

Toledo  
by  
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CHARACTERS:

Melanie

Daria

SETTING:

A bar in Columbus, Ohio. Valentine's Night.

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At Rise: A bar in Columbus, Ohio, on Valentine's Night. Daria and Melanie are at a table. Daria has a proper drink, Melanie has something designated driver-ish.

MELANIE

So ... what happened with your date last Saturday?

DARIA

It was going really well, very flirty-flirty, like things might ... and then she asked what my feelings were about a vampirism blood-drinking fetish.

MELANIE

Like actual blood?

DARIA

Yeah, apparently, actual blood-drinking fetish and I was like, no, that's not my kind of thing. Then it got weird.

MELANIE

Then it got weird?

DARIA

She got weird because I said it wasn't my thing as though I'm the one that brought up drinking blood. Whatever, it wouldn't have worked anyway.

MELANIE

Because you love garlic?

DARIA

Because she thought the third Matrix movie was the best one. I could deal with one of those things, but not both.

MELANIE

Okay, so here you are, single, on Valentine's Day, with me, again, because we are both cursed.

DARIA

I'm not cursed, I just ... Maybe I should have been the driver, you sound like you need a drink.

MELANIE

No, it's fine. I've decided I'm not going to be cursed anymore.

DARIA

That sounds positive.

MELANIE

I'm going to love me, I bought myself the flowers, chocolate, a card, all that.

(MORE)

MELANIE (cont'd)

I'm my own Valentine and then I won't be desperate and won't be chasing love and that will give love a chance to chase and find me. But first I have to do something, complete a ritual to break the curse.

DARIA

If it involves blood I know a woman you can call. This isn't going to end up with me freezing my nipples off sitting naked in a circle of candles trying to think about world peace for like an hour, but really spending the whole time thinking if I fart it's flammable, because turns out naked candlelight circle ritual is not nearly as sexy as someone made it sound.

MELANIE

Where do you find these women?

DARIA

What's the ritual?

MELANIE

We just have to make one quick stop on the way to your apartment. Okay ...

(putting a plastic bag of ashes  
on the table)

So, I took everything I had from Mmm-he-whose-name-we-aren't-going-to-say and I burned it.

DARIA

What did you have from him? That guy never bought you anything?

MELANIE

I had texts and emails and photos.

DARIA

Yeah, like on your phone, oh shit, you didn't actually burn your phone did you?

MELANIE

No, I printed the stuff out and then burned it.

DARIA

Wait, is that what you were using my printer for the other night? Wait, photos, you said you weren't going to print photos this time.

MELANIE

No, I said I wasn't printing headshots this time, but I did print photos of he-whose-name-we-aren't-going-to-say and -

DARIA

Is this why I'm out of magenta ink? That shitty printer won't print if any of the colors are out. You blew through magenta on Jo-

MELANIE

No, no, he-whose-name-we-aren't-going-to-say. And we're besties and no matter what you love me.

DARIA

We are besties and I do love you, but please tell me you used the regular paper, not my photo paper for this?

MELANIE

I used the regular paper for the emails and texts, obviously. But I had to use the photo paper for the photos, to do it right.

DARIA

You owe me photo paper and magenta. Just to burn it?

MELANIE

But now I have this baggie of ashes ... And once we take your car and drive to his apartment and leave the ashes on his doorstep I will be over him. Curse broken.

DARIA

Take my car to his doorstep, tonight?

MELANIE

It's the best night to do it.

DARIA

Doesn't that dipshit live in Toledo? I am not driving to Toledo on Valentine's Night, again. Do you know what happens when you drive to Toledo on Valentine's Night? You drive all-the-fuck-way-up-there so that Jessica can tell you to your face that she's decided to try to work things out with her ex, Susan, because she felt telling you over the phone would be mean, while Susan stands there in the doorway of the kitchen glaring, okay, Susan, you won. And then you stop at a gas station to change into something other than edible panties and an overcoat because obviously that outfit is no longer called for and some weird guy tries to hit on you because there are always weird guys out hitting on women on Valentine's Night, I don't know why.

MELANIE

Tell them you're a lesbian.

DARIA

That only makes it worse for some reason. So, now because of Gas Station Casanova I forgot to change my clothes, drove all the way home with a candied crotch, ended up with a yeast infection, and that stain in my car is never coming out. Thanks, Jessica! It's like a period stain out of the Scottish play on the driver's seat of my car and I haven't been able to make eye-contact with my mechanic since. And that is what happens when you drive to Toledo on Valentine's Night!

MELANIE

Okay, but I mean it's not like that'll happen twice. We'll wear cotton underwear. And you're my best friend and you wuv me and you want to help me break my curse.

DARIA

I do love you, but ... besides we already have other plans for tonight.

MELANIE

Hate-watching RomComs, mocking them to cover up that we actually want to be watching them, that we're jealous of the love on screen and secretly afraid that we'll never have true romance and we're going to die alone? Those plans? Or, do we sublimate our insecurities with a few hours in the car yelling over the stereo about all of our exes, drop off a baggie of ashes, get home much closer to midnight so we no longer feel bound to Valentine's-themed viewing and instead get a pizza and watch Aliens? Do you want to watch some manic pixie skinny girl make terrible decisions but still somehow find love because she doesn't realize she's conventionally pretty or some bullshit? Or, do you want to repress your self-doubts and romantic disappointments and watch Ripley kick butt and call an alien a bitch while stuffing your face with pizza and salty, butter-drenched popcorn?

Slight pause.

DARIA

I do like Ripley.

MELANIE

Everyone likes Ripley.

DARIA

You're paying for the gas, and my next oil change, and new photo paper and magenta ink, and the pizza, and what's in that bag? What kind of chocolate, yeah, that's mine now, I'm eating all of that chocolate ...

MELANIE

Toledo?

DARIA

You know me too well. In the end it's going to be cockroaches, zombies and you and me, still single every fucking Valentine's.

MELANIE

If we can't find any cockroaches or zombies to date - we've done worse. Should we date? It's always down to the two of us.

DARIA

Um, you aren't into women like that. And I love you, but I know what you're like in a relationship, I'm just saying.

MELANIE

Yeah, and I love you, but I know how you are with the women you date, too. Best friends forever, then?

DARIA

Yeah, okay, forever, to Toledo and back ...

End.