

Anniversary

A cooperative trick taking card game

To my love, Althea

Warning

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents either are products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events or locales or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

CHAPTER 0

Althea

A wedding episode. I hate wedding episodes. Not like I wouldn't like a wedding one day. I don't even have a girlfriend. Day in and day out, every day is the same. Work, eat, watch tv and sleep, and then I do it all again. I wish I could break the cycle but- oops! Late again. I flick off the T.V. Then I rush outside and into my car, making sure to blast some The Garden. I may look like a rat today but I know I'm hot shit. I would spend more time looking nice but lately I've been feeling like a zombie. Who would ever love me? I guess that's what I was saying about the vicious cycle. One minute your driving to work and the next-

"Here's your paint sir." Ughhh. How have I been at work for 5 hours already!? I'm so bored! I just need more energy. You know what could be fun...

Tinder. Downloading 34% ...

Hannah

Fuck I look great today. I went on a date, and I was totally adorable. I went bouldering and I was totally adorable, and I got an iced coffee and the barista thought I was totally adorable. Did people look at me? Was I cute enough? I bet I didn't sound right. I bet I'm not trying hard enough... Maybe, maybe I'm just not enough. Who would ever love me?... ughhh shut up brain. I'm exhausted. I'm probably just going to sleep in my makeup... and outfit... all alone. I pull the blanket over me tighter. Why is it so cold? I hug my stuffed animal. I guess I should have figured when I moved out to live by myself it would be lonely, but it feels like nothing I do makes it better. I sigh and open up Tinder again. Maybe this time will be different...

-A-

YEAR 1

Chapter 1: Swipe Right

For some reason I'm thinking about Willow. Well, I guess I think about Willow a lot. The classes, the dysphoria, the friends. I was pretty weird back then. I didn't get along with everyone though. Some people I was just never really friends with. I bet part of that was my fault. I've changed a lot since then, really grown as a person. If only they could see. I open Tinder and start swiping. Why is everyone on here so gross? I wish I could get a real match... Swipe, Swipe, Swipe, Swipe...

- Sweetness Needed: 0
- **Swipe Right Sweet Gesture (each)**
- **No Healthy Communication**

Chapter 2: Match

Match! Finally!

“Hey! It’s you!”

An old friend. Friend? I wonder what she thinks about me? I want to show her how cool I am now.

-A-

If we weren’t friends before, we certainly are now. We’ve been talking all week. She tells me all about her day. We shared playlists! I want to hang out so bad. She said some things recently that are making me confused. She called me cute, and keeps calling me ‘b’. It probably doesn’t mean anything. But I get this warm feeling inside when she does, like I’m melting. What am I thinking!? We’re just friends... right? She couldn’t think about me in that way... could she?

-A-

The week I’ve had! We’ve been sending scandalous messages. We couldn’t meet up fast enough. The second I saw her our lips were pressed together and, well, I don’t kiss and tell... but we did more than just kiss, but she’s seeing other people, it’s just sex.

-A-

I- I’ve never admitted this but, I think I want it to be something more. My heart has never pounded this hard. What will she think? I have to find some way to tell her.

-A-

Flowers and Ring Pops and Sweet Gestures galore! She confessed! She likes me! She really really likes me! We’re together now. A new adventure. Just me and her. I’m a little scared. Life is going to be so different now. Will we ever live together? What if we fight? When should I say ‘I love you’? Will we get married? A new partner is going to be quite the journey. Luckily for now I can just enjoy going on Dates and doing Sweet Gestures.

- **No Healthy Communication**

Chapter 3: Christmas

She is so lovely and amazing. Whisked between hang outs, Ten Foot Henry's, and Con Mi. It's getting cold out. The winter season is fast approaching. It's cozy. She finally said it. We said 'I Love You'. It may have been less than a month since we've started dating but it felt like forever!

I have this creeping feeling. This is a full on relationship. This is real. This is it. I know that she's the one but... I'm afraid I'm not worthy of her love. I'm scared one day she'll find out and it will be all over.

She lives so far away from me. We don't hang out as often as I would like. The snow set in overnight. We keep pushing the car out of the snow to even get it moving!

Hannah

So when we are together I want to make it perfect. I baked her so many cookies. I'm cleaning every surface, buying ingredients I never have before, I put her name on the cabinet. I'm working really hard on her Christmas present. It's wearying to keep up. Sometimes the dishes fill the sink. My makeup runs. I say the wrong thing. She's going to see through me. She's going to find out I'm unlovable.

Althea

So when we are together I want to be high-spirited. We bake together. I'm so excited for her to open my present for her. I wear bright clothes, and keep up bits. I put on shows and music and anything to stop the tired from setting back in. It's not easy to keep the blues away. Sometimes I just feel down. She's going to see through me. She's going to find out I'm unlovable.

- **Healthy Communication Bounty Added**
- **Healthy Communication Usable**



Chapter 4: Monster

Whenever we're together, it's in Peggy's basement. Peggy's very cold basement. It'll be nice in the summer but for now we're huddling together and always in big sweaters.

Althea

I'm invited to a wedding soon, but I don't have anything to wear! I got Hannah to take me shopping but nothing really seemed to work. It's got me thinking a lot about what I want to wear to my own wedding.

Hannah

Althea seems to be thinking a lot about our future together. I know we're going to be together forever, but there are so many steps before that! She wants us to go to the ranch or go to dinner- but I keep putting it off. That would mean I have to meet her parents and her parents will see through me. I have to be perfect.

Althea

Hannah keeps worrying if I'm fatigued. I can't be like that now, I can't be like that in my most important relationship. I'm not fatigued, I just get sleepy in the morning. She keeps buying Monster Energy and I think they're helping... they have to be helping.

-A-

Perfect! Now I can never run out of Monster. A whole row in the fridge dedicated to Ultra Rosa!!! I'll. never. be. tired.

Chapter 5: Spring Holidays



Hannah

She's perfect. I've gotta stop getting distracted with this black-and-white platformer and think of the perfect Valentine's day surprise. It has to be perfect.

-A-

This Valentine's Day was perfect! How could she be soooo sweet? So much hand crafted care.

Althea

Yahoo! I'm stuffed- I'm all full from birthday cake, chocolate eggs, and picnic charcuterie.

Hannah is hard to keep up with! But this is the most fun I've had, she almost makes it feel easy.

I really don't want to mess this up. I don't want her to see through me. Then how could she ever say 'yes'? I mean! What!? I wasn't thinking of proposing!

I've got this though- if I come up with enough funny bits I'll never burn out!

Chapter 6: Tension



Hannah

When I realized we were both really serious about us I knew this was going to be an adventure.

And I was right, winter has been so difficult! All I wanted was cuddles, all the time. So when we

were sporadically together I really wanted to make the most of it. I wanted to look perfect, the

house to be perfect, the food to be perfect. Always do things that are super fun. It has been a

lot. But, when there was a mess or I wasn't ready or the food was all burnt: she didn't mind! I still

want to impress her, but I'm glad she's chill. I've never had anything like it. I think.. I think I want

to take this to the next level...

Althea

Hannah is always doing something cute <3 I'm helping her make a costume of her dnd

character, picking her up drunk from a party, driving her to Airdrie for a tattoo. It's a miracle she

has time for me between her magic systems and compression algorithms. And then we're

trapped in the pouring rain, hiding inside the warm car, doodling on the sun roof. It's like time

stops. I need her to always have time for me. I need her to promise. Till death do us part...

- All tasks to one partner

Chapter 7: My Pumpkin

A whole year together. Something is different with her. The days are getting chilly. We light

cinnamon candles. She has that look in her eyes. Like she's a hungry lion. I think we're

becoming something new... Vampire and Bloodbag? Oh my god. Is this really happening? A

downtown apartment. Fuzzy socks. A view of the amber colored trees. A shared lease.

Roommates?? Pumpkins in superstore. Pumpkins at every turn. Pumpkin pie,

pumpkin fields

carved pumpkins,

pumpkins after dark....

Engaged!???

- At no point can either partner foot two more '6' cards than the other.

YEAR 2

Chapter 1: The Wicked Witch 5

Two cats, smaller than a hand and as black as night, watch a woman work. She is bony with dark hair that looks thin and wet and barely covers her head. Her tattered dress whisks about as she grabs something sweet from a shelf and brings it to the bulbous iron cauldron. Smoke and bubbles spew forth and then a voice. Both cats have just awoken from what feels like a very long dream and neither cat remembers anything that came before. This is the first voice either of them have heard. It is sweet, soft and smooth. And out of the cauldron comes another, a second voice! This one sweeter and softer than the last- but then they are both gone. With a big stretch the cats stand up and begin to lick each other and explore the cluttered cabin interior.

- You have 3 minutes and 30 seconds to complete the Sweet Gestures.

Chapter 2: Taste Tower 5

She looks stunning. I can barely breathe, but that might just be the air up here. The tiny lights of the city glitter below as we ascend the Calgary Tower. It's been so hard to get away together. She's in school now and is so busy with classes and homework. This is nice.. But we have a job to do! The restaurant lays out ornate plates of candle-lit food. Pastas, steaks, potatoes, duck. We carefully taste and consider what our guests would most enjoy. The evening was so romantic I kept getting distracted. I hope catering won't be too expensive.

Chapter 3: Christmas Shopping 5

Another Christmas with my love. In a new house decorated with lights and music and even a little tree. We are driving around more than ever. Visiting hotels, parks, barns, looking for the perfect venue. I make sure she stays warm and bundled up though.

Chapter 4: The Grind

She's a beauty isn't she. A glorious white tower of raw computing power. 160tb of pure trans-ram. 50cc of carbon fibre water cooling. And the NVIDIA Geforce GX 3040 Super TI+ with 32 gb of V-RAM and G-RAM. Nothing left to do but grind. Pintrests boards. Dresses. Switch to Schoolwork. Switch to Rocket League. Gotta get out of Diamond. Back to Schoolwork. Rocket League again. New Pintrest board. Invitations. This is hard work, but she promised she'd help me. Why does it feel like I'm doing it alone?

Althea

Maybe she's not really interested...

Hannah

Maybe she's too tired...

- No Date may be opened with a pink card or a position card.

Chapter 5: A Musty Magical Meeting



The cats explored every nook and cranny of the one room hut. It was all very fun to play with each other but already they were bored and the witch was not very good company. She seemed to see the cats as a bother and spent most of her time hunched over her cauldron or asleep in her cot.

“Come children” called the Witch, churning a big stick in her potion. The cats jumped onto the shelf of ingredients and the witch plucked a foul smelling fleshy item and threw it into the cauldron.

“Fair is foul, and foul is fair” She croaked. Again she began to stir and chant

“Double, double toil and trouble; Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.” The green goop began to shimmer and an image appeared in the liquid. A dark room filled with big orange cats. A rotund man was in the room, his clothes were grease stained and his expression stern. It was hard to hear him over the sound of wailing cats in the background.

“M'lady” the man said, bowing his head.

- **You have 3 minutes to complete the Sweet Gestures.**

Chapter 6: Disaster



We've been discussing and I think planning for our big day is going to take longer than I expected. Our caterer, our venue, our cakemaker, don't know if they'll be available. This delay is making me scared. Can we really do this? Our funds are thinning and we might not have enough to put down deposits in a few months.

Hannah

*No no no no. I'm completely failing to make the perfect wedding. I'm not just ruining it for Althea, I'm ruining the most important day of **my** life! Everyone is going to see I'm not cut out to be a wife.*

Althea

I just can't do everything fast enough. The stress of getting things done, making it all happen, work and life. It's all on my shoulders! I just can't stay positive enough for the both of us even though I'm trying. If I can't be enough for Hannah, how can I marry her?

- **You are allowed to talk freely with your partner about how to distribute the Sweet Gestures without disclosing anything about the cards in your hand.**

Chapter 7: Sultry Streams



The wedding is becoming all too much, so I've taken a little break away. I'm posting all sorts of tantalizing photos online. The attention is really nice.. so I did some streams too. Can you believe people pay for this stuff!? I've gotta setup some stream bots and an onlyfans then! I can present a version of myself without any rough edges. A fun version that likes to party... and take her clothes off!

- **All Sweet Gestures to the top.**

Chapter 8: Fell Omen 5

Put these foolish ambitions to rest. I am racking up deaths for great runes, but also racking up debt looking for things like chairs and curtains and napkins and little things you couldn't imagine. I need to save money on at least one thing. Damn it. The Lord of Blasphemy is resistant to my attacks. I better summon Zach to help me... That's it! Zach can DJ our wedding!

Chapter 9: Escape! 5

The disgusting man asked the witch "I would like two more cats. Do you deem me worthy of your cats?"

The witch replied "Yes!"

The cats look at each other with fear and for the first time they find their voice.

"I don't want to go with him!" Said the small one.

"Let's run away! Where we can do what we want" said the big one.

"Are you sure? The world is scary and we won't have an owner!" replied the smaller.

Then the witch began to reach for their scruff. In an instant the two cats jumped out the window and began to run through the forest. As soon as they thought they could run no more they began to smell something delicious....

- **You have 2 minutes and 30 seconds to complete the Sweet Gestures.**

Chapter 10: Burning Pile 🍬5🍬🍬🍬🍬

Registry to registry. Form after form. Doing other peoples jobs for them! Why is changing your name this hard? Months of needless waiting but it's all going to be worth it. To take a break from that we try on dress after dress trying to find the perfect fit. The right fit for our personalities, for our bodies, for our wedding. Look at the time! We've got a concert to get to! We rush back home just in time to see Mother Mother.

- **The top must take the Sweetest task**

Chapter 11: Broke

Broke - Althea thinks doesn't work enough, hannah thinks fail/imperfect

The end of another year together, and everything seems so far away and yet right around the corner. I want to keep treating my baby like the queen she is... problem is, I'm out of money. With all the Dates and Sweet Gestures and wedding planning!

Althea

I just can't work hard enough. Work is pure dread for me and I feel like it's just getting harder. I need to do nothing for at least a year. But I can't let my baby down like that! I've gotta get us through this. I have to. But I can't even get through the day without two cups of coffee. I have to do everything to keep her from doubting me.

Hannah

I'm ruining everything! I was supposed to give her life. I was supposed to be the perfect girlfriend. If our situation isn't perfect why would that be unless I'm the one poisoning it! I'll fix this somehow. Make it up to her. I have to do everything to keep her from doubting me.

- **At no point can either partner foot two more '1' cards than the other.**

-A-

YEAR 3

To Be Continued...