

MY DEAD TRUE LOVE by Kim Pierce

EXCERPT

We stood a moment without speaking—sizing each other up, I suppose—before I invited her to have a seat on the couch. I sat down next to her.

“Look, I know this situation is awkward,” I began. “Me the fiancée, you the ex-wife...”

“Yeah, I can only imagine what he’s said about me. Medusa unbound.”

“Oh no, that’s not what I meant...”

I tripped over my words.

“But it’s very likely what he meant.” She let out a belly laugh.

Bunching up her considerable green velvet skirt, she stretched out her legs, revealing black cowboy boots.

“Ours was not a friendly parting.”

“I gathered,” I said. “I also know you were married for, like, ten years—double the time I knew him. And I know I ought to feel jealous...”

Elizabeth stared at me, waiting.

“But I don’t.”

“No?”

“No. You were close to him. He was close to you.” I paused. It was difficult, even counterintuitive, what I was trying to say. “I could hear this in the intimate way you talked about him at the service.”

I clasped my hands as my words spilled out haltingly.

“I don’t even know how to say this,” I continued, “but I understood. It’s not like you’re a rival. You’re more like a sister. Or something like that. Someone I have a common bond with. He’s gone, and the hurt of that...”

I looked away. Tears were percolating up, boiling over again. Would this fountain of grief never cease?

I rushed to add, "The hurt of that doesn't leave room for trivial bullshit like jealousy." There, I'd said it. My heart was pounding.

"We... shared... him. Like no one else can understand."

Someone understands.