

Devin sipped on his ice-cold lager as he watched the hustle and bustle of the evening traffic wiz by outside the window of the bar. Christmas lights twinkled in the apartment windows overhead and snow drifted down from the black sky. He would have found it beautiful if this wasn't his first Christmas alone. Fresh out of college, starting a new job, and deep under a heaping pile of debt, Devin couldn't peel himself away from his new life in the city. He would tell himself that it was fine, that it was good to try and build a life for himself away from home. The sentiment was nice, but actually building a social circle from nothing wasn't an easy task.

Devin had met a few kind people at his local bookshop's reading club and there was a running club that he would frequent that was bursting with youthful, athletic city folk that were so welcoming. However, they were all off with their own holiday plans. That left Devin alone, in a bar, on Christmas...He wished it didn't affect him as much as it was.

He finished his drink and waved the bartender down. He eyed her patchwork sleeve of tattoos, wishing he was as bold as this woman. She gave him a kind smile and brought him another pint. To distract himself, Devin pulled out a paperback novel from his bookbag beneath the bartop. The light was low and the bar was packed but calm. The patrons must be friends and loved ones catching up while they're visiting for the holidays. Devin smiled, happy for them, and turned his attention to his book before spiraling to a darker place in his mind.

He flipped open the chapter he had paused on, squinting in the dull light to follow the murder mystery he'd recently borrowed from his local library. A smile crept across his face as he became more engrossed in his story, his eyes flying down the page. He barely noticed that he'd finished his drink and another was put in its place. Without thinking, he started on his next drink, enjoying the bubbles on his tongue and the foam mustache that caught on his lips. He cleaned himself up and eyed the drink, realizing that it had been filled.

"Oh.. sorry Ms?" Devin waved down the bartender who broke away from another group of customers.

"Yes, hon?" Her smile could light up a room.

Devin shook the lovey-dovey thoughts from his mind. "Sorry to bother you, I actually didn't mean to order another drink." He was too embarrassed to be upset about an extra charge, but he did have a bit of a tighter budget currently.

"Don't worry, darling. That drink comes courtesy of the lovely woman in red in the corner." The bartender motioned to a woman in the corner of the bar. Devin could barely make her out, all he could see was a pint of beer on the table, a book in her hand, a red sweater, and blonde curls cascading down her face.

"Who's that? Why'd she do that?" No one had ever bought Devin a drink before.

"Beats me, cutie. Why don't you go ask her yourself?" The bartender winked and knocked on the bar before walking back to the customers at the other end of the bar. Devin turned back to the mysterious woman, still engrossed in her own book.

Devin had never had a drink purchased for him before. He felt flattered and out of his element. He knew this was a kind gesture, but he'd never been one to approach a woman in public. The drink felt like an invitation, but what if it was just a gift? Nothing more, just a kind act from a beautiful woman who noticed a lonely man by himself at Christmas. Devin was spiraling.

He took a moment, taking a deep inhale, chugging a bit of beer, and gathered his things. He returned his book to his bag and grabbed it with his beer. Another deep breath, Devin approached the woman. The bar grew quieter as he approached her as if he were being drawn into her very own world. He reached the edge of the table and still, she didn't look up. He could see she was wearing thick-rimmed glasses and was staring intently at her book. He cleared his throat.

She didn't notice.

Devin tried again.

Still, she didn't look up.

"Enough with the awkwardness," he shouted to himself in his mind. "Say HELLO!"

"hi..."

The woman looked up slowly from her book, still with an intense scowl on her face from concentrating while she read. Her brow relaxed and a smile blossomed on her face when she saw who it was. She removed her glasses and said, "Hi, to you. Who might you be?"

"I was... the guy?" He said it as a question. "I was the guy at the bar... with the book..." He really wasn't used to this.

"I recognize you. I'm glad you got another drink. What I meant was WHO are you? What's your name?" Her gleaming white, perfectly straight teeth dazzled in the dark corner of this bar.

"Oh, sorry! Yes, I'm Devin. Thank you for the beer...." his brain froze. He realized he didn't ask for her name, so he awkwardly motioned to her, as if inviting her to speak.

"Mariah," she said firmly but kind. "It's nice to meet you, Devin. Take a seat. It's the holidays, you should be relaxing a bit." Mariah motioned to the corner chair opposite her. Devin took his seat and finally got a better look at her in the dim light.

Mariah's curls were perfect ringlets that must have taken a lot of care to perfect. Her high cheekbones drew Devin's gaze to her blue eyes, which were visible even in this low light. Her smile felt like a warm hug, and it drew him in. While still trying to be a gentleman, he still caught a glimpse of her form. Her crimson sweater was quite robust, not giving him a real idea of her shape. She seemed to be on the curvier side, which wasn't a problem for Devin. He liked a woman with a little extra.

His eyes shot back up to her gaze, hoping that she didn't think he was creepy for looking at her in that way. She didn't acknowledge him in that way. She only sipped her beer and cleared her throat. "So Devin, what brings you to a cozy bar like this on a night like tonight? Shouldn't you be with friends or family?" The comment stung, but he tried to shake it off.

He took a swing at being playful. "I could say the same thing to you, Ms. Mariah." He grinned, as did she. "What brings you to this quiet corner of a bustling establishment when YOU should be with friends and family."

"Touché, sir. My family had a bit of a falling out so we no longer have big get-togethers. The only relatives I like are spending Christmas in Europe, and I'm not about to dump a bunch of money during the most expensive time of year on an overplanned trip with people I sorta like."

Devin regretted asking, feeling bad to hear that she'd be alone and guilty for making her share. She could read his mood. "Don't worry, cutie. I'm fine on my own." Her smile reassured him. "What about you? Is your family spending the holidays abroad as well?"

"No, no, nothing like that. I just moved here and I can't afford to go home this year. My mom was so upset, but I couldn't accept a ticket home from them. I'm just going to hunker down and save. Hopefully, I'll see them over the summer."

"Is this your first Christmas alone?" Mariah asked, concern in her eyes.

"... Yeah, I guess it is." A pinch of sorrow hit Devin's heart. He had been depressed about not seeing his family but hadn't really acknowledged that feeling head-on. Devin was pulled from this feeling when a hand rested on his own. He tilted his head up to meet the two blue jewels staring back at him.

"It's ok, cutie. It's never easy," Mariah rubbed her thumb across his knuckles. "This is my third time alone and it hasn't gotten better. The only way it gets better is by building a family here." Her smile felt like a cup of cocoa on Christmas morning. Devin gripped her hand back.

"Why...why are you doing this?" Devin was afraid to know the truth, in case it would hurt him.

"Doing what, cutie."

"Being so nice. Touching my hand. Buying me beer." He struggled but had the courage to maintain eye contact with this beauty.

Her smile cracked, letting sorrow slip through. "You looked lonely..." something caught in her throat. "I'm just... very familiar with that feeling, and I thought a little kindness would go a long way." She gripped Devin's hand a bit tighter, trying to show her sincerity.

"I'm sorry, but I have to be honest..." Maybe the beers were giving him some false confidence because he'd never have said what he said next if he were sober. "You're a beautiful woman, you could be with anyone in this bar tonight. Hell, anyone in this city. You don't need to be with me..."

She paused, taking a moment to gather her thoughts. "... I recently got out of a very long-term relationship. A very... long term on-again off-again relationship with someone who didn't treat me right." A tear snuck from her right eye. "I finally got away and I feel more free than I have in my life." Mariah smiled through it, though tears were still showing her true feelings. "I'm sorry if the gesture made you uncomfortable, I promise it was only meant to brighten your day." She pulled her hand away, and Devin immediately regretted his comment.

"No no! I did enjoy it! It was very kind of you. I haven't really had a close connection with anyone since I moved here and..." It was Devin's turn to tear up. "I was just surprised that it affected me this much. It was very sweet of you."

Mariah smiled, sniffing a bit and wiping her cheeks. "Well, if you wanted to make it up to me, I could go for another round." She giggled through the stuffed nose.

"You got it! What'll it be?" Mariah gave him her order and Devin returned within a few minutes with two more rounds for both of them. He wasn't flush with cash but he could shell out a bit more to brighten her evening after making this stunning stranger start crying in public.

"Trying to liquor me up?" Mariah teased while biting her lip.

"Only trying to lighten the mood after I brought it down."

"Oh hush," Mariah swatted away the words. "Cheers!" She hoisted her glass into the air.

"To?" Devin asked, holding his glass aloft.

"To not being alone during the holidays." Mariah's smile lit up the whole room.

"I'll cheers to that." They clinked their pints and tapped them on the table, and Devin was shocked to watch her down the beer in seconds. Mariah pulled the glass away and spilled a bit of beer on her sweater.

"Oh damn! Cover me, will you?" Mariah started to wrestle the bottom of the sweater of her seemingly full-term pregnancy-sized belly.

"How?" Devin looked around frantically.

“Just don’t let the plebes get a peak of the goods!” She hissed in a hurry. She was really having trouble getting this oversized garment off. Devin stood up and opened his jacket to block the view. “You look like you’re trying to flash me.” She giggled, finally starting to pull the sweater over her torso.

“I’m doing my best!” He hissed back, giggling before pausing in bewilderment. As the sweater pulled away, what sat before Devin wasn’t a gut or a pregnant belly, they were tits! Breasts! Boobs! Milkers! Devin couldn’t think of more words, he could only stare as the sweater covered Mariah’s eyes and she struggled to get the rest of the sweater over her head.

He could now tell that she was fairly tall, maybe over 6 feet, but had been hunching over to either hide her bust or because of the weight of these two boulders. Devin couldn’t believe breasts could get this big. The only size comparison he could think of was watermelons. Except if each breast were the size of two of them put together. It looked as if his whole torso could disappear between them if she were to wrap them around Devin. They looked so heavy yet so perky. Mariah wore a white tank top that was struggling to contain her hefty boobs. Whatever bra was containing them looked to be straining to hold them together, and her tank top looked like it could fit a full-grown bodybuilder inside it, but it was just barely covering her tits and tummy.

Finally, after much struggle, the damp sweater was free and her tits shook with glee as she finally rested. “Much better.” Devin wasn’t quick enough to look away before being caught by Mariah.

“Yes yes, I know. They are enormous and gross and I should get them reduced. It’s on the to-do list when I have money.”

“Woah woah woah!” Devin stopped her before she kept rambling. “I didn’t mean to stare but I don’t think they’re gross. They’re great!” Oops, he cringed. He’d said too much. “I mean... I don’t think anything about them. They’re fine.”

Mariah squinted at Devin. “Fine, you say?” She hefted her breasts onto the table and set them down with a bang. A few patrons turned to look in their direction but Devin was still blocking the view. “These are monstrosities, but they’ll go away soon. For now, just pretend I’m fat or something. That’s all they are.” Mariah was so dismissive and ashamed of her assets. Devin hadn’t known Mariah long enough to say anything as a retort, so he simply sat back down.

“I don’t think anything negative about you or your...” Devin couldn’t say breasts, he could only vaguely motion with his hand.

“Well, thank you. I’ve heard enough comments from my family, my friends, my...” she paused. “My ex was very cruel about my chest so it’s a bit of a sore spot.”

“I’m sorry to hear that.”

“It’s... it’s ok. Wow, we’ve really gotten deep for a first meeting. Let’s lighten it up a bit.” Mariah grabbed her beer, her massive breasts shaking in her top. “Tell me about yourself, Devin.”

That was the night both their lives changed forever.

TO BE CONTINUED