

# Valentine's Day

*by* S.H. Gall

I first met you in a February, but my best early memory is of your deep and sweaty tan. You'd been to Florida, I ran into you in the market, the sight of your tan made me hard for your pale parts. It was summer, you were dressed all in white, I invited you to my ghetto abode.

"Hi," is what you said and I said. We eyed each other like nervous blind lizards. Eyes flitting all over the place, ultimately appearing fixed, black in white. Like those birds with cartoon eyes.

I called a friend. I told him "I'm gonna get my Bernie on!" That was you, your name, my sweet Bernard.

I made other calls to the friend in succeeding years, with the same content and a different name. Harry, Bill, John, Jon, Rick. Finally the friend struck me from his life. Too much information he said. My destiny doesn't involve you.

Now he's a failure and I, a success. Should I thank him or shun him in return? Never mind, I'll just fuck with his wife's sadly mistaken brain.

If, my dear, you look your age, it's entirely due to my influence, the influence of my mental illness. You looked ten years younger than your years when I met you thirteen years ago. I made you hate me with a wrath you could barely control, only to find yourself loving me when I got well.

I first met you in a February, and it was a February many years later that we celebrated our first anniversary. Happy Valentine's Day, my sweet bambino, Happy Anniversary.

