

Eccentric

I walked into the small, dark bar and felt everyone's eyes on me. I was expecting somebody to yell out "Norm" like they did on that old nineties show. And that would have been okay with me. Anything was better than what I was experiencing – women peering at me through squinted eyes, looking like they didn't trust what they were seeing. I couldn't blame them, because I didn't trust what I had been thinking when I got the great idea to go out dressed as one of my favorite characters from of book. I should point out that it wasn't Halloween.

It had seemed so cool, imagining the character from the book going everywhere dressed in stylish pajamas and a matching tie. I guess that just goes to show you what a good writer the author of the book is, 'cause on me it didn't look cool at all. To make matters worse, I'd stuck a cowboy hat on my head. It did match my boots perfectly, but clashed with the symbols on my pjs. I won't say what symbols it clashed with. It's enough to know that it did.

Pretending that women weren't looking at me as if I was an alien, I strutted up to the bar like I owned the place. I really wanted to order the hard stuff. I had this crazy idea it might help me forget I looked like a complete idiot. Strike that. I don't think complete idiots would have wanted to be associated with me. I settled for a beer, knowing I need to keep my wits about me.

Channelling Xena, the Warrior Princess, I slowly drank my beer and waited for some smuck to hassle me. In my mind, I'd be yelling the warrior cry and smashing bodies all over the place. In reality, I'd probably get my glasses busted and end up trying to crawl my little geek ass to safety.

"Hey, can I buy you a drink?"

I turned to look at the face that went with the sexy voice, and almost fell to the floor. She was gorgeous. That is, her tits were gorgeous. I couldn't really seem to see anything else until she lifted my chin. Did I mention I was only five feet two and a half inches? To me, she looked like she was seven feet tall and gorgeous everything to go with the tits.

I knew right away she'd either lost a bet or was trying to win a bet by suckering the nerd. "Sorry ma'am, my mom won't let me accept drinks from beautiful strangers," I said. I sighed, gave her tits one last lingering glance and turned to face the rows of liquor bottles lining the wall behind the bar. I may have been born at night, but it wasn't last night.

I allowed myself a tiny smirk when I heard her move away. Score one of the geek, zero for the gorgeous tits. No, I couldn't in good conscious score zero for the tits. They were just ... Well, you had to be there is all I'm saying.

I took another sip of beer and calculated I only had to stay twenty more minutes to save face. Then I could slink home and lose myself in the world of fiction where it's never me having one of life's most embarrassing moments. So only about 1195 seconds to go, but whose counting? Besides me, that is.

I finished off my beer and ordered another one. I needed something to do with my hands and I'd already peeled off the label. I didn't dare look around, afraid I would see the expressions accompanying the snickers I thought I heard. It was tough being a pathetic little toad – especially when you know you are one.

“So, Mallory. Should I be Del or should I be Gigi?”

By the Goddess! Someone was speaking my language, and with an incredible British accent. I was almost afraid to turn and look, fearing my imagination had gotten the best of me. But only almost. The owner of the voice was short enough for me to see her face. Her smile made my knees buckle and I would have fallen down if the bar wasn't holding me up.

“So, mate, Del or Gigi?”

I tilted my head to the side and gave the matter a couple of seconds thought. “Del,” I announced. She was sturdy like Del, and I sure as hell didn't want her to be flaky like Gigi.

“Cool. Buy you a beer?”

I nodded. “You're not going to believe this, but my name really is Mallory. I go by Mal.”

She stretched out a large hand. “Pleasure, Mal. My mates call me Chris. What'll it be?”

“Miller Lite,” I replied and shook her hand. I had already started praying she wasn't here to make a fool out of me, given that I do that so well on my own.

“You call that a beer?” she scoffed with a wide grin.

I clutched the bar again as my heart pounded under the affect of her grin. To my complete surprise, I found myself saying, “I don't, but Anheuser Bush does.” I couldn't believe I'd managed such a witty comeback. It usually takes me two days to come up with something like that. She laughed and it was such an infectious sound, I felt some of my toadiness fall away.

“You're weird, Mal,” she said, making it seem like a compliment.

“Hey, I resemble that remark.” I let go of the bar and drew myself up to my full height. “And I'll have you know, I've been told by a higher authority that I'm not weird, I'm quaintly eccentric.”