

The book cover features a pink, satin-like background. In the center, a large, 3D red heart is being held by three hands. One hand is at the top, another at the bottom left, and a third on the right side, which is wearing a diamond ring. A black silhouette of a person is shown in a dynamic, falling or leaping pose against the red heart. The title is written in a red, cursive font with heart accents, and the author's name is in a blue, stylized font with a shadow effect. The publisher's name is in a small red font at the bottom right.

*A Valentine's  
Gift for Tori*

**Zenobia Renquist**

**Red Rose Publishing**

*She wants a boyfriend for Valentine's and her husband wants to deliver.*

Tori has come to the realization that her marriage lacks the spark it had in the beginning. She and her husband argue more than anything else and she foresees a nasty break-up on the horizon if something doesn't change. When he asks her what she wants for Valentine's Day, her answer is scandalous and straightforward—a boyfriend.

Rather than be upset, her husband is intrigued by the idea and sets out to make it happen. Tori has set herself—and him—an impossible goal and her prospects aren't that promising. But she's determined to have a boyfriend in time for the most romantic holiday of the year.

# A Valentine's Gift for Tori

By

Zenobia Renquist



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## Chapter One

“What do you want for V-day, sweetheart?”

Tori regarded her husband. He didn't even look at her when he'd asked the question. Instead, he lazed in his easy chair with his feet up, clicking through the channels. She shouldn't be upset at his dismissive behavior. Unlike most husbands, he'd actually remembered days in advance of the holiday instead of the day of. Christian was good at remembering anniversaries, birthdays, and the like.

“I want a boyfriend.” Some wild hair made Tori say what was on her mind, the thing she really wanted and had kept to herself for the past two years.

Her marriage with Christian was lukewarm. She couldn't remember when the last time they'd had sex, but Christian could tell her the exact date if she asked. He only remembered stuff that concerned him.

That wasn't to say she didn't love her husband. He was the only man who could put up with her and vice versa. They were the perfect complete-each-other's-sentences couple. On the surface, they had the type of marriage every couple envied with three kids who were mature beyond their years and a stable income. A dream come true except one thing...

“Ha ha. Now what do you really want?” He continued flipping channels.

“I’m not joking. I want a boyfriend.”

Christian looked at her. His smile vanished when he saw she wasn’t smiling.

“What are you saying?”

“I just told you twice. For the third time, I want a boyfriend.”

“Is this about Samantha? I apologized. You forgave me. You said it was in the past and not to worry about it. Why after two years of forgiveness do you suddenly want a divorce?”

“I didn’t say I wanted a divorce. I said I want a boyfriend.” She felt like a broken record.

Her gaze strayed to the clock. They had an hour before the kids were due back from school. She hoped whatever theatrics Christian threw her way ended before they came home.

Christian switched the television off then stood and faced Tori. “This isn’t a funny joke. Or is this payback?”

“It’s neither. When was the last time we had sex, Christian?”

“Two years and three months ago next Friday.”

She knew it. He’d been counting, which meant the lack of intimacy had bothered him. She crossed her arms. “We don’t have a relationship anymore—not the kind married couples should have.”

“We can work at it.”

“I really don’t want to.”

That made Christian angry. His face contorted in rage and he paced away from her with an angry sound.

She wasn’t scared. Christian would never hurt her. He wasn’t the type of man to do that. That didn’t mean he wouldn’t put a hole through the wall or stab the couch with a kitchen knife.

“Christian, assuming I wanted to have sex, do you even want to?”

“Yes!”

“With me?”

“Of course! You’re my wife. We’ve been married ten years.”

“Then how come you were with Samantha on that Valentine’s Day two years ago?”

Christian deflated.

She’d won every argument for the last two years because of his one moment of weakness. “I think it’s time we see other people.”

“We? You saying if I brought Samantha to this house right now, you wouldn’t get pissed off?”

“That’s right.”

“Then why were you pissed off then? What’s the difference?”

“The difference is I’m approaching the subject like an adult and talking about it openly. The difference is, back then, I thought we were a loving and honest married couple. The *difference* is I’m telling you straight out rather than having you walk in on me and some guy in *our* bed.”

Christian’s look turned solemn.

He didn’t argue with her, which meant he knew he was in the wrong. But, that was a given. It also meant that he might be considering her request.

To urge him along, she asked, “You still have her phone number, don’t you?”

“We only talk.”

“Uh huh.”

“That’s the truth.”

“So I shouldn’t be the least bit suspicious that you keep in touch with your mistress?”

“Who did you have in mind? You wouldn’t drop a bombshell like this if you didn’t have your sights on someone already.”

He was trying to spin it to make her look bad but it wouldn’t work. She did have someone in mind, but she’d never entertained the thought of an affair. Well, that wasn’t true. She’d entertained it and used it as masturbation fodder a few times, but it hadn’t gone past that.

Her imagination was good but going solo had gotten old. Every time she thought about inviting Christian to join her, he did or said something to make her angry or turn her off. Enough was enough.

“Actually, there’s this guy at work who’s known for having flings with the married women and only the married women. Some of us think he has commitment issues and dates married women so he doesn’t have to worry about the long term,” she said.

“Wait. That sounds familiar. Have you mentioned this guy before?”

“Douglas. Yeah, I’m pretty sure I have.”

“Is he good looking?”

“No, Christian, he’s a complete and total dog. Of course, he’s good looking. He’s so good looking me and some of the other girls thought he was gay until it got out that he was doing the boss’s secretary.”

“So, you’re going out with him then?”

“I haven’t asked. I thought I’d talk to you about it first.”

Christian sighed and sank to the arm of the easy chair. “This isn’t normal, Tori.”

“Have you looked at our family lately? Since when are we normal?”

“This is a boyfriend though. That implies long term.”

“Not longer than a husband. I’m not saying move the guy in and have ourselves a threesome. I just want the option to go out and get some with a guy who wants it from me.”

“I do want you, Tori. Two years of celibacy should prove that.”

“All that proves to me is that you still feel guilty. And that’s why I know you’re going to say this is okay, because you really don’t have the right to say no.”

He nodded and she smiled. This was easier than she thought it would be. And, there wasn’t even that much drama. It had to be the time of year. At no other time would that conversation have led anywhere good.

Valentine’s Day was in two weeks. That was plenty of time to chat up the guy at work and make a date for the day in question.

“I’ve got one stipulation,” Christian said.

“You don’t get stipulations.”

“Fine, think of it as a V-Day gift then. You plan to have sex with this guy, I’m assuming.”

“The thought had occurred.” Her voice was heavy with sarcasm but she kept the rest of her thoughts to herself. The conversation was going in an amicable direction, no need to derail it.

“I want to watch.”

“For Valentine’s Day you want to watch me having sex with another man.”

“That’s it in a nutshell.”

“This family really isn’t normal.”

“It is only fair. You watched me and Samantha.”

“That was involuntary and completely your fault. I’d thank you not to bring it up anymore since this and that have absolutely nothing in common. This conversation wasn’t permission to flaunt your indiscretion in my face.”

“I wasn’t. I just...” He trailed off and glanced at the clock.

She followed his gaze. They were running out of time. “Fine, you can watch. I have no problems with it. I’ll clear it with the guy at work just so it isn’t a surprise. After a regular date, we’ll come back here.”

“V-Day is a Thursday. What about the kids?”

“My parents can take them. Dad doesn’t mind driving them to school and picking them up.”

“A boyfriend,” he said in a thoughtful manner. “The upside is a boyfriend won’t cost me a dime. Happy hunting.”

“Douglas has been making eyes at me for the longest time. It shouldn’t be that hard to convince him to go out with me.”

The front door opening cut off whatever Christian would have said next. The kids made their usual commotion as they headed for the living room.

Tori went to the kitchen to start dinner. She was in the mood to cook for once rather than phoning for takeout-of-the-day.

As nervous as she'd been to bring up the subject, talking about it had actually relieved some of the tension in the house. Christian glanced back at her and she smiled. He gave her a whatever expression and went back to fighting for control of the remote.

## Purchasing Information

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## About the Author

HOME PAGE URL: <http://dreenebagby.com> or <http://zenobiarenquist.com>

Zenobia Renquist (Zen-Ren) is the pseudonym of D. Reneé Bagby. Zen-Ren was invented with the intention of keeping Reneé's Multiverse stories separate from her stand alone stories, thus cutting back on confusion (both hers and the readers).

Reneé is still fairly new to the publishing world but she loves to write and does so at every opportunity. When she isn't writing (because she's at her day job or otherwise away from her computer), Reneé is thinking up stories and characters to write about.

She hopes to have all her story ideas published one day and that they will be enjoyed. Visit her website at <http://dreenebagby.com> / <http://zenobiarenquist.com> or join her Yahoo! Group [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dreenebagby\\_multiverse/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/dreenebagby_multiverse/) to learn more about Reneé and her works.