

Her Gift

By. S. Labrecque

I opened the door and was hit with a perfume cloud. Flowers and chocolate– scents of Cupid’s Day.

I gagged and rubbed my watering eyes. The shop was two stories with a second floor balcony, and pixies lit the chandelier. Browsing love birds were packed shoulder to shoulder, and the crowd jostled me aside. I ended up in the corner near the miniature-dragon perches.

I don’t belong here, I thought.

“Hellooo there!”

I jumped– an employee materialized beside me. She wore a draping dress in a waterfall of blues, and jewelry made of smooth stones from a streambed.

“Looking for anything in particular?”

My face flamed. “Um... I-I’m looking for a gift. It’s our first, um, Cupid’s Day...”

“A gift for a lover?”

“Um... no...”

“A friend? New relative?”

“Friend.”

Riti and I were queerplatonic, but people got weird when I said that. The employee somehow caught that “friend” wasn’t exactly right, though, and led me to a display of heart-shaped jewelry and charms. I stared at the glittering spectacle with growing panic.

This was a mistake, I thought.

I flinched when she laid a hand on my shoulder, but her touch was gentle. She lifted a small charm off a mannequin.

“I gave something like this to my girlfriend on our first Cupid’s Day.” She placed it in my palm.

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It was a simple charm. My sixth sight told me it had a light protection spell– enough to prevent a stubbed toe or burned tongue. Instead of a cheesy heart, it was a delicate, rose gold infinity symbol.

I felt myself smile.

“It’s beautiful,” I whispered.

She squeezed my shoulder. “Don’t let ignorant people kill your joy, sweetheart. You got this.”

One purchase later, I clutched a small package. My steps were lighter as I made my way home.