

sirenia sirenia

by Peter DeWolf

He leans back in the desk chair in his home office.

He clicks on "Inbox" in his Gmail.

He spins around in his chair.

He clicks on "Inbox" again.

As he spins again, he realizes how silly it is to keep clicking "Inbox" when Gmail automatically checks for new mail.

He clicks on "Inbox" again.

She stands in the doorway.

"This?" she asks, with an expression that says she's already made up her mind.

"Perfection. Nobody does sexycute like you," he smiles, all smittenboots.

"You always say that," she replies, fussing with one of the sleeves.

He always does. It's always true.

And she disappears again.

He spins around in his desk chair.

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He holds the door open for her. She takes one more look in the mirror, then quickly removes the offending headband.

She stands on her tip toes, kisses him, and then walks out the front door.

He follows.

He grabs her hand as they walk up the driveway.

"I don't see what the big rush is," she says. "We're just going for a walk."

"We're pretty close to the ocean. I was hoping there'd still be land to walk on. Erosion and all."

"I wasn't taking that long..."

"Plus tectonic shift..."

"You're kind of a dork," she points out.

He kisses her on top of the head.

They turn west at the end of the driveway.

A little ways down the road, they see a girl walking towards them. She's somewhere in her teens and carrying something.

As the girl gets closer, they see it's a picnic basket.

The girl stops right in front of them, blocking their progress. She sits the basket down.

Then the girl dances. Some kind of Celtic dance. Around the basket. Around them.

Then stops, smiles and walks away.

He picks up the basket and starts walking again.

She catches up, wrapping her arm around his.

"What WAS that?" she asks.

"Looked like The Highland Fling."

"Oh.... Okay. Wait. What?"

They keep walking. She looks back over her shoulder.

They hear two little boys — probably ten years old — before they see them coming towards them.

The boys are laughing and roughhousing.

He stops. She does too — after bumping into him.

The little boys run what looks like a basketball play.

He holds out the basket.

The first little boy shoots a round object and it goes directly in.

The second little boy shoots, but he has to move the basket a little to catch it.

They then high five each other and run off down the street.

She's even more confused.

They turn a corner to the lane leading down to the harbour.

A man in a trench coat steps out of the shadows.

She giggles.

"You wanna see what I have under my coat," the man asks.

Without waiting for a reply, he throws open the coat...

He's wearing shorts and a t-shirt.

But he pulls a bottle of wine out of an inside pocket.

The flasher places the bottle in the basket, takes her hand and gives it a kiss, closes his jacket, and disappears back into the shadows.

She turns and smiles.
He takes her hand and leads her down the lane.
As they get closer to the water, she shivers a little.
"Babe, I should have dressed warmer."
He stops. He raises a hand over his head.
A teen boy on a mountain bike comes zipping down the lane behind them. The boy tosses something. He lets go of her hand to catch it. He puts the basket down and helps her into her cardigan.
She gives him an impressed "Mmmmm."
He gives her a little bumsqueeze.
They walk.
She looks at him.
He pretends not to notice.
A woman jogger comes up the lane and meets them.
She runs on the spot for a few moments.
"Lovely night," joggerlady offers.
They "Yeah" in unison.
Then joggerlady jogs off.
"But... she didn't give us anything," she says.
"Not everything is about you. Sheesh."
She laughs.
They start walking again.
Two oldish ladies approach them. They are in mid-gossip. Lots of mentions of "the other one" and "you know what HE'S like."
The old ladies stop.
The first lady puts a box of crackers in the basket.
The second puts in a beautiful homemade blanket.
Then the ladies start walking again. "I'm not sure the kid is even his..."
He squeezes her hand and leads her towards the water front.
An old man is getting out of his parked car.
The man passes her a pretty tulip and tells her she's beautiful in French.
She offers a smiley "Merci."
The old man gets back into his car.

They walk down the steps leading to the shore.
He holds her hand extra tight as they navigate over some slippery rocks.
They arrive at a big rock.
He puts down the basket. He pulls out the blanket and spreads it over the rock.
He takes her hand and helps her sit down on top of it.
"You're going to go SO lucky tonight," she informs.
"I already have."
"That is such a line," she says with a kiss. "But I love it."
"I mean it."
"I know."
He takes a wheel of cheese out of the basket and stands it on its side on the blanket so she can see that it is her favourite kind.
The wheel of cheese rolls off and into the water with a PLOOP.
He looks down. He looks back at her.
Then he takes the second wheel of cheese out of the basket, and puts it flat down on the blanket.
"Sometimes cheese likes to return from whence it came."
"The ocean?" she asks.
"Sure... You've heard of sea cows?"
"Sea cows? That's the story you're going with?"
"Uhm... Yessss."
"You're a goofball..."
"That's outrageous, madam."
Waves lap gently on the edge of the rock.
The lighthouse beacon warns and invites.
A waxing crescent moon appears as the clouds call it a night.
And they kiss.

