on the backseat of the cab home. Something Max couldn't endure to witness. Not anymore.

But these business trip were another deal.

This was the third this month he had to do; this time for a whole week. Which meant not only being away and leaving Leo alone yet again. It meant letting Leo alone in his nightmares once more. Max knew how much the younger man hated to be alone. It had been no big deal when it had been one or two days in half a year. After all he was surrounded by everything he knew for ten years now and knew how to make himself feel at home by now. But the nights were trouble. Leo tried to hide this but Max had noticed. Of course.

Even when they hadn't been aware of their affection for one another he'd had caught Leo in the middle of the night, walking aimlessly up and down the apartment to calm down. Sometimes, when it had become really bad, he had even sneaked into Max's bedroom and had laid down next to him, only to vanish before sunrise again. He'd never spoken about that but Max had noticed of course. Sometimes he had woken up at night to find Leo snuggled against him, holding his hand so close to him and sometimes he'd spotted tears in his eyes all the while being deeply asleep. Max had never lost one word about it, but this state hadn't changed much, even though they shared a bed now constantly.

"Leo, please say anything," Max stepped closer to him.

Leo shrugged, but didn't turn.

"Only a week," he repeated silently, still staring outside without moving at all. "It's not that long. I guess it'll pass faster than we will notice."

Max couldn't endure this.

"Listen," he started slowly, closing his eyes for a moment. He always felt safer when it came to these emotional talks, which he knew was inevitable right now. "I know you hate this..."

"I loath it."

Max almost jumped as Leo turned so hastily and unexpectedly, raising his voice.

"Why can't someone else go?" Leo was on his feet now. "Why can't you let someone else do this? There are enough people. And nothing can be that important to justify the third trip in a month!"

Much to his horror Max saw tears glisten in the corner of his partner's eyes. Leo stood there completely stiff, with his hands formed to fists and clearly shivering from trying desperately to hold back his emotions.

"Because that deal needs me," Max answered calmly although his heart was bursting witnessing this. God, when had he become this soft? "Because I am the official contact when it comes to backing productions and that means meeting up with them. Please, try to understand."

"I know," Leo immediately calmed down, taking his eyes away from his partner. He let himself sink into the couch again, looking down to his feet.

"I'm sorry about that," his voice was shaky and thin and Max could tell he was close to bursting into tears completely. "I don't know what hit me."

He took one deep breath and lifted his head again, forcing himself to another smile. Max bit his lips.

When Leo opened his eyes again, tears run down his red cheeks, even though his smile was bright and he tried his very best to keep his voice steady.

"I'm sure you will do great," he said, pressing his hands together on his knees until his knuckles turned white. "And I'm sure you'll be back without me having noticed you've been gone. Just promise me...promise me to have fun, will you?"

This was too much.

Max almost rushed forward, embracing Leo as tightly as he could. The younger man immediately entangled him as well and started sobbing silently. His face was buried in Max's chest with Max gently stroking his back, yet the uncontrollable rising and falling of his body gave Leo away easily.

Max stroked over his head, holding him close to himself while breathing in his smell. He didn't dare to say anything for there was nothing that could relieve Leo's pain right now.

It took quite a while for Leo to control his emotions again. He sniffed once or twice and then gently stemmed himself away from Max.

They still sat there on that couch and Max still held his hand on to Leo's back to support him.

Leo on the other hand rubbed over his face with his hands once and then looked at him through red puffy eyes.

"Sorry...", he started shyly. This shouldn't have happened. I ....it's just... just imagining you'll be away for that long... I'm a hopeless case, am I not?"

He tried to smile once more, but looked rather surprised when he turned to Max again.

The older man sat there in front of him, smiling gently and looking at him with loving eyes. His hand was spreading out his hand, holding something like a very small folded piece of paper. Leo stared at it for a second, but then hesitantly took it. With his eyes still on Max he started to unfold it, slowly turning his gaze to the picture in front of him.

An old photograph.

It showed Max and him. They stood forehead to forehead to one another, smiling widely. Max had his hand put around Leo's neck, while Leo was softly touching it with his own hand. It seemed the whole world had disappeared just judged from the looks on their faces. There was no one else.

A warm feeling started to spread inside of Leo watching this.

"Where is that from?" he asked a little uncertain. "I don't remember anyone shooting this."

"It was Roger," Max answered. "We didn't notice back then."

"This was during the opening night party of 'Prisoners of Love'. I remember that," Leo answered, still staring at it. This was long before they had fallen for each other... or maybe not. He couldn't tell himself when this first started. Only thing that was for sure was that it took them way too long to admit it. "Why haven't I seen this before."

"I took it and threatened Roger to personally kill him if he ever lost one word about it," Max grinned.

"But you kept it all these years?"

Max nodded.

"I always had it with me...And now I want you to have it."

Leo turned his head in disbelief.

"So you can keep me with you," Max smiled back at him. "Inside the pocket of your suit, if that helps. As close to you as you need. The main thing is, you don't forget I'll always be there for you. And I'll always be with you more importantly. So if you'll feel alone, just hold me a little closer to you and you'll feel my heartbeat longing for this heinous week to be over already, so I can be close to you again."

Leo listened to him, but didn't know what to say. So, instead he leaned forward, falling into the arms of Max once more, hugging him tightly.

Only a week... he surely could survive this too, now knowing it didn't matter how far they'd ever be apart from each other...

He'd never be alone. Not anymore.

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