

Falling for Squirt

by

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As pratfalls go, it was my most spectacular yet. I'm known for them, you see: it's something about being six-foot-three, skinny, uncoordinated and nerdy with it. My usual nickname is Beanpole, but I also get Tanglefoot.

I also blame the Med School lifts. They're definitely a health hazard.

Anyway, there I was waiting for the lift, explaining our just completed lecture to my dense mate Gormless, when the doors opened.

Like clouds parting on a vision of glory, they revealed The Bombshell, wearing a tight low-cut emerald-green top that matched her eyes and flaunted her most prominent assets. The flesh swelled above the top like pure white foam cresting a pair of mighty ocean boomers. Distracted by the sight, and by my unfinished conversation, I failed to notice the lift had not precisely aligned with the floor of the corridor.

I tripped, unsurprisingly, triggering an interesting demonstration of the domino effect.

The lift was too crowded for us to fall down, so we finished up in a pile at an angle of about forty-five degrees, with The Bombshell on top.

And me on top of her. With my nose buried deep, deep, deep inside her spectacular cleavage.

Embarrassment locked down my brain. I had to say something, but what?

"Tell me I've died, and gone to heaven," I croaked.

The Bombshell took a deep breath — that was an experience, I can tell you. Talk about ships on a stormy sea! — and shrieked, "*Get off me, you bloody clumsy jerk!*"

The lift dropped downward then, assisting everyone to regain the vertical. I babbled incoherent apologies. Everyone was sniggering, snickering or suppressing snorts of laughter. Everyone but The Bombshell and me, that is.

And The Squirt.

She was crushed in the corner of the lift. Almost unnoticeable as usual, but as I turned away, red-faced, her eyes met mine.

I couldn't concentrate during the next lecture. For some reason, I kept seeing that look The Squirt had given me.

It's not as if we were special friends or anything. She didn't seem to have any close friends; she was about five-foot-nothing, prickly, eccentric, with no social graces, and the best brain in Med School. Well, maybe second best. It was a toss-up, as she and I took turns in topping the class. We'd tease each other about our rivalry, but that's about all the interaction we'd had up to now.

Still, it bothered me.

So when I saw her sitting alone in the cafeteria at lunch time, a textbook propped on the sugar bowl in front of her, I went over and sat down opposite.

“Okay, Squirt. Give.”

She raised her eyebrows and her big baby-blues from the book and said, “Give what?”

“In the lift, after I dug myself out of The Bombshell’s boobs. You looked at me as if I’d just shot Santa’s reindeer. I know I’m clumsy, but it was an accident. The floor tripped me. So what was that look all about?”

I could have sworn there were tears in her eyes. “Men! You’re all the same!” she hissed.

“Hullo?”

“What you said! About being in heaven with your nose stuck in there! Eww! Just the sight of a big pair of boobs and your hormones go into overdrive!”

Definitely tears. Was I starting to get a handle on this? Surely she didn’t fancy *me* ... did she? Then I became aware of something else, and mentioned it.

“You look kinda cute when you’re angry, Squirt.”

It took her aback for a moment. I pressed my advantage.

“I only said that about heaven ’cause it was the first thing that came into my head to get me out of an embarrassing situation. Didn’t work, though.

“And I go for a woman because of her mind. That’s why I don’t have a girlfriend. The ones I fancy because they’re smart enough are also smart enough to go for someone else.”

Her lips formed a silent protest.

Yes! Definitely an interest! How ... interesting. “I’m not really a boob-man,” I continued, glancing down her front. “But if I was, I’d think yours were really nice.”

Now she looked flustered. Blushes looked good on her, too, I noticed.

“They’re too small. Like the rest of me.”

“Like sweet ripe pomegranates. Perfectly formed and proportional — just like the rest of you.”

“I’m too short.”

“Petite and graceful.” I was getting into the swing of this, now.

“I don’t relate well to people.”

“That’s because they’re too dumb to work you out.”

“I’ve got buck teeth.”

“A slight overbite. It makes your mouth look sexy.”

Her flustered look cooled to one of disbelief and sadness. “Oh, *come on*, Lewis.”

So, she’d gone to the trouble of finding out my name. It struck me then that she was the only one in Med School who didn’t call me by my nickname. Either of them. Hadn’t I read somewhere that women don’t like *their man* to have a nickname? It was slowly dawning on me that I fancied *her*, and was nearly home.

“No, I’m serious now. It mightn’t have started out like that, but it took a sharp turn to serious along the way.” I leaned across the little table and murmured, in what I hoped was a bedroom voice, “I’d really like to try that sexy mouth.”

I caught her unprepared, and narrowly missed being wounded. Ahem, maybe she was right about the teeth. “This might require some practice.”

Her mouth opened in surprise. I tried again. That was the way. Nice!

Ironic cheers and applause broke out around the room. We ignored them.

“I can’t keep calling you Squirt, but I don’t even know your first name. The exam results just give our initials.”

She blushed again. I was getting really fond of her blushes. “I hate it! It’s so old-fashioned. I sound like a maiden aunt.”

“Go on, tell me.”

She lowered her head and mumbled, “Alice.”

“But that’s perfect! Lewis and Alice. Like Lewis Carroll and Alice in Wonderland.”

Now that we’ve graduated, Alice and I will do our Masters, then go into research. We’re working on some radical ideas about holistic medicine.

I’m not so clumsy anymore. Maybe walking hand-in-hand with Alice gives me balance. And she’s acquired a few social graces, now. Maybe it’s something to do with self-confidence. Or maybe they’re both to do with our now-satisfied hormones.

Funny thing, none of our friends were surprised when Alice and I made a twosome. And since we’ve become inseparable, we’ve lost our old nicknames. I guess we do look a bit odd together. She doesn’t even come up to my shoulder.

When our friends see us coming now, they say, “Here come the Hi-los.”