

A TEASE VALENTINES DAY SHORT

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Valentine*

CAT JOHNSON

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The serving girl leaned over Eros and poured the blood red wine into his silver chalice, but it wasn't the rich claret color of the liquid that captured his attention, but rather the dusky blush of her one exposed nipple, pebbled so near his lips he could almost taste it on his tongue. Eros restrained the impulse to reach out and sample it, and instead allowed the girl to refill the cup belonging to his friend, Erato.

"What plans have you for Valentine's Day, Erato? Surely the muse of erotic poetry has some sinful fun planned down below amid the mortals." As Eros spoke, he noted Erato, the darkly handsome counterpart to Eros' own golden good looks, never even glanced at the tasty tidbit offered by way of the serving girl's bared breast.

Fine, all the more for him then. Eros signaled the girl back over to his side, indicating she should rid her hands of the wine and instead put them to better use when he flipped back the hem of his toga and exposed himself.

Erato raised a brow as his gaze dropped briefly to observe the serving girl who took Eros' hardened length into her mouth.

Grinning at his friend, Eros swept a hand before him in invitation. "Join me, Erato. There is plenty of this lovely for both of us to share."

"Thank you, no, Eros. I'm good, but please, feel free. And I won't be going below for the celebrations. Acantha and I have sinful plans of our own, this being our first Valentine's Day together."

Eros pushed himself deeper into the girl's throat and let his eyes drift shut, enjoying the feel of her muscles contracting as she swallowed around his shaft. Opening his eyes again, he found Erato slowly shaking his head. "What bothers you, Erato?"

"I was just thinking how since Acantha, others don't hold even the tiniest bit of temptation for me."

"Yes, so I see." Eros joined his friend in pondering that thought. "And I agree with you. 'Tis a sad day when a man falls in love, Erato."

Erato belted out a hearty laugh at that. "No, 'tis a sad day when the god responsible for that emotion feels such as you do. Don't you want to be in love, Eros?"

"By the gods, no! Are you crazy, Erato?"

"But how can you do what you do, be who you are and not believe in the most wonderful of all emotions?"

"Oh, I believe love exists. Of course, it does. I have a quiver full of golden arrows that will inflict the cursed emotion on whatever unfortunate mortal I choose. I simply don't wish to be so afflicted."

As the girl kneeling between his legs redoubled her efforts with both mouth and hands, Eros felt himself nearing completion. With one palm he pushed and held her head down over him, closed his eyes and came deep in her throat.

Opening his eyes again, Eros dismissed her with the flick of one wrist and then took another sip of wine, only to find his friend once again shaking his head.

“What now, Erato? What do I do that displeases you so? Is it the girl? You said you didn’t want her. I’ll gladly summon her again if you wish.”

“Do you not feel any emotion at all, Eros? Do you no longer feel passion for anything?”

Eros considered that a moment. “Of course, I do. I hate Apollo fairly passionately.”

Visibly setting his jaw, Erato nodded. “I agree with you there, but there is naught I can do about him. But you, Eros, *you* I can do something about. It saddens me that you have become so...”

Eros watched his friend search for the word he wanted before supplying a few choices of his own. “Cold? Unfeeling? Bored to tears from an eternity of dispensing love to the pitiful mortals?”

Jumping on that last statement, Erato nodded his agreement. “Perhaps that is it. You are bored from an eternity of choosing love for others from a safe distance. Don’t stay so safe, Eros. This time when you go to the mortal realm, dare to get a little messy. Feel what the humans feel. They have an enormous capacity for emotions, the mortals. It comes I think from knowing they all face death, that life is fleeting. It’s something we miss here on Mt. Olympus, I fear.”

Though Eros refused to envy the humans their fragility and ability to die, he would allow them the capacity to feel, but that was not to say that he particularly wanted to share in their emotions. In fact, he always took great pains to shield himself from emotion while in the mortal realm. Eros’ thoughts must have shown on his face, because Erato let out a frustrated puff of air, set his cup on the floor and stood.

“Think about it, Eros; that’s all I ask of you. But as for now, my love will be awaiting me in my chamber and I have a feeling I don’t want to miss a moment of whatever she has planned.”

“Enjoy, Erato. Oh, and please tell the lovely nymph Acantha she may feel free to envision me as you mount her.” Eros grinned.

“Keep it up, my friend, and you may find that quiver of yours stuffed somewhere you’d rather it not be.” Erato shot Eros a warning look on his way out the door.

Eros laughed, knowing full well his friend was as serious as he was jesting when it came to the subject of his new lover.

“May the gods preserve me from love’s foolishness,” Eros mumbled to the empty room, as he rubbed from his chest a strange feeling that seemed a bit too reminiscent of envy.

Valentine's Day in the mortal realm. Why these lowly creatures insisted on taking ancient traditions and dressing them up in modern trappings until there remained little or no resemblance to the original was beyond Eros' comprehension. The worst was the bastardization of his own image. He, the mighty Eros, had been turned from skilled archer to chubby cherub. In the image of a child no less, with fat cheeks, wearing a diaper!

Where were the days when Eros was respected, feared even? Gone with the invention of greeting cards and paper decorations. It made him ill, and if Eros hadn't been ordered to visit the mortal realm on this specific date, he sure as Zeus wouldn't be there now in some hotel lobby bar amid the pitiful creatures.

Glancing around him, Eros spied the expected. Lovers forcing themselves to look extra blissful because it was required of them on this day. Others, alone, feeling even more miserable than usual for the lack of love in their lives. Still others, strangers, coming together for one night simply because it was better than admitting they were alone on Valentine's Day. Mortals often confused sex with love, something the Gods didn't suffer from on Mount Olympus.

Eros sighed and signaled the bartender for a glass of wine. He'd down one inferior, mortal-made beverage, find a likely target, shoot the poor creature and be gone. It wasn't like he had a quota to fill. He merely had to be present and bring love to some lowly being. Besides, the denim jeans he wore while among the mortals may warrant much attention from the females, judging by the looks he received, but they were some of the most uncomfortable things he'd ever put on his body.

The bartender, a surly old man who looked like he was doing Eros a favor by simply serving him, slid his wine across the bar, and Eros missed the serving girls up on Mount Olympus even more. Though, the man did look a bit happier when Eros slipped a large denomination bill across the bar and told him to keep it.

With every passing sip of the mediocre liquid, Eros' malaise grew. Finally, with a sigh, he decided to try Erato's suggestion, if only to alleviate the boredom. Considering his choices, Erato took in the scene within the bar until one woman sitting alone caught his eye. She was lovely, as far as mortals went, which is what made it even stranger that she was alone. Though she was waiting for someone, judging by the way she continuously peered over her shoulder at the entrance, when she wasn't consulting what Eros recognized as a phone.

With a huff, she observed her watch and then the phone, followed by the door one more time, just as Eros opened his mind to her. The moment he dropped the mental barrier he usually kept in place, the waves of emotion that radiated off of her struck him like a physical blow. The rich tapestry of feelings drew him to her, and before he knew it, he had risen and was seated next to her. Her deep emerald eyes were trained upon him as all she felt filled his body. Anger. Hurt. Jealousy. Doubt. Insecurity. And below that all, the underlying cause, the unfulfilled desire to be loved.

“I am really not in the mood for a pick up line, so if that was your plan, save it.” Then she laughed. “Although, I should take you up to that overpriced hotel room I just paid through the nose for and fuck you until neither of us can walk. *That* would teach him!”

Eros raised his brow and considered that. “I’m afraid I don’t know anything about pick up lines, but that second part you mentioned I’m very well versed in.”

Her cheeks colored a charming pink. “I’m sorry. That was inappropriate. I apologize.”

“No apology necessary. I am not at all offended.” Eros felt the deep pain within her, but now, it felt different. There was a nuance to her emotions, as if they were mingled with something else. Interest? Desire? For him. Erato had been correct. Emotions were fun.

“No. It was an extremely stupid thing for me to say.”

Eros wondered what her satin brown hair would feel like draped over him. He shook his head. “You’re not stupid.”

She turned her body fully to face him now. “I’ll tell you how stupid I am. When my boss, my *boss*, which reaches a realm of stupidity all on its own, told me he was leaving his wife so we could be together and that he just had to wait for the holidays to be over because of the children, I actually believed him. And so I was alone on Christmas, and he was with her, and I was alone on New Year’s Eve, when he was with her. And what do I get? One text message over the holidays. A single text message!”

Eros wasn’t exactly sure what that was, but it was apparent from the feelings he felt coming off her a text message in this case was not a good thing.

The woman continued, “He swore to me, *swore* that he would ask her for a divorce and we would be together on Valentine’s Day. And look! Here we are, Valentine’s Day, and guess what? I’m alone. Again. And stupid.”

“Not stupid. You chose the wrong man to love. It happens.” Not to Eros, it didn’t happen, his aim was true and the love he wrought never ending. But to mortals, who wandered around blindly searching for love, mistakes happened. Often. Perhaps he did need to spend more time in the mortal realm helping the poor creatures.

“Love.” She indelicately snorted out a laugh. “I’m not even sure anymore that love is real.”

“It is. Yours was.” At least to her, in her mind and heart, it was. Eros felt that much. “And you’re hurt now, but you’ll heal. And then you’ll find the one you were meant to be with.”

She laughed again, but there was no joy in the sound. “And who would that *one* be? You?”

Eros couldn’t control his laugh at that suggestion. “No. Definitely not me.”

He shook his head to reinforce the point and then downed some more of his wine as he felt her watching him.

“You really didn’t come over here to try and pick me up? Or get me into bed?” she asked.

“I came over because you looked like you needed someone to talk to...before you burst into flames or something.” He grinned, even though he’d actually seen someone burst into flames after they’d angered Zeus.

A strange expression crossed her face. “Ah. I get it now. Gorgeous. Nice. Drinking wine instead of beer. I should have seen it before. You’re gay. Of course.”

Eros was familiar with the mortal terminology she used and raised a brow in response. “I assure you, I like women. Very much, in fact.”

“Oh.” Her face fell. “Then you just aren’t attracted to me.”

Another wave of sadness and insecurity hit Eros. “First of all, I thought you didn’t want me to try and woo you. In fact, you said exactly that.”

Her mouth twisted at that. “Well, not exactly. I don’t believe I ever used the word *woo*. And are you sure you aren’t gay?”

“Quite sure. Stop interrupting. Now if I may continue. Second, I find you very attractive and I don’t know where your insecurity stems from.”

She looked at him accusingly. “You don’t? Just look at me.”

He did look at her. Silky hair the color of chestnuts. Lips, full and pink and in the perfect shape of a bow. Large breasts that he would gladly spend hours feasting upon, which now that he thought about it, he itched to reach out and test the weight of with his palms. Thighs, round and shapely, that would wrap around his back quite nicely when he rode her. “Yes? And?”

“And? I’m fat!”

“Fat? Pigs are fat. Cows are fat. Women are well rounded, and beautifully so, I might add.” Eros let his eyes roam her body one more time and felt his cock stir as a result. More than stir, actually, a movement that she noted also as her eyes dropped to his crotch.

The amazement clearly showed on her face. “You really mean that. You do find me attractive.”

Eros didn’t even have to lie. “Yes, I do. Extremely.”

This flirtation with the mortal felt...different. Here, there was no snapping of his fingers to have a girl drop to her knees and service him. Throw in the onslaught of the mortal’s emotions and Eros found himself more aroused and—dare he say it—desperate than he’d ever felt in his very long life.

Eros swallowed hard, his throat suddenly dry and tight. He felt the uncertainty coming off her, but it was mingled with a wanting that nearly matched his own. Eros covered her hand with his, knowing the mere touch of a god could melt a simple mortal. It would definitely dispel her lingering doubts.

Her eyes softened immediately at the contact, her lids growing droopy with desire. “Am I a whore for wanting you? A man I just met?”

Eros shook his head. “No. You’re a woman in pain, and I alone have the ability to heal you.”

Little did she know how true that statement was.

“I could use some healing. Lots of it, in fact. Did I mention that bastard, my boss, had erectile dysfunction?”

Eros smirked. “No, you didn’t.”

“You don’t suffer from anything like that, do you?” Her gaze dropped again to his erection, clearly outlined by the stiff denim.

He followed her gaze and grinned. “No, I certainly do not.”

“What’s your name?”

Hmmm, Eros didn’t have a mortal name ready on the tip of his tongue. He scrambled to avoid the question. “No names.”

“Okay, fair enough.” Still holding his hand, she stood. “Let’s go.”

They entered the lobby elevator, and as it rose with them inside, so did both her anxiety and excitement. With his mental shields still down, Eros felt every ounce of it.

He slid his hand along the back of her neck and lowered his mouth to hers for a deep, soul-searching kiss. The emotions streaming from her hit him twofold at that intimate contact, but he knew the effect he had on her was far greater than hers upon him.

Her body leaned into his as her breathing quickened and she was his for the taking.

“Stop worrying,” he whispered, breaking the kiss to speak. Though she was already under his spell just from the kiss, she needed this reassurance. The time would come when he was no longer there with her, and Eros wanted her strong and confident when that time came.

“You are beautiful. I need you at this moment more than I need the very air I breathe. Now show me to this room of yours before I take you right here.”

Awash in her feelings, Eros meant every word he spoke, and judging by the look in her eyes as she looked into his, she believed him, trusted him, completely. The elevator opened and there was no more talk, just fumbling, first with the door and then with their shoes until they landed on the bed, still dressed, in a tangle of lips and limbs.

Eros had forgotten how good mortals tasted. Her mouth was like honey, and if he remembered correctly, the flavor would be even more intense between her legs. He yanked up the hem of her dress in search of a taste, and found she wore only stockings held up by a strip of lace around her waist, and nothing else. It appeared she had dressed especially nice for the bastard married boss with erectile dysfunction.

Though Eros appreciated the comfort and ease of access of the togas typically worn on Mount Olympus, particularly now as his erection pressed painfully into the seam of his jeans, he had to admit there was something intriguing in this mortal female’s attire.

Looking for more of the tempting lace, he raised the dress completely over her head, dropped it to the floor and enjoyed the garment holding up her generous breasts. He popped first one peak out of the garment and took a taste, letting the flat of his tongue run over the hardened nipple. Then he moved to the next before moving down her body.

She pulled at his clothing and he stilled her hands. "Lie back, relax and enjoy."

Eros spread her temptingly rounded thighs and revealed what he sought, framed beautifully by white lace. His mouth watered in anticipation. Why hadn't he indulged in this particular pleasure recently? He certainly could not remember the reason as his tongue reached out and stroked the woman, eliciting a jolt that sent her hips off the bed.

He'd forgotten how easily mortals responded. He repeated the action and felt her hands tangle in the curls on his head as she moaned. He smiled and went to work, dipping his tongue deep inside her and gathering her honey, enjoying her as much as he felt her enjoying him. Eros was so hard he ached, but he was in no rush to end his feast, especially when she came beneath him and flooded his mouth with even more intense flavor.

He worked her until she lay limp on the bed, twitching from his touch, exhausted. Then and only then did he remove his own clothes to crawl between her legs and slide inside her. He felt her tremble beneath him as strongly as he sensed the sheer relief she emitted from having him inside her. Relief that he wanted her. Her feelings of insecurity still baffled him and made him hate the bastard boss even more for the damage he'd done to her. With a vow to set it all right before he left this realm, Eros made love to her, slowly at first, healing her from the inside.

He came once inside her, then kept going as she writhed beneath him, his strokes growing faster and harder as he felt her strength grow. They stayed locked, moving together until nearly dawn. When he finally left his place between her legs, had Eros not been a god he would indeed have been unable to walk from their fucking, just as she'd predicted when they'd first met.

Dressed again, Eros leaned over her as she lay on the bed, sleeping soundly, looking peaceful, though exhausted.

"You deserve to be loved," he whispered against her cheek. "Never forget that." Then he ran his hand gently over her face, erasing all memory of him and their night together.

With one last glance back at the woman who had taught him, the mighty Eros, so much about love in only one night, he left the room and headed to finish what he'd started.

Erato smiled the moment he saw Eros enter the hall.

"Friend! You have returned." Erato's dark eyes inspected Eros more closely. "From the looks of you, I can't tell if you enjoyed your time in the mortal realm or not. Shall we share some wine as well as some Valentine's tales?"

Eros raised an eyebrow. "You would share the details of your time with Acantha with me?"

Smiling, Erato shrugged. "Some, yes. But not all."

Eros shook his head. "But you would want me to share all the details of my night with you?"

"Exactly!"

Eros laughed. "Ah, Erato. You are indeed one of a kind."

"And you have never hesitated to brag about any of your deeds before, which only makes me suspect that something of actual consequence happened since you don't want to speak of it."

Something of consequence. Erato was correct in that. At that very moment, the bastard boss, unaware of the golden arrow lodged firmly in his heart, was so in love with his wife he would do anything to please her. While at the same time his wife, equally unaware of the lead arrow lodged in her heart, was planning how best to rid herself of the man, while keeping all of his money. Fair was fair, and the bastard boss deserved to feel the pain of unrequited love. Perhaps, one day soon, Eros would travel down and remove one or both of the arrows, but not too soon. Let the man suffer. The bastard deserved that and more for what he had done to both his wife and his lover.

Thoughts of the woman Eros had lain with caused a strange feeling in his chest. Regret perhaps that they were not meant to be together for more than one night. Though it was only Eros who bore that feeling, because his lover, *his* Valentine, if only for one night, had forgotten all about him already. More importantly, she was finally confident and strong enough to accept the love Eros knew she deserved. And it had taken only a brief glimpse into her life the next morning for him to see that the man she was meant to be with all along was actually the bastard boss' assistant. When Eros had opened himself and dropped his shields again, it was obvious the shy, younger man was already so in love with her, he didn't need one of Eros' arrows. Eros had left them together late that morning, sipping hot beverages in the office lounge, his former lover blushing at the newfound attention, the man equally amazed at the time his love was suddenly willing to spend with him.

"Eros?"

Erato's voice broke into Eros' memories of the mortal realm. "Yes, my friend?"

With a grin, Erato laid an arm around Eros' shoulder. "Welcome back."

"Thank you, Erato. For everything."

When they stepped into the chamber, a serving girl stood before them, head bowed, awaiting instruction.

"Wine for both of us," Erato told her, and then glanced at Eros. "Eros, do you require anything?"

Shaking his head, Eros answered, "No, thank you. I'm good."

One dark brow rose. "I will hear this story, Eros," Erato said, watching him closely again.

"Perhaps," Eros replied lightly. "I'd be open to a trade. My story for a night with Acantha."

"Eros..." Erato's voice resonated with warning.

Laughing, Eros sat in the chaise opposite Erato to enjoy a cup of fine wine, the company of a good friend and Valentine memories that would stay with him forever.

The End