

TEARS AND GLITTER

by

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CHARACTERS

TARA - *a trans woman in her mid 30s; smart and confident, her jaded affect protects a sensitive, romantic heart.*

DITA - *a trans woman in her mid 30s; her charisma and force of will enable a cruel streak she uses to assuage her sadness.*

MURPH - *a nonbinary person in their early 20s; sincere and caring, their co-dependence leads them into difficult, sometimes doomed relationships.*

COLLIER - *a nonbinary person in their mid-20s; their obsession with confronting anti-trans politics leads to increasingly dangerous behavior.*

QUINN - *a trans man in his late 30s; his image as a community leader with a streak of zealotry obscures severe self-loathing on his part.*

RHETT - *a cis man in his late 20s; his interest in Dita's mind games leads him to an unhappy supporting role in her life.*

TIME

Several months in 2023.

SETTING

A mid-sized city in a Republican-controlled state in the U.S. The banality of the bars, apartments and queer community center we see belies the trans characters' fears that their way of life and ability to live as themselves might, quite soon, be extinguished.

PUNCTUATION NOTES

A stroke (/) marks the point of interruption in overlapping dialogue.

A dash (-) marks the halting of a thought.

Scene 1

Tara and Murph sit in a bar.

TARA
So, you're still hung up on Dita?

MURPH
Um -

TARA
It's not going to result in anything ... except your
being sad, that is.

MURPH
I don't really want to - maybe we could change
the / subject

TARA
Sure ... Do you want to go fuck at my place?

MURPH
Tara.

TARA
What? I actually want to be with you ... Unlike "you
know who."

MURPH
(changing the subject)
Collier seems kind of intense lately, huh?

TARA
I guess that's a "no" on the fucking, then?

MURPH
Um -

TARA
(sighs, annoyed)
Yes, our friend Collier, who devotes all their time to
arguing with Nazis online, does seem a / little

MURPH
I'm sort of worried, actually.

TARA
Have you talked to Quinn?

MURPH
(uncomfortable)
No.

TARA
You know I liked you first, right? ... She's just copying me "again."

MURPH
Tara.

TARA
Besides, she's exclusively dated cis guys since we split up, as though proximity to them exempts her from these laws raining down on us.

MURPH
Collier was ... talking about buying guns ... the last time we / spoke

TARA
They're ... influenced by Quinn, right? He was always that he-man, tough guy-type.

MURPH
Collier wasn't, though.

TARA
Couples rub off Look at Dita.

MURPH
What about ... / her?

TARA
She was practically an egg when we met. She took what she wanted from me, like a vampire and / threw me out

MURPH
I don't really ... want to be in the middle of, um -

TARA
That's where she put you, though, isn't it?

MURPH

Maybe I should ... / go

Tara kisses Murph. The latter pulls back, shocked and uncomfortable.

TARA

Jesus, you don't have to act like I'm repulsive.

MURPH

I told you I'm -

TARA

(biting)

Saving yourself for her? ... Get ready to be lonely.

MURPH

That's not very nice.

TARA

(mocking)

Are you helping her with the Pride committee again?

MURPH

Yes ... Why?

TARA

You're basically full-time unpaid staff now, huh?

MURPH

(defensive)

The committee is voluntary ... for the community.

TARA

(stands)

Great ... a parade while we're being legislated out of existence.

MURPH

(nervous, defiant)

She says you, um, never got over her.

TARA

(angry, intimidating)
Does she?

MURPH
Y-yes.

TARA
(Pause, cools off)
Sometimes I think Collier and Quinn are the
only ones responding logically.

MURPH
By being violent?

TARA
Isn't taking health care from kids violent? Or
banning the words gay and -
(gathers things)
Have a nice night "alone," Murph.

Tara exits.

Scene 2

Dita and Rhett kiss on the couch in the former's apartment.

DITA
I bet you didn't predict this is how the training
would end, did you?

RHETT
Not exactly.

DITA
Do you like working there?

RHETT
It's alright. I mean, people need insurance
policies, right?

DITA
Let me guess ... that dickhead Brian wouldn't
stop making bathroom jokes about Dylan, so
HR brought me in to avoid a lawsuit.

RHETT

Um, yes ... you're / right

DITA

It gets kind of predictable after you've been
in my business awhile.

She kisses him.

RHETT

Who was that other person with you?

DITA

What?

RHETT

The little guy? Smurf, or something?

DITA

Murph? Why do you ask?

RHETT

Were they, like, an intern?

DITA

(scoffs)

Trans inclusion trainers don't have interns
... They asked to shadow me. They might want
to do trainings, also.

RHETT

It seemed like they ... might want some other
things, too.

DITA

Oh, yeah? Are you feeling jealous, Rhett?

RHETT

Of them?

DITA

Sure.

RHETT

No.

He leans in to kiss her. She pulls away.

DITA

Why not? Maybe I'm their Smurfette, fucking all night in a giant mushroom.

RHETT

I won't be losing any sleep.

DITA

I bet Tara would relish this if she was a fly on the wall.

RHETT

Who's Tara?

DITA

Someone I dated when I came out She tried to bet me \$100 I'd go stealth when I came out.

(rueful)

I sometimes think I didn't just to spite her.

RHETT

What's "stealth"?

DITA

It's the opposite of walking into a room full of people and announcing you're a transsexual for a living, like I do.

RHETT

Right ... So you date women?

DITA

Huh? ... Oh, Tara. All trans women sleep with each other when we come out. It doesn't really count.

RHETT

You should put that in your training. Even Brian would pay attention then.

DITA

What about you, Rhett?

RHETT

What do you mean?

DITA

Are you pan? Bi?

RHETT

Um ... no.

DITA

Look at you squirm ... seriously, though ...
you never fucked a guy in college, or outdoor
school?

RHETT

I mean, someone gave me head once, but -

DITA

That's perfect ... it's just like Tara said.

RHETT

(annoyed)

What's "perfect"?

DITA

You acted insulted when I asked if you
were queer and in the next breath you said
a guy went down on you.

RHETT

Okay ... I feel like that was some ... trap to
make me look dumb, or something.

DITA

It wasn't ... I was just doing a little research.

Rhett stands, annoyed.

RHETT

Maybe I should ... / go

Dita stands.

DITA

You can sit.

RHETT

I don't know what kind of "research" you're

conducting., but-

DITA

It's just something ... Tara - well, every queer person, really - says.

RHETT

What's that?

DITA

The people who pass laws against us are just us in the closet.

RHETT

I'm not trans and I'm not, I don't know, banning books, or / something

DITA

(as though addressing a child)

Of course you're not. Why don't you sit? I'll get us some edibles.

RHETT

No, I have ... an early morning.

Dita rubs against him.

DITA

Do you? That's too bad.

She kisses him.

RHETT

During the training ... it seemed like you were flirting with me.

DITA

Is that so? It's probably-

(kisses him)

Because I -

(kisses)

Was flirting with you.

She breaks off.

DITA

Did you need me to show you out?

Rhett shakes his head.

Scene 3

MURPH and QUINN sit in a bar.

MURPH

I'm glad we could meet.

QUINN

Sure. You wanted to talk about the Pride committee?

MURPH

(nods)

Dita didn't think you'd be interested in helping – because what you usually do is more, I guess, serious, but, you know . . . with everything going on now – militias, white nationalists – I –

QUINN

You thought, "Maybe we should bring in the aggro headcase"?

MURPH

(uncomfortable, anxious)

No . . . / I

QUINN

It was a bad joke. Sorry.

MURPH

We want to make sure . . . people who come are safe.

QUINN

Collier's helping, aren't they?

MURPH

Not that I know of.

QUINN

Oh . . . I thought they'd been spending time

with – never mind.

MURPH

I can ask Dita.

QUINN

It's fine.

MURPH
(nervous)

They've seemed a little . . . angry lately.

QUINN

Yep.

MURPH

Do you . . . know what's / going on

QUINN

They don't share very much.

MURPH

Really? . . . You two are a couple, aren't you?

QUINN

You work at the Pride Center, right? On the desk?

MURPH

Yes.

QUINN

Do you worry about it getting attacked?

MURPH

Not really . . . I mean, we'll get threats sometimes, but –

QUINN

Sure.

MURPH

Sandy, the director, figures it's just, you know, empty threats . . . Collier's counterprotesting at the library today, right?