

Desperation
by Carol Sandford

"C'mon Deanna, come and have a dance with me."

She shook her head sadly at him, but managed to somehow throw a tiny, tight smile at him to show him how much the offer meant. "No, really, Will, I just don't feel like dancing right now."

But she might as well have been talking to the invisible man as her words slipped straight past him and into the dimness of the room as she frantically scanned the room for a glimpse of the man that she DID want to dance with.

Will tried to make light of the moment, noticing that Beverly had a pleading, almost begging look in her eyes. "Well, you ladies will be missing the chance of a life time, its not often you all have the pleasure of my two left feet, I'm sure there is some other sucker out there that hasn't sample my unique footwork yet."

Beverly chuckled, but to no avail, it had all fell on deaf ears as they realised that Deanna hadn't heard a single word.

Will shrugged, plainly giving up on what was rapidly becoming a lost cause. Beverly sighed as she slumped back into her seat and stared out unhappily at the crowd. It had been her idea to hold a dance - a disco. Lots of people, lots of noise and lots of dancing.

Beverly had done her utmost to draw Deanna away from her fixation on the passenger they had picked up at Starbase 101. There was no disputing the man was handsome enough, even gorgeous. And true to form, Deanna had fallen for him, hard. Jazz had been flattered, even honoured that the beautiful Betazoid had made herself available. One click of his fingers and she was there.

But as they had neared his destination, he had wanted to pull away from her. Getting serious to Deanna was NOT on his agenda. Ships passing in the night would have suited him perfectly, only Deanna had dropped anchor on him and he was feeling the pressure of the heavy chain.

So he began avoiding her. It wasn't in his nature to be out-rightly rude, but he so needed to release her grip on him. He even resorted to dropping hints that he was intimate with someone else.

She had gotten the hint, she had backed away. But only far enough to constantly watch him and moon over him. He had begun to feel like a prisoner, and he hated it.

"For heaven's sake, Deanna, cheer up, your making me as depressed as you."

Deanna broke her vigilant watch on the entrance to look guiltily at her friend. "I'm sorry

Beverly, I know I'm behaving like a moron, but I so wanted to spend Jazz's last night with him, and I'd heard that he was coming with another woman, an ensign from the labs. But he wouldn't do that to me would he, Bev, he wouldn't humiliate me like that?"

Beverly's silence answered her friends question, but Deanna didn't want to hear it, or believe it. Beverly took a deep breath and tried ramming home just how pointless her fixation was, "Deanna, he doesn't care about you. By tomorrow morning he will be gone and you'll just be another notch on his belt, a very long belt I'll bet too!"

Deanna was mortified, "Bev, thats a horrid thing to say! I cared for Jazz, and he cared for me, I'm certain of it. He's just trying to spare my feelings because he's leaving. I know he's leaving Bev, but that doesn't mean we can't spend his last night together. In fact, I intend to make sure I do. I'm going to my quarters, I shan't be long."

Beverly stared open-mouthed as Deanna suddenly rose and strutted out of the Holodeck, knocking Will's arm as she blundered her way past the throng of bodies that swayed back and forth with the beat of the heady music.

Will had no choice but to watch her as she pushed her way past him, almost tipping his drink down his pants in the process. He looked to Beverly with a heavy puzzled frown, but all she could do was shake her head and shrug her elegant shoulders. It was several moments before Will's eyes left the door.

Will's eyes were drawn back to the door barely half an hour later when he heard the unanimous gasp ripple through the crowd. Deanna was back. But not the Deanna that left earlier. This one was dressed in a black mini micro skirt, a vivid pink boob-tube that shimmered as she walked. Her hair was loose, literally. Released of its confinements, it sprung around her head totally wild, and gloriously free. Legs encased in sheer transparent nylons disappeared into high heeled shoes that must've taken some getting used to.

She looked like dynamite.

The crowd parted as she made her way back over to her friend who watched her entrance with as much shock as the rest of the audience, including Will, who now stood brooding in the shadows, his eyes never leaving the woman he loved. Still loved, only she seemed to have forgotten him.

"What have you done to yourself Dee?! Do you really think..." Beverly stared at her outfit as she tried to form the right word in her mouth that didn't coincide with the one that screamed at her inside her head. "Do you really think looking like...that, is going to make an iota of difference?!"

She took a deep breath as she looked her friend straight in the eyes and whispered, "Deanna, you look like a whore."

Deanna wavered slightly before changing her mind and seductively sneered, "Good, thats just what I was looking for. Not one man could look at me without wanting me, not one. Not even Jazz."

Whirling round, she was startled to find Will barely a foot away from her. She laughed nervously, "Will! don't creep up on me like that, you nearly gave me a heart-attack."

Will's eyes dropped to her cleavage, but Deanna could see he wasn't looking at her in a sexual way, more rather in curiosity. She instinctively brought her hand up to her chest, but then she thought better of it and defiantly dropped her hand, squared her shoulders, tossed her hair back over her shoulder and met Will's gaze straight on. "So, are you going to ask me to dance now, Commander?"

Will's eyes didn't even flicker at the mention of his rank, he knew what she was trying to do, but he wasn't buying it. Without missing a heartbeat, he simply held out his hand and said, "Sure."

They moved into the crowd and Will pulled her into his arms. Deanna knew she had blown it by Will's indifference to her. Even though the music had quite a fast tempo to it, one could easily dance together, just with a slightly quicker step.

Round and round they went, in silence. Even though Will desperately wanted to pull the woman in his arms flush against his body. Wanted to bury his face in that wild mane of hair, Wanted to inhale some of that intoxication that she was reserving for someone else. And wanted to be the one to take her to her quarters at the end of the evening, he refused to let any one of them become a reality. Deanna Troi was stuck on the man who had just arrived at the dance, only she didn't know that yet.

The song changed and became a ballad. Other than slowing their steps down, Will and Deanna didn't break apart. Will moved his arms around her, pulling her closer to him, but as he did so, he whispered into her ear, "He's here."

Instantly Deanna went to pull away, but Will held on fast. Deanna was frantic, wanting to glimpse her long awaited objective "Where...?" She also wanted to get out of Will's arms,, "Let me go Will..."

"He's with someone else, Deanna." He hated doing this to her and was determined that she was going to keep her dignity and pride in tact. He held on tighter, now pulling her flush to his body. But she was as rigid as a Klingon's spine, and he could feel her anger beginning to build.

"If you thought any thing of me Will, you would let me go, I want to be with him, just his once more."

Will enveloped her within his arms, kissing the top of her head as he did so, "I do love you, Deanna and that's why I'm not letting you go. Not because I'm jealous, and not for spite, Its because I care about you and what will happen if I let you go to him. Please don't."

It was then she looked into his eyes, saw the sincerity, saw the love. But still needed to see for herself. "I need to see him, Will, just let me see him. "

Understanding, he nodded, "Okay."

They moved in unison around the room, until Deanna finally spied the back of Jazz's head against the far wall. Will moved her further round, loathing himself for inflicting the pain that she was about to encounter. Sure enough, she gasped in dismay when she saw the blonde headed ensign trapped against Jazz's body, one hand intimately placed on her hip, the other propping up the wall.

Deanna buried her burning face into Will's massive chest as she heaved with carefully held on angry tears, and shame. Her throat burned with tension as she whispered hoarsely, "Get me out of here, Will, please."

Within moments they were out of the room, standing in the long corridor. Will had instantly released her as soon as they were clear of the crowds, but now he reached one hand out to her arm, his concern ever present as he looked into her down turned face, its pallor making him frown. "Are you okay?"

Too humiliated to answer, she nodded hastily, "Yes, I'm sorry for doing that to you, for putting through that. It was selfish, childish and totally humiliating, for everyone, what on Earth was I thinking?"

Will smiled grimly, "You were thinking about your heart Deanna, we all do sometimes. We all have to sometimes. Don't you think I've behaved like that on the odd occasion...Not quite like ~that~ but you haven't got the monopoly on looking like a jerk for the sake of a good time."

She smiled at the gentle teasing from her friend, but as she stepped into his open arms for a gratifying hug, he said smiling, "And at least you always had me to fall back on, you know I'm always here for you, Deanna...especially if you dress like that for all your dates."

Giving him a healthy swat on his behind, Deanna blushed crimson as she moved away just far enough to slip her arm back around his waist and move in the direction of their quarters, "Oh, you! Desperate situations require desperate measures."

Slinging his arm along her shoulder he pulled her up close to his side, the feeling entirely comfortable, entirely welcome, his smile teasing as he bent swiftly to bounce a friendly kiss off her mass of hair, "My date didn't show tonight, and I'm kinda desperate, can I take advantage of your desperate measures?"

Raising her smiling, teasing face to his, she brought her finger tip up to his lips, dragging the long nail across their softness, "Well that depends on your situation and just how desperate you are."

Will groaned as his eyes fell shut with the erotic image that she projected through his senses, capturing her finger, he tenderly sucked the inviting morsel, "Oh, God, I'm desperate, I'm desssss...perrrr...aaaate!"

