

FILM BLUE by Patricia Leavy

EXCERPT

After grabbing a hand basket and making a beeline to the freezer for some ice cream, she started searching for the items on Penelope's list. As she fumbled for the note, mumbling, "Ah, where is that stupid thing?" she heard a voice say, "Maybe you'd have better luck if you shut your eyes and put your hand in."

"Huh?" she queried, looking up at the six-foot-tall guy standing before her, dressed from head to toe in black. He had bleached blonde spiky hair, high cheekbones, a strong jawline, and a piercing through his right eyebrow that she thought was simultaneously cool and disgusting.

"You know, sometimes if you're looking too hard, you can't find anything."

"Uh, yeah," she said, staring into his evergreen eyes. Oh my God, he's seriously hot.

"Here, tell me what you're looking for and I'll shut my eyes and stick my hand in for you."

Raising her eyebrows, she said, "How stupid do you think I am? Maybe I should just go outside and scream, 'Somebody rob me!'"

He laughed. "Fair enough, but you try it."

Tash smirked and stuck her hand into her bag without looking. "Uh huh, here it is!" she exclaimed as she pulled out the small, crumpled paper. "That's uncanny."

"Sometimes you just have to concentrate less, you know? What's so important, anyway?"

"Oh, it's just my roommate's grocery list. She's pretty uptight so I can't screw it up. You wouldn't believe the things she writes, like 'two organic red apples and flax seed powder,' whatever the hell that is. Anyway, I should probably get back to shopping."

He smiled and waved his arm, to indicate she could pass by. With only a few aisles in the small store, Tash bumped into him again in the produce section.

"Should I even ask what that's about?" she remarked while giggling, looking at the twenty or more coconuts in his basket.

"Oh, these are for a party I'm deejaying for a couple of friends over at NYU."

“They’re serving whole coconuts?” she asked, mystified.

He laughed. “People try to get them open. It’s like a drinking game kind of thing. It’s pretty funny.”

“Gotcha. Do you go to NYU?”

“No, I went to school in Chicago and moved to New York after I graduated. I’m a professional deejay. I’m just doing this party as a favor.”

“So, what kinds of clubs do you spin at?” she asked.

“Uh, well, tomorrow I’ll be spinning at the Forever 21 store in Times Square.”

She smiled. “Well, do you get a discount at least?”

He laughed. “Didn’t think to ask for that. So, what’s your name?”

“Natashya, but my friends call me Tash.”

“I’m Aidan. Do you live around here?”

“Just a block away. I share a place with two roommates.”

“Pretty awesome area, good for you.”

“Yeah, well we’re in like the only non-restored building in the neighborhood. Don’t get me wrong, I love living here and it’s pretty close to my work, but we’re not in one of the swanky buildings with a marble entrance. It’s more like splintery wood floors and a scary old-fashioned elevator that makes me want to take the stairs.”

He smiled. “What’s your work?”

“I work at a couple of stores in SoHo.”

“For the discount, right?” he joked.

She laughed. “Well, nice to meet you but I’ve gotta finish up and get going.”

“Sure, me too. Maybe I’ll see you around. If you’re not busy, stop by Forever 21 tomorrow.”

“I have to work.”

“Well, can I maybe get your number?” he asked.

“Why don’t you give me yours instead?”

“Sure, that’s cool.” He put his coconut-filled basket on the ground and held out his hand. “Give me your phone and I’ll put it in.”

“You don’t want me to have to search my bag again. Here,” she said, handing him the note with Penelope’s grocery list. “Do you have a pen?”

He smiled and pulled a red crayon out of his pocket. "Don't ask," he said as he wrote his number on the little paper. "Here," he said handing it to her. "See ya."

"See ya," she replied.

When she casually glanced around the store a few minutes later, he was gone. She brought her basket to the checkout. The cashier asked, "Did you find everything you needed?"

"Yeah, yeah I did."