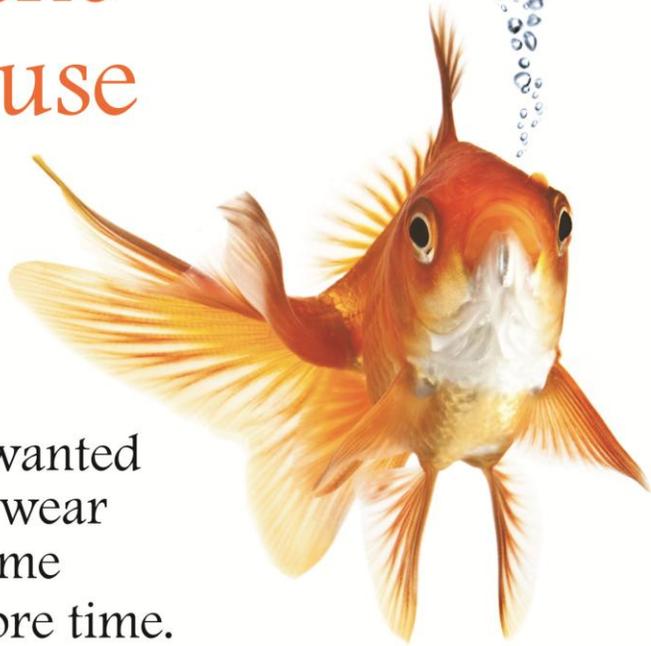


Elvis



in the House



All he wanted
was to wear
gold lame
one more time.

(A pretty erotic short story)

Kat Drennan

ELVIS IN THE HOUSE

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My bag's still swinging on the front door knob and Rex (that librarian you set me up with) has me bent over the couch with his grabby little hands wheedling away and his great thunder thighs beginning to pump. A glass of champagne and two dirty martinis, and I'm just not into it. Here it is Christmas Eve, Christmas lights still in the box, no cookies on the hearth or presents under the tree.

(You finally found the man of your dreams, so why can't I?)

Rex pumps away, but something is a little off.

"Wait." I straighten.

Rex slows his rhythm, but doesn't stop.

Someone is *watching* and I'm *into* it, like butter melting, filling in all the empty spaces and it feels...*hot*.

I stand up and pull down that Spandex dress you loaned me.

Rex steps back, sees that his woody is sticking out like a pump handle, and pulls his T-shirt down over it.

"Someone is watching. I can feel it," I say, and I look around.

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There's no one there but Thundar the Librarian, and that goldfish you left behind.

I grab the bowl off the coffee table and plunk it down on the kitchen counter, water sloshing. Those damned fish eyes follow me back and forth as I pace the room.

That stupid little gold fish is *oogling* me, and it feels kinda...*Ooooh*.

Rex is in the kitchen now, working under his T-shirt with one hand and reaching under my dress with the other.

"Come on, honey, I thought we were havin' us some Christmas cheer."

"We were, but..." I take another peek at the bowl. "The goldfish is *watching*."

Rex shrugs out of his shirt and sails it across the kitchen for a direct hit over the fish bowl. He pulls my dress up to my arm pits, frames my ass in his big librarian hands and has me going over a kitchen chair. But no sooner do we slip back into the groove, than I hear singing.

H-luv meeee tender, h-luv me long...

"Wait," I say.

Rex ignores me.

...take me h-in your arms...

"Do you hear that?"

"Hear what?"

"The singing."

...for h-it's there that I belong...

"I don't hear anything. C'mon, baby..." Rex is getting down with his own special working-the-stacks rhythm.

...H-and I always will...

I straighten up.

Rex stops with a groan.

I snap the dress back over my hips.

"Of all the women I could have had tonight..." he says. He drags on his Levis and heads for the door.

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I pick up the fish bowl and glare at its occupant. “I suppose *you’re* happy now.”

The fish swims down behind his little plastic mermaid.

...I’ll have uh ba-lue Ca-rist-mas, h-without you...

“Stop it.” I cover him up with that dishtowel you gave me for my birthday. It’s your fault after all. You dump this trick fish on me and now I’m alone on Christmas Eve, rejected by a cretin and listening to Elvis songs.

I reread the card taped to the fishbowl:

*Feed twice a day.
I’m off to Vegas to get married!
Take care of Elvis, honey,
and he’ll take care of you.
Maggie*

Elvis swims near the surface of the water, gulping air. Christmas morning sunlight glistens on his scales. He looks like an ordinary goldfish. Still, I cinch the belt of my bathrobe a little tighter before I refill my coffee.

“I hate the smell of fish flakes in the morning.”

I drop a pinch in his bowl and head for the shower.

It won’t work out, you know, comes the voice.

It stops me in my tracks.

Elvis.

I turn, and there he is, fish flakes stuck to the sides of his cheeks.

“Okay. I’ll go with this a minute. *What won’t work out?*”

Maggie’s wedding, he says.

I sit down. Maybe I’m not sober yet. I need something in my stomach and grab a cold slice of pizza from the fridge.

“You, a fish in a bowl, the only woman in your life a plastic mermaid, are an expert on love?”

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I promised your room mate, Maggie, if she got me to Memphis, I'd get her the man of her dreams.

I take a bite of pizza. "You know, I'm missing something here, because..."

All I can tell you is one minute I'm sitting on the throne, and the next I'm at the pearly gates. I tell the guy, 'all I want is to get back into a gold lamé suit'.

He presses his nose against the glass and screws one of his eyeballs around to look at me. It is the saddest gold fish face I have ever seen.

"Yeah, well I didn't get what I wanted for Christmas either."

He shifts his fish hips practically out of joint and back, gives me that hound dog look, and starts in again, all bluesy and soulful and shiny like an alto sax in a dive bar on Beale Street.

We-hell since my baby left me... (shift-shift)

...I found a new place to dwell...

... down at the end of Lonely Street ...

I turn my back and head for the shower.

"I'm not listening," I sing back.

...you make me so lonely bay-beh...

"That's enough!" I grab the bowl and haul it to the bathroom, water sloshing.

No more dirty Christmas Eve martinis for me.

"How 'bout if you *swim* back to Memphis."

I lift the toilet seat and start to pour.

The fish dives for the bottom of the bowl and covers behind the mermaid as the water level goes down.

No! Wait wait wait wait wait! I'll make you the same deal.

I stop pouring and lift the bowl to eye level. "The man of my dreams for a trip to Memphis? You said it wouldn't work out for Mags."

He scurries along the bottom of the bowl, his top fin sticking up out of the shallow water.

She didn't exactly get me back to Memphis, did she? He scoots behind the mermaid and sulks.

Nice tits, by the way.

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My nipples pull into tight knots. No way.

He pokes his head out. *I just want to get laid by a sweet little Memphis girl one more time. You gotta help me.*

“Get out. *Elvis?*”

I can’t breathe. Elvis Presley is in the house. I close the toilet lid, sit down, and let myself relax into the idea. I lean back against the toilet tank and warm to the feeling of his eyes on me.

(Remember that time we touched each other, to figure it all out? Well, it was like that. Only creepier.)

“Sing me another one,” I say.

We have a deal then?

“I’ll think about it.”

You know I’m going to need more than an inch of water in here; hey, your phone is ringing. Hey!

The second ring comes in. “Don’t get your gills in an uproar, the machine will get it. Start singing.”

Are you lonesome tonight...

Click:

“Hey Rina, it’s Mags. I’m at the Quick Stop in Barstow. Are you there?”

Pick up. I don’t know what happened. I need a ride...”

I’m off my butt in a flash. I fill the fish bowl at the bathroom sink and haul it to my computer, water sloshing.

“Maybe I can find a last minute flight.”

Elvis swims to the surface and gulps air. *You can use my frequent flyer miles.*

I book two free seats to Memphis for the next morning. I have no idea what he has planned or how he will pull it off, but for the man of my dreams? I’m not taking any chances.

The man of my dreams, just around the corner? Just the thought, the possibility, was like the great throbbing mass of lip-drooling, ass-

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grabbing, basketball-watching, bacon-cheddar-cheezeball eating, beer-guzzling, garlic-farting momma's boys had been swept off the face of the earth, clearing the path for that one guy who would make my dreams come true.

I shower off, grab my clothes, and I'm on my way to the kitchen singing *Walkin on Memphis* when I see his bowl is empty.

Empty?

An electric zing prickles from my toes to my scalp. I get down to eye level with the bowl and creep forward slowly, afraid of what I might find, and there he is, listing to starboard near the surface, his mouth working, probably on some song like *It's Now or Never* but doesn't have the strength to make me hear it, a little poop string hanging off his gold lamé tail.

"Elvis," I moan.

The only emergency vet open on Christmas is all the way in Ventura. I grab my coat and my keys and Elvis and fly out the door, water sloshing.

The waiting room is full of people when I burst through the door, crotch soaked from driving with Elvis between my legs.

Now he's all the way on his side, his fins drooping, his swively little eyes not focused on anything at all.

The guy sitting next to the only empty seat in the waiting room gives me a supportive smile, moves his coat for me, and I sit.

"Merry Christmas, eh?" His voice is deep and smooth. He leans over my bowl.

"Doesn't look good," he says, and I notice his eyes are my favorite shade of green. I swallow hard and drag my attention back to Elvis.

"I don't know what happened. One minute he was singing 'Heartbreak Hotel' and the next he was belly up."

Christmas Man smiles the most genuine smile I have ever seen on a man, and then I realize he has a fish bowl between his legs too.

Inside swims the prettiest little fish I've ever seen, all black and white with a gold chiffon fins draping all around.

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And then, through the bottom of the bowl, I see the zipper closure of his slacks and the slight bulge down the left leg and I feel this little surge, and...

Christmas Man adjusts himself. "I think she's depressed," he whispers and looks at me with a pathetic smile. "She just hangs out behind her little castle and won't look at me at all."

"It sucks to be alone on Christmas," I say.

"You too?" Those green eyes pour into mine.

"Just me and Elvis." Elvis is all white and puffy now, floating on the surface like a soggy little marshmallow.

Christmas Man offers his hand.

"I'm Ross," he says.

I open my mouth to answer, but just then, a woman and two golden retriever pups burst from the clinic door. One of them charges toward my lap, paws skidding on the linoleum. I lurch up, trying to save Elvis from sure destruction, but the bowl flies out of my hands into the wall behind me, shattering in an explosion of water and glass. The little mermaid and Elvis sail up into the air, end-over-end.

His shriek tears at my heart as he reaches an apex near the acoustic ceiling and begins to fall, the two dogs at full attention, leaping and yipping, their mouths snapping in unison.

"Elviiiiiiiiis..." I scream and jump up, but my feet get lost somewhere under me. The room and everything in it jerks upside down.

And then, in a slow motion dream, Ross's hand sails in, opens like a lotus flower, and snatches Elvis out of the jaws of death.

Our eyes meet and time stands still, his arm high over the heads of the pups, holding Elvis in his sacred grip.

Ross shows up, out of the blue, at the only emergency vet open on Christmas morning just at the moment needed to save the life of the King.

He smiles at me another timeless moment, then nudges Elvis off his palm into his fishbowl.

Elvis lights up gold again. His fins snap and his eyes swivel and dance as Ross's little fish swirls around him. I'm pretty sure he is singing to her, and she must feel little fish twinges in all the right places.

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“What’s her name?” I ask as we leave the office together.

“Memphis.”

So, anyway Mags, you’ll have to get someone else to pick you up in Barstow. Ross and I are using those frequent flyer seats in the morning. Just in case.



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