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# Cameron Diaz and I are in Love

## **Abstract**

Cameron Diaz and I are in love. She calls me when she is in New York. We don't meet at her hotel because it's surrounded by photographers and reporters. She escapes them and meets me at a diner. I ask her how she pulls off the escape, but she won't tell me. She likes having secrets. "If I wanted to," she says, "I could walk through the hotel lobby, no sunglasses, no wig, right past all of them, and they'd never even look at me. That's not how I did it, but I could. If I wanted to."

## **Keywords**

celebrity, relationship, jealousy, reality, status, Cameron Diaz



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## Cameron Diaz and I are in Love

Fiction by Edward Porter

Cameron Diaz and I are in love. She calls me when she is in New York. We don't meet at her hotel because it's surrounded by photographers and reporters. She escapes them and meets me at a diner. I ask her how she pulls off the escape, but she won't tell me. She likes having secrets. "If I wanted to," she says, "I could walk through the hotel lobby, no sunglasses, no wig, right past all of them, and they'd never even look at me. That's not how I did it, but I could. If I wanted to." She tells me about Marilyn Monroe. "She's walking down Broadway with a friend, just window shopping, poking along. This is at the absolute height of her fame, after DiMaggio, after the dress and the subway vent. No one notices her, no one pays any attention. At some point Marilyn turns to the friend and says, 'Hey, you want to see *her*?' The friend thinks about it and says, 'Okay.' Marilyn doesn't whip off her scarf or anything, she just begins to walk differently. Suddenly people are screaming, 'My God, it's Marilyn Monroe,' and flashbulbs are going off everywhere. See, she changed who she was inside."

Cameron Diaz and I eat at the diner around the corner from the DSNY Manhattan 6 garage. She likes to watch me eat. I get a grilled cheese sandwich and French fries, extra-crispy. She gets a Diet Pepsi, and unbuttered rye toast. The toast is just for show, she doesn't touch it. She watches me eat the fries. "Do it slow," she says. "Put more salt on that one. How's the grilled cheese? Did they butter the toast and fry it on the griddle first?" I nod. "Okay, take a cheese bite now. Oh, that's good. That's really good." She squeezes a dab of lemon into her Diet Pepsi, and takes a sip.

Later that day she says, “People ask me what was it like to be in this movie or that movie, what was it like to act with so and so. I tell them I don’t remember: I was in starvation delirium. We were shooting for ten weeks and all I ate the whole time was three slices of tomato and a carrot. I got incredibly sneaky about food. Like right now we’re lying in bed, we’re naked, but while I’ve been talking to you, I could have eaten an English muffin and thrown it up, and you wouldn’t have noticed.”

Most of the time I don’t get to see her. I do my garbage route in the Bronx with the other guys. We go down 134th Street at four A.M. 134th is the worst street they have for volume of refuse, for lack of proper bagging and containment, and for rats. We keep a sharp eye out for mongo—discarded but usable household items—our chief perquisite. I swing huge sloppy cans up onto my hip, and flip them into the truck. The movements come from low in my body, deep in my power core. I am, frankly, exceptional at my work. It’s all in my back and hips, and especially the muscles in my ass. Even at the age of forty-seven, my glutes are extraordinarily powerful. Of course, my upper body is powerful as well. But I do the key work with my lower body.

The truck’s hydraulics rip a long tear in the fabric of dawn as the gate compacts the garbage. Citizens scream at us from the windows. “*Maricons!*” they yell. “Cocksuckers!” As if we come at four A.M. on purpose. As if we bounce and roll the cans on the pavement for maximum noise. As if we make sure that the crusher pistons on the truck are never greased so they squeal as loudly as possible. Actually, all of that is true.

Cameron Diaz and I meet for sex in a cheap hotel, the Hotel 17 on 17th Street. We alternate between there and the Hotel 33 on 33rd Street. She stands in the shadows, away from the clerk while I sign in. In the elevator we fall over ourselves kissing and giggling. The tiny room is carpeted with acrylic green shag, the sheets are scratchy and rough, and through the walls we hear other couples banging around and shouting. None of this matters to us. We make love like crazed animals, like monkeys, like goats. She knows that I admire the famous Richard Avedon photograph of Lauren Hutton, the one of her torso and breasts taken from below, her face barely visible. Cameron Diaz recreates this for me now, dropping her head back so I see her breasts lifted high. She is encouraging me to objectify her. Then she flings herself forward and runs her hands madly over my head.

“Does my gray hair arouse you?” I ask.

“Oh God yes!” she says. “It’s like I’m fucking my father!”

Afterwards we snuggle, spent. I talk to her about my work, but I can tell she isn’t listening.

"I'm sorry, I can't concentrate," she says. "I'm just so incredibly fucked right now. Fuck like a weasel—nap like a ferret. That's my motto."

She falls asleep, and I lie there watching over her for an hour. When she wakes up, she is someone else. She sits up and cries, her back towards me. "I have to go," she says. She walks out the door without kissing me. I try to think tolerant thoughts. Her life has many pressures. It isn't easy to be Cameron Diaz.

I leave my wife for Cameron Diaz. This is sad for both of us, because my wife is a decent person, and I have always been fond of her.

"You're lucky I don't cut your dick off in your sleep," my wife says.

"I know," I say, "thank you." If my wife cuts my dick off in my sleep, I won't be able to fuck Cameron Diaz with it.

"Who are you leaving me for?" my wife asks.

"I can't tell you," I say. It is important for Cameron Diaz that she not get any bad publicity.

My wife is well-liked, with many friends. They threaten me on the street. "Don't ever show up at one of our parties again," they say, "because you will be out on your ass. On. Your. Ass. You're lucky she didn't cut your dick off in your sleep."

"I know," I say.

"She should have," they say.

"Well, she didn't, so what can you do?" I say.

My coworkers ask me why I left my wife. I tell them I left her for Cameron Diaz. It is the first time I have told anyone who I am seeing. I trust my coworkers to be discreet. But they laugh. "You are so full of shit, Ed." I discover no one believes me. It becomes a good joke. I tell all my friends I'm seeing Cameron Diaz, and they say the same thing: "You are so full of shit, Ed." As it turns out, the best way to conceal my affair with Cameron Diaz is to tell everyone I know about it. I explain this to her, and she agrees. She calls this "hiding in plain sight."

I move to another apartment alone and furnish it with mongo from work. Now, when Cameron Diaz is in town, she comes to my place, and we don't have to have sex in sex hotels anymore.

One day Cameron Diaz is lying on her stomach in my mongood bed. I look with longing at her shapely ass—miracle of genetics and Pilates—and ask if she will allow me to penetrate her anally. She says, “I’ll tell you what I’ve told every man who ever asked me that, and by that I mean every man I’ve ever slept with. You can fuck me in the ass the day you let me shove something long and hard up your ass in return.” She looks satisfied, like she has settled the matter, but to her dismay, I am looking wildly about the room for an appropriate object—fair trade is good bargain. “Okay, I lied,” she says. “You can’t fuck me in the ass. No one can fuck me in the ass. That’s the whole point of being Cameron Diaz—no one can fuck you in the ass.”

Unfortunately for me, we go for long periods of time without seeing each other. She lives in Los Angeles. She is away making movies. I leave messages on her cell phone to let her know that I am thinking about her. Sometimes she calls me back a few days later, sometimes not. I can’t help reading in the newspapers that she has been seen with this actor, or that producer at a club, or opening. Although I know these stories are often factually mistaken or deliberately misleading, I also know that she sees other men. She is honest with me, and makes no attempt to deceive me on this count. This is only fair: after all, I was still with my wife when we met, and Cameron Diaz never complained about that.

My jealousy is volcanic. I have fantasies of confronting these celebrities, of engaging them in combat, of destroying them with my powerful garbageman hands. But I know I can’t live my life in a fantasy world. Eventually one day, the phone rings and Cameron Diaz says, “I’m flying in tomorrow morning, can you take off work?” The disconcerting thing is that none of my feelings of jealousy, or, let’s face it, abandonment, retain any sense of coherence once I’m in the same room with her. For better or worse, I trust her completely.

Cameron Diaz is free to go away for a long weekend: a first for us. Our relationship is progressing. She takes me by limousine up to Connecticut. In the car, we fool around, our hands down each other’s pants. With the flick of an electric switch she could raise the partition between us and the driver, but she chooses not to, and the man watches us in the mirror out of the corner of his eye. I believe she is aroused by this. To my mind it is a strange if forgivable abuse of class relationship. To have the servants watch her having sex—to not *care* if the servants watch her having sex—is perhaps a form of luxury. Perhaps even the Cameron Diaz’s of this world need the occasional perverse validation of their success. It only goes to show that she is human.

We pull into a large estate on the water. The house is feudal, baronial, Camelotian. “It belonged to a friend of mine,” she says. “We keep it exactly as it was, in her honor.” Inside, the place is lavish in a New England Calvinist kind of way: there is a superabundance of unvarnished coat pegs. Pictures of Katherine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy line the walls, and stand on dressers and desks.

“A great woman,” I say, with respect.

She nods and says, “So thin, for so long.”

Cameron Diaz and I have frenetic sex all over the mansion. We exhaust the geometry of anatomy. Finally, she bends me over an unvarnished pine desk and uses one of Kate’s Oscars on me. I am grateful the little guy’s hands are smugly clasping the sword hilt at his waist instead of upraised in victory. She makes me guess which one it is.

“*The African Queen*? Jesus Christ. Slower.”

“Wrong. Katherine Hepburn didn’t win one of her four Oscars for *The African Queen*. The Oscar for best actress that year went to Vivien Leigh in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Guess again.”

“Um. Oh God. *Morning Glory*?”

“That is an outstanding guess, but no, this one’s for *The Lion in Winter*.” There is an oil painting over the desk, brilliantly colored, semi-cubist: a blue cow, and a purple and green rooster. “See that?”

“Mmmf.”

“That’s a Chagall. Now you’ll always be able to say you’ve been fucked under a Chagall.”

Cameron Diaz and I go out on the beach at night. We walk along the margin, my arm around her. The mood is poetic: lapping water tintinnabulates through the shells, shells, shells, and the moon is a ghostly galleon over Long Island Sound.

“No one knows what I want,” she says.

“What *do* you want?”

“I want to be a housewife. I want to marry you and move out here to some country town. I want to see you up on the roof in a checkered flannel shirt, fixing the shingles, cleaning the gutters.”

“Do you want to work on the roof too?”

“Don’t be ridiculous. I’m inside on the couch, eating chocolates and drinking non-diet Pepsi.”

Back inside, we watch Looney Tunes videos. She is a Bugs Bunny connoisseur. “Bugs Bunny taught me everything I know about acting, about life. When in doubt, I ask myself, what would Bugs Bunny do?” Daffy Duck charges through a door frame and off a cliff. He stands in mid-air puzzled. He looks right, then left, then up. He scratches his head and taps his foot. He happens to look down and does a double-take. Only then does he begin to fall. “There’s a world of meaning right there,” she says. “Never look down. As long as you don’t look down, you can do anything. Also, if Bugs Bunny opens a door, don’t run through it.”

After the weekend, after the limo driver drops me off, I feel hopeful at first, even grandiose. We have taken some steps together. No promises have been made, but things have been done and said. Then I look around my mongo-strewn apartment and stare at the lack of Cameron Diaz. After four days of non-stop intimacy, the sudden and utter dearth of Cameron Diaz wrecks me. I burst into tears and sob for hours. “You little girl!” I tell myself. “Snap out of it, Porter! You’re a top garbageman in the biggest, dirtiest city in the world, for God’s sake. That used to mean something to you.” But my heart is all fluttery. It flitter-fluts back and forth between an opioid sense of bliss and a completely explicable feeling of impending doom: I have allowed myself to hope, and am now hostage to fortune.

As I get to know Cameron Diaz better and better, I see she suffers from an unusual form of stress, one that most people wouldn’t understand. Cary Grant once said something like, “Cary Grant: glamorous, debonair, equal to any occasion. Every woman wants him, every man wants to be him. I only wish I were him.” I see Cameron Diaz look at herself in the mirror, compare herself to Cameron Diaz and fall painfully short. I know that I function as a refuge from all this pressure, but still, every time we fuck, I sense her asking, “Does this guy feel like he just fucked Cameron Diaz?” We banter, and she doubts herself, “Sure I’m funny, but am I as funny as Cameron Diaz?” I want to tell her to just be herself, but of course, that’s the problem, that’s asking so much of her. This is what I mean when I say it’s not easy being Cameron Diaz.

Cameron Diaz finds a dog. She shows up at my door one day with a hideous puppy. She cradles him in her arms, and looks up at me with pale blue eyes. Actually she looks down at me, I forget that in heels she is two inches taller than me. She doesn’t give me her customary stem-winder hug. “I got him at the animal shelter,” she says. The dog is a Rottweiler-hyena mix, with vestiges of Mako shark. He is fat and muscular, his fur a satanic black dappled with sickly yellow. A third of his body mass seems to be head, and he yawns wide to reveal rows of serrated yellow teeth, set at every conceivable angle. A bite wound from him would resemble a shotgun blast. He stinks of pee. We put him in the bathtub, and wash him with Johnson’s Baby Shampoo. When we take him out of the water, he gets cold and shivers, and we rub him with towels and hug him



between us on the bed to warm him with our bodies. After a while, he falls asleep. In his sleep, he pees quart after quart onto my bed. "I love him," says Cameron Diaz.

"He's a monster," I say.

"I know. I'm calling him Oliver Stone."

Cameron Diaz and I videotape ourselves having sex. Her experience in the motion picture industry comes in handy. For example, I stand holding the camera while she fellates me on her knees, and naif that I am, don't notice the upright mirror (mongo) next to us. "Shoot the mirror," she says. "It worked for Orson Welles." We get excellent footage this way. Later, we watch the video together. I find it both embarrassing and exciting. Our bodies seem sweet and vulnerable, there is something ridiculous and yet brave about the whole thing. It doesn't look like pornography.

"I was afraid my cock would look small," I say. "I don't know what it is about us men, we're always worried about that. It doesn't look particularly small right there."

"No, it doesn't," she says. "Now you'll always know that for sure."

She is especially keen on a section shot from above and behind that shows the muscular action of my powerful glutes to advantage, although it also features my unfortunate plenitude of back hair. The obvious contrast in our relative beauty is matched by an apparent disjuncture in scale, as though a fairy princess were set upon by an ogre. It is a trick of the angle and the light. After we watch our movie twice, she erases the camera's memory.

When Cameron Diaz comes over now, she often brings Oliver Stone the dog. Oliver Stone grows quickly, and soon he is an immense grotesquerie of a mongrel. Sometimes we don't make love, but instead take Oliver Stone to the dog run. I try to accommodate this change in lifestyle because I see how much Cameron Diaz loves him. The three of us play fetch and chase together and I try to find an increased closeness in this.

One day in winter, the three of us are walking in Central Park, and Cameron Diaz splits off. She needs to leave something with Paul Simon's doorman. When Oliver Stone and I approach the agreed rendezvous point, I see Cameron Diaz standing there, her face beaming, suffused with love. I am giddy, weak-kneed at her beauty. My heart is full to think she waits like this for me. Then she whistles and claps her hands, and Oliver Stone tears the leash out of my hand. They dive at each other and roll in the snow. I see now, perhaps too late, that his extraordinary ugliness is a threat. Until recently, I have been the ugliest,

neediest thing in her life. No more. It is an unfortunate aspect of this bitch of a life we lead that insight always comes, but always too late to help us.

We take Oliver Stone back to my apartment and feed him. He is ravenous: he tears through great hunks of dog food and bones and meat and leftovers. He can out-eat me without breaking a sweat. She watches him snuffle and gulp smelly gobs of raw chicken liver.

“How long are you in town for?”

“Shhh.”

I ask Cameron Diaz if she will come to a dinner with some of my friends. I mention it several times. I push the question firmly. With reluctance, she agrees. She comes over early to watch me cook duck in my newly mongood rotisserie. As seven o'clock nears, she becomes fidgety and irritable. When my first guest rings the bell, she says, “I’ll just be in the bathroom.” I buzz my friend in, and then I hear the window in my bedroom shoot up. I go back there just in time to see a steel grapnel retract its claws, and disappear from my windowsill with a flick of nylon rope. Looking out the window, I see Cameron Diaz’s Spandexed form vaulting to the top of the back fence, flipping over it, and disappearing into the night. Stunt coordinators and martial arts instructors taught her to do these ninja tricks when she made the two *Charlie’s Angels* movies. Now she whips them out at the least opportune moment. It is intensely annoying and disappointing, and yet it is impossible not to love such a woman.

I tell my guests, “I’m sorry, but Cameron Diaz couldn’t make it. Or rather, Cameron Diaz was here until a moment ago, but she just left. I’m sure you’ll meet her another time.” Their faces show by turns amusement, disgust, and concern, according to each one’s natural bent. Dinner goes badly: the duck has a sour aftertaste suggestive of rodent. I get drunk and pugnacious. When one of my friends disparages the sacred honor of the New York City Sanitation Department, I offer to fight him. It takes several guests to hold me back, while others hurry my antagonist out the door. “You don’t step on Superman’s cape,” they tell him.

Everyone leaves except Seamus, my best friend since we were altar boys, now, curiously enough, a rabbi. He says, “This... thing, you have with the shiksa? It’s *farblondjet*. It’s no good for you. One person only, you’re fooling. At most.” Easy for him to say. Seamus has never gone out with Cameron Diaz.

I forgive Cameron Diaz for escaping. “I was anxious,” she says. “I was depressed. It has nothing to do with you or your friends. I would have been terrible company, and I wanted to spare you that.”

I accept this. After all, it is still hard to be Cameron Diaz. But I can't leave it alone. "You've never introduced me to your own friends or your family. I honestly wouldn't mind meeting them. It wouldn't be imposing on me, truly it wouldn't."

She doesn't reply.

"Are you ashamed of me?"

"Don't be silly," she says. "How could I be ashamed of you? You're perfect."

I can tell she can tell she hasn't convinced me.

Cameron Diaz and I make love for the last time. Intuitively, I know it is the last time, although I can't face it. She can't face it either, or rather, she won't look at me. We don't have intercourse. She goes down on me, making me come as quickly as she can, to be done with it. Then I go down on her. Cameron Diaz's pussy is exquisite—closely trimmed curls, demure lips, a well-developed, eminently lickable clitoris. It smells and tastes of nutmeg, cinnamon, and salt. It is the platonic ideal of a pussy, by which I mean it is a pussy even Plato would have gone down on. It is the center of my universe. She comes, then pulls me up to her.

"Oh Ed," she says, and I know I will never hear anyone say that like that again.

Cameron Diaz breaks up with me two weeks later. We are walking along the river. "It's no one's fault," she says. "The pendulum swung towards you for a while, and then it swung away. I hope we can do this like civilized people. I just don't need a man in my life now. I have so much anger. This business. My family. Men are just not what I need. At the moment."

I say, "What about becoming a housewife? What about me up on the roof with the shingles?"

"That's why this is so painful for me. That was my dream. And you were that guy. I'll always have that dream, and you'll always be in it. But I can't have that reality. It's just not one of the things granted to me in this life. I have to be myself. In a way, giving up that dream is the first mature, responsible, adult thing I've ever done."

"Couldn't we still have sex?"

She laughs. "We can't do that. It wouldn't be fair to either of us."

"You're leaving me for Oliver Stone the dog," I say. "Don't be ridiculous," she

says, turning away. "Oliver Stone the dog is a dog."

"That's what makes it so sad," I mouth, but don't say out loud.

For weeks, months, I tell everyone I'm fine except for the harpoon through my chest. No one else can relate to how much it hurts to lose Cameron Diaz. They don't have the frame of reference. I am depressed and can't even masturbate to relieve my depression. How can I generate interest in sex after fucking Cameron Diaz and knowing I will never fuck her again? No one else will ever understand me like she did. For the rest of my life I will trudge a howling wasteland of frozen ashes, tortured by the memory of color and warmth. Even my job seems dull. The garbage seems like just garbage. Then I get over myself, somewhat. Time is a restorative. Once some of the sadness retreats, I realize how angry I am, and send Cameron Diaz a long letter. In part, it reads:

... I don't know why a man should mean less to a woman than a dog. I'm not criticizing: perhaps you have a clearer, more honest sense of your priorities than most women. For a long time I thought I was patient and understanding. Now I think I was just a masochist. However, I want you to know that I never idealized you. I never put you on a pedestal. I was always willing to accept you just for being Cameron Diaz.

I know. Boilerplate post-breakup letter. But I had to write it. I don't have her address, so I look up her public relations firm on line and send my letter through them. Six weeks later I get a manila envelope back. There is a picture and a letter.

Dear Ed,

Thank you for your letter. I love my fans!

Love always,

Cameron

Her name is signed on the photograph in lipstick, along with a smooch mark. Someone else, someone who didn't know her personally, might think she'd signed it herself. But since I am her former lover, I can see it's not her handwriting, and it's not her lips. It's not even her brand of lipstick.

A new girl is assigned to my route. She is young, with pasty white skin and long dirty blond hair that catches grease and dirt. They call her "Pigpen" behind her back. She only has one arm. You'd think that it's a problem for a garbageman, to be missing an arm, and you'd be right. But she is dead-game. She one-arms fifty-gallon pails up onto the truck and kicks them over. She uses

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her teeth on the plastic bags. Still, it's hard for her to keep up.

"Man, I'm going to get fired," she says. So I pick up slack for her. My glutes, quads, and dorsals are equal to the occasion. I double-dump full pails, my wrist flexors bulging. "Gee thanks," she pants. "You're really saving my ass."

"Don't be ridiculous," I say, with insouciant nonchalance. "You're doing most of the work."

Later on, in the locker room, she says, "Thanks again for helping me. And for being so—nice about it." She blushes and tries not to stammer. "When I got assigned to your route, I was afraid you—wouldn't even talk to me. After all, you're kind of a legend around here." Her hair wet and momentarily clean, a cute green hospital cap on her stump, she is sexy, in her fashion. Her eyes can't meet mine and can't look away. My mere presence makes her feel deeply alive.

"I'm only a legend in your mind," I say, but it's false modesty.

Edward Porter's stories have been published in *Colorado Review*, *Inch Magazine*, and anthologized in *Best New American Voices 2010*. He is a former McCreight Fellow in Fiction at the Wisconsin Institute for Creative Writing, and holds an MFA from Warren Wilson College. Currently, he is in the Ph.D. program in Literature and Creative Writing at the University of Houston.



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