

Young Mutants in Love

Chapter 1

It was a perfect night for star gazing. It was cold, which wasn't unusual for an evening in early February, and the skies were clear. Cacy, bundled in two sweaters and her heaviest coat, was participating in a class she didn't like for credits she didn't feel that she needed, but the registrar's office had informed her that if she wanted to graduate, she would have to take the class. It was Astronomy 101 and because of the school's policy, she was the oldest person in the class.

As a graduate student in Physics, she wasn't interested in the stars per se, but the school had a requirement that all students had to take an Astronomy class. It wasn't the worst thing possible. At least the 101 class was easy. Cacy just had to show up to check out the stars when the weather was nice. Unfortunately, the best nights were also the coldest. She just had to put up with her 'lab partner,' Gavin. He was the TA for the class, and since there were an odd number of students, and she was the oldest student in the class, she was partnered with him.

Gavin was a nice guy, but he wasn't an impressive specimen. He stood just a few inches above her five foot five inches. His red hair was always badly cut and frazzled. He wore the thickest pair of glasses she'd ever seen, but he was a good lab partner even though he was terribly awkward. Tonight he was just wearing a black school jacket that was a couple of sizes too big.

The class had come to an old field at the end of an abandoned road. Professor Harrington had chosen it because there was only one old tree so there was a clear view of the stars especially on a cold night like this.

Each team was given a blanket because the ground was muddy from the recent thaw and a star chart and a small flash light. Each couple was also given a constellation to find in the night sky. Cacy and Gavin had been assigned several because he was the TA and had an unfair advantage, as Professor Harrington insisted. It wasn't too complicated since Cacy had studied the heavenly bodies growing up. Her father had always tried to show her the stars when they went on their annual camping trip.

"Now that you have your constellations," Professor Harrington started, "I want you and your partner to find a patch of ground and lie down and look at the heavens. Take off your gloves and hold hands while you search for your constellations, and enjoy the moment."

Cacy was reluctant, but she took off her glove and the mitten from her right hand and grabbed Gavin's gloveless hand as instructed. She looked at his other hand which was also gloveless as he pointed at the belt of Orion.

"There it is," Gavin announced, "Orion, the warrior of the heavens."

"Oh really?" Cacy asked with interest.

"Yes," Gavin continued, "according to legend, Orion was the greatest hero of his age. He was placed in the heavens as a testament to his courage and strength."

"Is any of that real?" Cacy wondered.

"Who knows what happened in the world all those ages ago," Gavin replied. "We just have stories to give us hints about the past."

"How did you learn about all of this?"

"It's a part of Astronomy," Gavin explained. "The constellations are all tied to the stories. There are stories from almost every culture in the world."

Cacy was going to comment, maybe say that it was interesting, see where the conversation went from there, but three things happened at that moment. First she saw a streak of light pass by the middle star of Orion's belt. Next, there was a spark that shocked both her and Gavin. Finally after several seconds, she passed out while screaming.