

Love By the Book

Excerpt 1

“The Meet Cute”

Alex snapped her mouth closed and rolled her eyes. Instead, she offered Mr. Hotness a small smile of thanks and started to stand again...which managed to upend her bag, sending her keys, wallet, phone, change, and a couple of emergency feminine hygiene products down into another noisy mess at her feet. Green Eyed Hotness was still kneeling and froze comically as a couple of tampons bounced off his shoe. If it had happened to anyone else, she would have been laughing, she realized even as the blush crept over her face and neck. Instead, it was a mortified groan that escaped before she dropped back on her haunches to shovel her things back into the safety of her bag.

Blondie cleared his throat and started helping again, scooping up her phone and a tampon. Without meeting his eyes, Alex took the items and tossed them haphazardly into the purse and straightened again, poised to flee as quickly as possible.

“Thanks, again,” she said tightly as he stretched his tall frame back up. She darted her eyes around to avoid having to look at him and snagged her gaze on the cover of a rom-com still on the shelf. If this were a book, the sassy heroine would make a joke to cut the tension. Things always worked out for them, she figured. Worth a shot. She opened her mouth to try and add a little humor to the situation but was cut off again.

“Really, Miss,” the librarian snapped from her desk in her prim spinster voice. “If you’re going to insist on disturbing the other patrons with your noise, I’ll have to ask you to leave.”

Alex swung her eyes around the space with the empty tables and chairs. “What

other patrons?" she challenged, her patience finally breaking. "We're the only ones here, you freaking Nazi!" The older woman's eyes widened, and her jaw went slack in shock as her wrinkly hand clutched at her chest. *Holy cow*, she thought wildly, *I've given the old crone a heart attack!* A moment later, the woman's face hardened and she put her hand back down, and Alex saw that it wasn't her chest she was clutching. It was a pendant. A freaking Star of David pendant. She was Jewish, and Alex had just called her a Nazi. She slapped her hand over her own mouth to keep any further embarrassing outbursts from spilling out. "I'm sorry," she choked out, lowering her hand. She focused back on the shocked expression of Green Eyes and added, a bit desperately, "I'm usually a very nice person."

Then she hiccuped...a loud, obnoxious hiccup like a frog had possessed her. Completely past the point of redemption, she felt her eyes tear up. They would call out the men with the straitjackets any minute, she realized in the horrible silence. With her luck, there was probably some kid hiding behind the shelves with his phone on record catching the whole thing. She would turn up on YouTube under the heading Crazy Library Lady. After mauling the hot guy, showering him with tampons, the noisy messes, yelling at Granny, crying, and the hiccups, she was sure to be a hit. Hell, she was one fart away from going viral. And since she'd had Mexican for lunch, the future was looking pretty good for that!

Alex tossed the books onto the nearest table and streaked for the door.