

Worth the trouble?

Von xtrek

Title: Worth the trouble?

Author: xtrek

Pairing: a few hints to Lavi/Kanda at the end

Rating: PG (there's one little kiss)

Warnings: Nothing major, no spoilers. Only Komui's experiments and Kanda's temper.
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Word Count: ~ 2500

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Summary: Kanda is the victim of some prank and doesn't deal with it that well.

Worth the trouble?

Hastily breezing through the corridors of the Black Order's headquarters, Kanda Yuu was fuming and shooting death-glances at anyone that even attempted to look in his direction for more than a second. Still he felt as if everyone was staring at him. He was frowning even more than usual. You would expect that his normal irritable behavior had already scared off most of the normal staff of the headquarters, but today the circumstances were unusual. His appearance caused the people he came across to stop what they were doing and stare after him unbelievably.

He had to forcibly stop himself from imagining the laughter starting as soon as he rounded the next corner. His fingers itched to grab Mugen and clear himself a path to the cafeteria. The anger about what had happened to him the day before yesterday was still very present in his mind. His swirling emotions were close to boiling over every time he was reminded of his ruined and not so peaceful soak in the exorcists' shared bath that day.

Grumbling something about people's stupid ideas of a practical joke, he nearly knocked over Linali - who was leaving the cafeteria with her brother's favorite mug in hand - just as Kanda arrived. Kanda could smell the aroma of the strong, hot coffee that swished in the mug, dangerously close to spilling over.

"Umpf...", Linali looked up and fixed her gaze at Kanda's face and nearly dropped the mug, now spilling some of the hot liquid in consequence. "Kanda..., what happened to you?" Forgetting about the coffee, she stared at Kanda's face not quite believing what she was seeing. It was actually quite funny. Hadn't it been Kanda, she would have been rolling on the floor with laughter by now. As it was, only a quiet chortle managed to escape her and her eyes sparkled bemusedly.

"Some stupid joke," Kanda mumbled slightly miffed, hung his head - already resigned to his fate as the laughing stock of the day - and made for the door leading to the cafeteria. Linali watched him go with a thoughtful expression and a suspicion forming in her head. She turned and walked in the direction of her brother's office.

Kanda really didn't want to face anyone at the moment but he had to eat something today; he had already skipped yesterday's meals. He had just hoped - against better knowledge - that the cafeteria would not be too busy this morning. Now hearing the friendly chatter and the clutter of many people eating, he cursed his luck as he pushed open the door and mentally braced himself for the reaction of his fellow Order members.

At first his entrance attracted little attention, although he saw a few odd looks directed in his general direction. He tried his best to look as unapproachable as humanly possible - which was easy for him - and started to make his way to the food counter. The cafeteria was packed with people enjoying their breakfast and Kanda had to carefully make his way through the room.

Even though he would have liked to stay locked up in his room, he really had to eat something - preferably Jerry's soba. Plus, he needed to find out who had had the guts to temper with his bath water. By now he was ready to kill the idiot that had rigged his bath with something that had left him in this - state.

A few giggles, snorts and other sounds of barely suppressed laughter reached his ears and he whipped around to silence the morons that dared to laugh at his predicament with an especially vicious glare.

"Yuuuuuu!" Arms wrapped around his waist from behind and he was fiercely hugged.

Turning his head to snap at Lavi and shake him off, Kanda stilled when he noticed Lavi's eyes fixing on his face. Lavi's mouth twitched with a suppressed smile and Kanda could have sworn that there had been a mischievous glint in his eyes for a moment.

"Yuu, you look cute dyed purple." Lavi proclaimed.

That was the last straw.

Before the words had completely registered, Kanda had freed himself from Lavi's clutch and whirled around, drawing Mugen in the same motion.

"You!" He spluttered. "Don't. Make. Fun. Of. Me!"

He had spend an hour in the bathroom this morning, trying to get himself back to normal, but it had been futile. Furious scrubbing with various types of soap hadn't helped. He still looked... purple... all over. Why purple of all things? Kanda had never felt this humiliated in his life. Humiliation mixed with anger and formed a dangerous combination.

Mugen's razor sharp blade pointing at him had Lavi squirming uncomfortably. Kanda looked like he was seriously considering slashing him.

Thankfully, Allen chose this moment to appear behind Lavi. Smiling as if nothing had happened, he stepped up to Kanda and pushed Mugen away from the retreating Lavi.

"Let's sit down and have breakfast before anyone gets killed."

Allen pointed to the table laden with food that he had left behind to rescue Lavi. Lavi nodded enthusiastically and went over to sit down with a thankful look directed at Allen. Allen smiled back and turned back to Kanda. "I guess you want soba, Kanda?" Reluctantly Kanda nodded and accepted Allen's underlying offer to get his favorite food for him. Allen went to get the noodles, while Kanda sat down across from Lavi.

All around relieved sighs could be heard.

There was a moment of silence when Kanda glanced at Lavi. Lavi looked a little sheepish. "I guess I got carried away. But honestly, how did you turn purple over night?" Kanda tried to reign in his anger and frustration and replied: "It happened in the bath the day before yesterday. When I got out of the water I realized I was purple all over." 'Must have been one of Komui's experiments with his various bath additives,' Lavi thought. To Kanda he said: "And you didn't notice anything odd? No strangely colored bath water or anything like that?"

Kanda bristled with returning anger. "You think, I wouldn't have noticed something like that? Everything was perfectly normal." Allen returned with the food, effectively ending the conversation and they dug in, Allen eating at his usual amazing speed, inhaling most of the food in front of him in no time.

Meanwhile in Komui's office

Komui was hunched over a small stack of paper and was already wary of the workload that was still piling up on his desk. Reeve had forced him to pull an all-nighter yesterday to clear away some of the piles on the office floor. Not that it had had the desired effect. The office was still littered with paper. Therefore he was more than a little grumpy and longed for some kind of distraction from the boring paperwork.

Since the incidents with Komurin his only distractions from work were his 'bath experiments' as he liked to call them. But even thinking about those didn't appeal to him this morning. He hadn't had his usual mug of coffee yet and his caffeine level was too low to do more than wallow in self-pity.

He perked up when Linali entered the office with his coffee in her hand. "Linaliii~," he called happily getting up from his chair and preparing to take the coffee from her. Linali gave him a stern look and refused to hand over his coffee. "You don't happen to know something about Kanda getting dyed purple, do you?" She asked innocently but coming straight to the point.

Komui knew this tone of voice. It usually meant that his sister was not in a mood for jokes. He shifted his weight from one foot to the other and thought for some way to get out of this and not end up with his precious coffee being poured down the drain and himself being kicked into another dimension.

"Would you believe me if I said it was an accident?" Komui asked with little hope. Although he would have liked to keep his sister in the dark about his 'secret bath experiments' and their effects on Kanda in particular, he knew that he stood no chance in a battle of wills with his younger sister. He'd better fess up quickly or he would never hear the end of it.

Linali placed the mug on Komui's desk and leaned closer to her brother who shrank back into his seat. "I can't wait to hear all the details." She said sweetly and Komui started sweating profusely while hoping that he would live to see the next day.

The cafeteria had cleared out slowly and only a few late starters and exorcists off mission were left to witness Linali's entry. She was obviously enraged and very determined – the latter was evident by her easy ignorance of the struggling Komui she had in tow. She had simply grabbed him by the ear and dragged him all the way to the cafeteria. Komui had tears in his eyes and was begging for forgiveness: "Please... Linaliiii~... I'm your only brother. Please forgive me!"

Allen, Lavi and Kanda had stayed behind to drink some tea and discuss Kanda's awkward situation. Linali's sudden entry surprised them a little, although Lavi's quick mind readily figured out the connection between an angry Linali and the pitiful Komui. Lavi came to the logical conclusion that Komui must have been the cause for Kanda's state of purpleness.

Even Kanda must have noticed something, because he looked ready to jump up and run over to the Lee siblings. He was held back by Allen's hand on his arm, though. Kanda reluctantly leaned back his seat and waited for Linali and Komui to reach their table.

Linali only took a few seconds to nod a greeting at them and proceeded to push her brother to the front who had been trying to hide behind her. "I think, you should tell them what you told me." Linali leaned over and whispered to her brother: "And don't forget to apologize if you want Kanda to let you live!"

Thus admonished, Komui struggled to find the right words. His life depended on Kanda's reaction to his confession. But at least he was not alone with the bad tempered exorcist. Not that he believed that Kanda would spare him because of an audience.

"Eh... I'm sorry Kanda...," Komui stared nervously at his wringing hands, "I guess this got a little out of hand..." Linali nudged her brother to get him to continue, while Kanda already looked pretty close to an explosion of pure fury.

"You went on a date with Linali a whi-" Komui was rudely interrupted.

"I did WHAT? Date? I never went on a date!" Kanda was severely irritated and also a little bewildered.

Linali gave her brother a warning look. She had already told him that he had misunderstood the whole thing of her going out to shop with Kanda.

Having pity on her brother she decided to intervene: "Remember when I persuaded you to help me pick a birthday present for Lavi?"

At that Lavi pricked up his ears. His birthday was only a few days away and of course he loved presents. He was a little surprised though, that Kanda might have actually done something for him.

"That must have been when we were on our last mission. So you got Kanda to help you out with the party." Allen remarked.

Linali nodded. Kanda had calmed down a bit when he remembered that day. He was not too fond of shopping and party arrangements and had tried to erase the day of playing drudge for Linali from his memory.

"Yeah, I remember." Kanda grudgingly admitted.

In the end he had been unable to deny Linali anything and had gone along with her plans. He had even let himself be talked into also picking a gift for the bumbling redhead. He started wondering now, why he hadn't minded that so much at the time.

Komui – who had watched the exchange in silence – seemed to be relieved that he wouldn't be killed just yet.

"So that was the reason you tempered with Kanda's bath and dyed him purple?" Lavi asked.

"Out of stupid jealousy." Linali added. Allen murmured something about a sister complex.

Lavi could only think that he'd better find a way to thank Kanda for caring about his birthday, since Kanda had ended up with so much trouble in the end.

Komui looked like he wanted to object, he very much thought it his brotherly duty to protect his innocent sister, but he also valued his life a lot. So he just mumbled something about it not being solely his fault.

Kanda caught that and rose to his feet, grabbing fistful of Komui's shirt. "Are you implying that I was at fault?"

Komui violently shook his head no. Allen tried to break the tension: "So, how can Kanda get back to normal?"

That question caused a fresh wave of panic to catch up with Komui. "Eh... there is no way to turn it back," Kanda shook him and he quickly continued, "but it should fade after a few days!" Komui tried to look apologetic but the effect was lost in Kanda's long awaited explosion.

"You THINK I'm staying purple for another few days? No way! Get out of my sight before I kill you right here and now!" He roared.

Komui took off in panic with Kanda hot on his heels. The others that were left behind heaved a collective sigh before setting out to stop the two idiots from destroying the Order's Headquarters.

A few days later, on Lavi's birthday

The party had dwindled down and Lavi had decided to step out for a bit. He had had a bit too much to drink and needed a change of air. When he stepped out into the corridor he saw Kanda who had refused to come to the party, although his naturally pale color had returned earlier.

Curious as to why Kanda had decided to stay in the vicinity, he approached the other man.

When Lavi got closer Kanda turned to him and thrust out his hand that held a small gift-wrapped package. "Happy Birthday." Kanda said quietly and a little reluctantly.

Lavi took the package with both hands and stepped up to Kanda. "Thank you, Yuu," he whispered and pressed a quick kiss to Kanda's lips. Kanda blushed furiously.

"You look even cuter when you blush. Purple really doesn't suit you all that well," Lavi laughed.

Kanda turned even darker and Lavi smiled one of his rare real smiles.

Maybe the whole ordeal had been worth it in the end.

THE END