

Hopeless Bromantic

by

Niharika Iyengar

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Email: [niharika.iyengar@gmail.com](mailto:niharika.iyengar@gmail.com)

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*VED enters and stops by the bar, looking for his best friend, AMAN. He notices the attractive bartender and greets her. Slow jazz plays in the background of the Friday night chatter.*

VED

Hi there, you must be the new bartender.

JEN

Word travels fast. I'm Jen.

VED

Cool, cool, cool. I'm Ved.

JEN

Nice to meet you, Ved. Can I help you with something?

VED

Yeah, I'm looking for a friend. He's about ye high, beard. Looks like a poor man's Hasan Minhaj? Probably wearing something red.

JEN

(chuckles)

I think he's upstairs. Can I get you a drink?

VED

I'll have a Yuzu gin to start, and you can put it on Aman's tab, please and thank you.

JEN

Sure thing. I'll have it sent over.

*VED walks upstairs to AMAN who is sitting on the farthest table by the railing overlooking the rest of the bar below. AMAN looks in distant thought and doesn't notice VED sitting down.*

VED

Uhh, hello? Earth to Aman?

AMAN

Oh, shit. You scared me.

VED

You okay, bro?

AMAN

Yeah, yeah.

VED

I got here as soon as I could. You alright? What happened?

AMAN

Yeah, it's this girl I've been -

VED

(exhales deeply)

For fuck's sake. I thought it was  
- never mind. What are you  
drinking? Why on earth is it  
purple?

*JEN overhears the last bit of the conversation as she brings over VED's drink.*

JEN

That would be my recommendation.  
Forager's Garden.

VED

Oh! Hey! Yeah, looks delish. Aman,  
have you met Jen? She's the new  
bartender.

AMAN

(barely looking up from his drink)  
Yeah, sure hi.

*JEN walks away, VED leering after her but AMAN is still distant.*

VED

Anyway, what's up? What's your  
problem?

AMAN

(muttering)

It's not *me* that's the problem.

VED

(cups a hand over his ear)  
What?

AMAN

It's Max - the girl I'm seeing.

VED

Okay - so what's the deal with her? She used to be a dude or something?

AMAN

What? No! Why must you be so crude -

VED

Yeah yeah, so what is it? I mean it's only been what, two dates, and you're in this weird funk.

AMAN

Well, she's sort of seeing other people.

VED

Two dates does not an exclusive relationship make, Aman.

AMAN

It's not the 'her dating other people' that's upsetting me as much as who she's dating.

VED

I knew it. She plays for the same team. NOICE. Maybe you can finally get in on that threesome fantasy huh? Hashtag fucketlist

AMAN

(finishing his drink)  
You disgust me.

VED

Tell me something I don't know. Like what the fuck her deal is?

AMAN

(takes a deep breath)

Max doesn't believe in monogamy. She's polyamorous.

*JEN seeing AMAN finish his drink walks over to their table and again overhears the last bit of their conversation.*

JEN

Ooh, who's polyamorous?

AMAN

Uhm -

VED

I could be. If that's what you're into.

JEN

Sorry, bro, dudes really aren't my thing. But polyamory? Definitely my cup o' gin. So who's the chick that's into it too?

AMAN

Great. Is everyone more open-minded than I am?

JEN

Polyamory isn't about being open-minded! It's about trust and.. knowing what you want. Anyway, sorry didn't mean to be nosy. Just wanted to see if I could get you another round?

VED

(tutting)

What a loss for us men. Another house gin for me please.

AMAN

That's - interesting.. I'll stick to the Forager's Garden, thanks, Jen.

*JEN exits to get their drinks.*

VED

Aman, trust me. I know what you want. And it is not multiple lovers.

AMAN

(ignoring Ved)

Max said if I'm okay with being in this with her and her other partners -

VED

Lovers.

AMAN

Whatever. She said if I'm okay with it, then I should text her by midnight. If not, it's over. We're done. We both walk away.

VED

Wow, Cinderella much?

AMAN

Why do I even bother? I asked you to meet me because I needed some advice. I knew you wouldn't take this seriously. Screw it. I'm texting her -

VED

Woah - no! Chill man. I was just kidding. Look, how about this - if she feels the same way about you, and she wants your relationship to work, don't you think she should check in with you by midnight too? And if she doesn't, we'll forget about her. Okay? Sound fair?

AMAN

Yeah but I really like her, Ved!

VED

Yeah, but I know you, Aman! You want a woman who prioritizes you. Polyamory is not your thing. Feet maybe. But not polyamory. Besides, you like your STDs like your coffee - single origin.

AMAN

Eew! Seriously Ved, I really think she could be the one.

VED

Like you thought Priya could have been the one? And Neha -

AMAN

This is different. Max is mature, and real and she's-

*From the corner of his eye, AMAN looks over the balcony and notices the person who's just occupied the table downstairs.*

AMAN (CONT'D)

HERE! Oh my god. Ved - she's here!

VED

Wha - where -

AMAN

Downstairs. My 1 O'Clock. Your 7. Don't look. Don't look. Don't look!

VED

Relax dude. She doesn't even know who I am.

*VED attempts a subtle yawn and stretches to take a look behind and below him.*

VED

Daaaamn bro. I'd say well done but  
-

AMAN

This has *got* to be the universe  
telling me we're meant to be. I  
mean, come on! It's fate!

VED

(sarcastically)

Oh I'm sorry, Mercury must be in  
retrograde for me or some shit. I  
don't speak universe.

AMAN

Shut up. Maybe I should go  
downstairs and say hi?

VED

Please tell me you're joking.

AMAN

What?

VED

Do you seriously see yourself in  
an open relationship?

AMAN

Ved, I don't think I will ever  
find anyone like her. She's smart,  
and kind, and funny -

*JEN returns with the new drink orders.*

JEN

Talking about me, are you?

VED

You know, you are ridiculously  
self-involved.

JEN



(curtsies)

Why, thank you. Here are your drinks.

AMAN

Jen, would sit with us for a bit?

JEN

Only a bit, my shift is almost done and I have people to do and things see. (winks) What's up?

AMAN

How do you do it?

VED

Oh jeez -

AMAN

How can you be with multiple people?

JEN

Well, for starters I don't believe in the institution of marriage -

VED

Maybe because you're not even legally allowed to get marr-

JEN

(louder)

Secondly, the way I see it, the more people you love and who love you, the better you are for it. You have to let go of your pride, jealousy, possessiveness.. And you have to learn to share. But with the right people, I think you get more than you lose.

AMAN

That sounds nice -

VED

No. No. No no no no. Look, I know you. You can't do this sharing

love nonsense. Okay? You need good old traditional monogamy.

JEN

Okay this looks like a conversation I don't want to get into. So - peace out.

*JEN exits.*

AMAN

See Ved. Jen makes so much sense. If I say yes to Max I'll get more than I lose. That's it. I've made up my mind. I'm gonna go talk to her.

*AMAN gets up to leave. VED looks over the balcony horrified.*

VED

Aman, don't! She's kissing someone else!

*AMAN rushes to look over the balcony in a panicked state, but sees that VED is lying.*

AMAN

Wha - Where - No, she's not. That's not funny.

VED

Well, at least now you know how you *really* feel about being with her and her other lovers.

*Aman sits down again.*

AMAN

UGH! Damnit! You're right. I hate it when you're right. But I want her! Did I tell you she's a dancer? And she loves The Beatles?

VED

Everybody loves The Beatles!

*AMAN'S phone buzzes.*

AMAN

Oh my god, she texted me!

VED

What? What'd she say?

AMAN

'Hi, miss you'. It's kinda sweet, no? (gets up again) Maybe I'll type something like "careful what you wish for" and then I can go down and surprise her!

*VED looks over the balcony and is horrified.*

VED

Stop typing - stop replying - Aman! She's kissing someone -

AMAN

Sent! I'm not falling for that again.

VED

No. I'm not fucking around this time!

*AMAN looks over the balcony and is shocked to see Max kissing someone.*

AMAN

Oh - What the - Is that Jen?!

VED

Oh my god, it is! Of course, it is! What are the chances we would run into two polyamorous chicks in the same bar who *didn't* know each other?

AMAN

Oh shitshitshit I texted her saying she looked good in that green dress! She'll know I'm here!

VED

Shhhh! DUCK!

AMAN

Fuckfuckfuckfuckfuck. Did she see me?

VED

I don't think so. Come on, let's get out of here.

*VED and AMAN go downstairs but are interrupted before they can reach the exit.*

JEN

Oh, leaving already? Let me introduce you to -

AMAN & VED

NO!

*AMAN is trying desperately to hide behind VED, and JED notices his eyes keep darting to Max. Comprehension dawns on her face.*

JEN

Okay.. Oh, I see. You're the dude Max was talking about.

AMAN

Yeah, well Max conveniently forgot to mention you!

JEN

Okay, there's no need to get mad -

AMAN

I mean, what's next? Did she also used to be a dude?

JEN

Aman, calm down -

AMAN

You know the polyamory I might have got on board with, but she's also bisexual?!

VED

Uh, Aman, let's go. Come on -

AMAN

I mean how hard does a guy gotta try to find love huh? Just someone who likes me, and no one else. What have I done to deserve -

VED

(loudly)

You know what your problem is?

*AMAN is stunned into silence and many in the bar are now looking at the trio.*

VED (CONT'D)

You're too fucking naive, Aman. You go around falling in love with every second girl you meet and sulk like a baby when they don't feel the same way about you in 24 hours. You want everyone to fall for this hopeless romantic act you've been pulling for 5 years, but the truth is, you're not ready to be in a committed relationship. You haven't been since Rhea left you. And you're never going to be unless you deal with it. Stop trying to get other people to replace her and just, for once, try and be happy with your own goddamn self.

*VED storms off leaving JEN staring at AMAN open-mouthed as the bar slowly returns to its usual volume of chattering patrons.*

JEN

I'm sorry, I -

AMAN

Would you keep my card safe please? I'll come back for it tomorrow.

JEN

Of course, Aman, I -

*As AMAN goes towards the door, VED re-enters and both men stare at each other for a couple of minutes in silence.*

AMAN

You know, I hate it when you're right.

VED

I'm sorry, I shouldn't have -

AMAN

No, don't. I'm sorry Bro. For, well, Priya, and Neha, and - you get the idea.

VED

I only want what's best -

AMAN

I know, it's okay. Seriously. You're right. I'm done pretending. In fact, you know what? I think I'll just stick to being a hopeless *bromantic* for a bit.

*VED grins and they hug while JEN gets AMAN'S card. They wave goodbye to JEN, and as they exit, AMAN catches MAX'S eye and raises his hand to her.*

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