

Wicked Fem by Edie Marr

SAMPLE CHAPTER

1. Supermarket

So, it's Saturday night, I live in an amazingly queer city by the sea, I have money, I'm single, it's the weekend, and what am I doing? I'm going to the supermarket to buy a ready meal which I will heat up in the microwave and eat before getting an early night.

I have less than twenty Saturday nights left before I turn forty and this is how I am choosing to waste yet another of them.

But, perhaps, I'm being smart. Before you judge, have you considered I might meet the girl of my dreams in the yoghurt aisle in Waitrose?

If I do, I'd better hope she makes the first move because I am useless in that direction. Move making, I mean. Also my gaydar is bust, so even if I knew how to hit on people — which, and I want to make this very clear, I do not — I have no idea where to aim.

But I'm a problem solver at heart, that's why I have the kind of haircut — very short, fade, etc — that gets most people at least halfway there, and if that and the jacket aren't enough, often I also wear a rainbow wristband, because I figure I ought to help out any dykes who are as clueless as me without a label, by wearing an actual label.

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So I'm cruising the aisles — yeah, except not cruising, because I have no idea how to do that — I'm *walking along* the aisles, when I realise I've been kind of following this woman around. I didn't mean to. Or, at least, I didn't *consciously* mean to.

God, she's hot though. And even after I've realised I'm following her, I don't actually stop doing it. I try and look at her in a non-creepy way as I select yoghurts, taking far more time over the choice between 'peach and passionfruit' and 'fruits of the forest' than I ever have before.

She's so beautiful. She's also not really dressed for the supermarket. She has dark hair, long, but swept up in a sort of fancy, shiny roll thing on the back of her head. She's wearing a lot of eye make-up and red lipstick — I really like red lipstick — and a green dress, clingy and with a kind of sheen to it that really emphasises her shape. She has the cutest figure, like all the things you want, in the exact amounts you want them.

She's conventionally attractive hot, but also edgy hot. Like she'd be filthy in bed. No wonder I'm staring at yoghurts like I have a weird thing for them.

And look, I have a lot of weird things, but yoghurts isn't one of them.

Also, okay, she is wearing black shiny knee boots with heels.

And I love boots. Like, I love boots a lot. And I love *those* boots. I want to kneel in front of her and kiss them. Because, I'm like that. And when I look at her — secretly, while pretending to look at yoghurt — I feel more *like that* than I think I ever have done in my life.

I'm still sort of having this perverted dream about her resting those boots on my back, when I see this young guy walking up behind her. He's pretty good looking.

At first I think, I'm gonna wait until he walks by and see if she looks at him, because, as I may have mentioned, my gaydar is bust, so maybe I can get a hint from whether hot girl looks at hot guy.

But as he gets nearer, I realise from the way he's walking towards her, not past her, that he knows her. And I think, shit, he's her boyfriend. It makes sense. They're both hot and, like her, he's dressed a bit too well for a supermarket trip. With a leather jacket over his jeans but, wait, what I thought was a black T-shirt is a black *latex* T-shirt.

So he's maybe gay? I don't know if I'm being wildly offensive, but straight men don't wear latex shirts, do they?

Perhaps the sexually adventurous ones do. Maybe they're swingers. Swingers probably wear anything. They're off to a swinging party out in the suburbs. What if they invite me for a threesome? Could I do that? I had a boyfriend in my first year of university. I sucked a dick, like, once. I could do it again. It's not like they've changed how dicks work.

I could suck a dick if it meant afterwards I got to kiss those boots.

And I'm deep, deep in this thrilling thought. Too deep, because the guy looks at me and says, "So, which one of us are you into?"

The girl nudges him and says, "Cal," like she's annoyed and that's already nice because I kind of feel like she's on my side. Protecting me.

She can protect me. So long as no one protects me from her.

"Sorry, what?"

He grins. "I mean, we're both bi, so you might as well go for it."

And he's being obnoxious. And she's embarrassed, but on one level, this is the kind of clear declaration of sexuality I could do with in *all* conversations with strangers.

But already my hopeless dreams are being slightly dashed by the girl saying, "Oh shut *up* about that."

But he goes, "Well you are, aren't you? You keep saying you are."

"Yes," she says, turning the sort of angry eyes on him that I'd been slightly dreaming about her turning on me. She has amazing eyes. Bright blue and sparkly in a sea of black eyeliner. "But you don't need to announce it to random lesbians in the supermarket."

He looks at me. "I'm so sorry she called you random," he says. "Look, obviously it's her you like. I mean, your hair."

I nod. The hair is, after all, on purpose.

“But,” the guy continues, “she only dates subs so unless you’re that way inclined, you’re out of luck.”

I let myself smile at that. Because my gaydar might be bust —and I really did have no idea this chick was bi – but I *did* spot exactly what those boots meant. I mean, no one wears boots like that unless they want kinky little shits like me to start thinking the things I had been thinking.

“Right,” I say, because I haven’t said much and I ought to say something.

The guy grins at me, “So, you *were* staring at her.”

And then, out of fucking nowhere, *this* kicks in, “Sorry, no. It’s not like that. I just thought... Sorry, I thought I knew you from somewhere.”

What? Fucking stop.

“You thought you knew me?” she says. The first words she’s said to me and her voice is really incredible. Just that little bit husky. Not too much. Just enough to make me fall for her even more than I already had.

But I battle on with my own stupidity, “Yeah. I thought we were at school together.”

She looks a bit shocked at this. Unsurprising, as she is clearly about ten years younger than me. “Which school?”

“St Cuthbert’s Girls’ Grammar,” I say. Which is the real name of my school. I’m too overwhelmed to invent a school.

“Where?” she says.

“Stevenage.”

“I’ve never been to Stevenage.” She looks a bit bemused. Maybe even disappointed. She turns to the guy, “Look, we’re going to be late for Alexis’s party.”

Of course they’re going to a party. That’s why they’re in the supermarket. It’s only then I notice her basket contains two bottles of Prosecco and a six pack of beer.

He gives her a look, but he's clearly a good enough friend to spot that she wants to stop talking to this weirdo and nods at me, "Well nice to meet you," he says. And it's over. None of us even exchanged first names.

As they walk away he says to her, "You said you wanted to do something about it."

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