

LOVE IN THE TIME OF COVID-19 OR WHAT ALSO FEELS LIKE 100 YEARS OF GAY  
SOLITUDE  
by EMILY ANDERSON

(In LOVE IN THE TIME OF COVID OR WHAT ALSO FEELS LIKE 100 YEARS OF GAY SOLITUDE, a new couple considers homophobia in national healthcare while navigating their relationship.)

(An American Red Cross mobile blood bank sits in the parking lot between a family-run grocery store and some apartments that look like they were decorated by an industrially-minded-Wes-Anderson type.)

### CHARACTERS

KEVIN, 28. Barista at hottest coffeeshop in town. Wears only earth tones and light pastel colors. Still coming into his sexuality.

CARL, 25. Tech guy for company that manages other businesses' WordPress sites. Flirty bisexual who means well but is off-putting at times.

CARRIE, 27. Volunteer at blood drive. School nurse. Friend who introduced the pair.

### TIME

Early afternoon, the year of our lord 2020. A cloudless day in the Midwest, early April.

*KEVIN exits his car and walks toward the side of a long American Red Cross bus. He shakes his head at the photos of the people in the ad next to the words "Make sure blood is available when your family needs you."*

KEVIN

Carrie?

*KEVIN looks up the bus steps and does not use the handrail.*

Hi, I'm here. You said I'm giving blood today.

CARRIE

Hi, Kev! I'm so glad you could make it. Come on in. Take one of the facemasks out of the bin, will ya? They're clean, I promise.

KEVIN

Clinical white my only option?

*CARRIE side-eyes KEVIN.*

KEVIN

Alright, alright, fine.

*CARRIE points to a plastic placard with a list of directions on it.*

CARRIE

Go ahead and do this for me. Let me know when you're done registering. And if you have any questions.

*KEVIN opens his phone, sees no new text messages, and starts typing the registration link.*

CARRIE

By the way, it's super casual, but just wanted to let you know I invited Carl.

*KEVIN looks up from his phone.*

KEVIN

You're joking?

*CARRIE purses her lips and looks down.*

KEVIN

You're not joking. I need to go then.

*Someone walks up the bus entrance, which is also its exit, and now KEVIN can't leave just yet.*

CARRIE

Carl, hey!

KEVIN

*[hushed tone]* I cannot believe you did this to—

CARRIE

*[hushed tone]* Don't act like you don't want to see him. *[normal voice]* Carl! I'm so glad you made it. Grab a mask, answer the questions, leave a seat between the two of you—

CARL

—Oh, come on. Things didn't end that badly—

CARRIE

—I need to take care of something—um, well, that's not exactly what I heard—

KEVIN

Carrie! Come on.

CARRIE

Sooo, yeah, anyway. The other room, right. I have to do something. In there.

*CARRIE leaves.*

CARL

Kev. What's up? You never texted me back.

KEVIN

Well, yeah. I felt weird after, you know...

*[FLASHBACK to two weeks ago.]*

KEVIN and CARL sit on CARL's bed.  
They start kissing and pulling off each other's shirts.  
KEVIN says, "I love you."

*[Back in the present, at the Red Cross bus.]*

CARL

So, she reeled you in to donating too huh?

KEVIN

I mean, obviously, but why wouldn't I want to help.

CARL

Could be the homophobia part, who knows.

KEVIN

Um. Okay. Aren't you here doing the exact same thing right now?

CARL

I'm here supporting my friend because she asked.

KEVIN

Yeah. Same.

CARL

But I don't wanna think too much about the part where I'm helping out the Red Cross. Like I said. Homophobic.

KEVIN

Actually, I don't think the Red Cross is in charge of making FDA guidelines, but okay.

CARL

Sure, sure. They *were* the ones who told me to leave last week after I said I date men though.

KEVIN

Seriously?

CARL

Yeah.

KEVIN

Well that's pretty fucked up.

CARL

Right? Didn't you know dating means fucking and only gay men can get HIV?

KEVIN

HIV obviously only lives in gay-man blood, yes, Carl. You're right.

CARL

Exactly. Plus, you already know *all* about how I haven't been sleeping with anybody, huh.

*KEVIN looks away from CARL.*

KEVIN

I—

*CARRIE comes back.*

CARRIE

How's everything—whoa ... Is everything alright here?

CARL

Yeah, except your questionnaire isn't up to date.

CARRIE

What do you mean?

CARL

This question. Right here. Asking me if I've slept with a guy in the past twelve months. It should say three.

CARRIE

It should say three. That's weird.

CARL

So, what do I do?

CARRIE

Well, I can't technically let you donate until you fill out these questions. So ... yes or no to the twelve months?

CARL

Are you kidding me? I'm not answering that.

CARRIE

Then I can't let you—

CARL

This is bullshit. I don't have to.

CARRIE

You're right, you don't.

CARL

I'm out then.

KEVIN

Wait, hold on. Hey, Carrie. Uh, it kinda sounds like you're telling your friend he can't donate because he maybe slept with a guy, like, a year ago.

CARRIE

Well—I, I'm definitely not saying that. I'm the one who asked you both to come today.

KEVIN

Right, so why'd you ask us to come again?

CARRIE

Because the rules changed—

CARL

—Yeah they fuckin' did.

KEVIN

So...have the rules un-changed since we've been here?

CARRIE

No—but I can't break protocol either.

KEVIN

Alright. I respect that—

CARL

Why are you siding—

KEVIN

—but you know, I could've slept with somebody this last year too—

CARRIE

We both know that's not—

KEVIN

—so I'm gonna be heading out too.

CARRIE

Um. Alright. That's fine. I can let you both know when it gets updated, shouldn't be too long, couple days to a week, max. If you want. I'll get ahold of my boss.

CARL

Whatever—that's fine.

CARRIE

Maybe you can come back together next time?

KEVIN

Yeah, sure. I would.

CARL

Really?

KEVIN

Yeah. As long as you want me to.

CARL

I would, yeah.

KEVIN

*[nodding]* Let's do it.

CARL

Okay... yeah. Yeah! We can flesh out the details later. I'll text you?

KEVIN

Yeah, yeah that sounds great.

CARL

Cool. See you guys later.

KEVIN

See you later.

CARRIE

Bye, Carl!

*CARL walks out of the bus.*

CARRIE

Well, that went better than you thought right?

KEVIN

Sure, Carrie. I'll see you next time.

*KEVIN walks out of the bus and starts typing a new text to CARL before getting in his car.*

THE END