



Love and Two Fourthths

*Different Fourthths.
Very different fireworks!*



Love and Two Fourths

By Jane Colt

Fireworks. Love. Heartbreak. Love. Fireworks.

What a difference a year makes!

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Adult Sexual Content

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CHAPTER ONE

It was the first day in months Anne woke up feeling optimistic. When she looked out her bedroom window, she saw a bright red cardinal fly by. *It's a sign! Today will be special!* She'd finally put the breakup behind her. She was open to new possibilities and hopeful about the future. Little did she know she was on the threshold of one of the most exciting days of her life.

Stepping into the unusually warm Cambridge morning, she was thrilled with the azure, cloudless sky. *Perfect for the fireworks!* She hopped onto the T, enjoyed the view of Boston and the Charles River as the train crossed the Longfellow Bridge, and made her way to the Hatch Shell. She was attending the Boston Pops' annual Fourth of July concert and fireworks display. Knowing the best way to get a good spot is to arrive early, she was in line an hour before the Esplanade opened at 9 AM. Once inside, she spread her white comforter on the lush green grass and settled in for the 11-hour wait until the music started. Fully prepared, she would work on the Relationship Vision Board she'd recently begun on her iPad. She'd scoffed at the idea when her baby sister showed her the one she'd created six months earlier and explained—with an earnestness Anne found unsettling—the power of visualization. As a medical professional, she trusted science, not science fiction. A diamond appearing on the left hand of her twenty-one year old sibling a week ago (with a guy so perfect Anne would have married him in a heartbeat herself)—not to mention her

own twenty-eighth birthday right around the corner—convinced her a different approach was at least worth a try.

She began listing the traits she was looking for. *Nice guy. Kind. Intelligent. Genuinely likes other people—especially women. Compassionate. Wants to be helpful. Trustworthy.* Her inner tart poked her—hard. *Yeah. Yeah. Sure. Sure. Wonderful qualities in a girlfriend, neighbor, or Labrador,* the voice teased. *But I know you. Get to the important stuff!* She laughed at trying to pretend to herself she'd become oh-so mature and sophisticated about what she wanted in a relationship. *It's not being superficial or a ho. Boston is cold in the winter! If you don't have a sexy stud to keep your feet—and other parts of your body—warm and toasty, you'll catch pneumonia. It's a health thing!*

“OK,” she said softly with a naughty smirk, “what’s my inner slut hot for?” *Tall. Dark, curly hair I can run my hands through. Athletic, but not muscle bound. Deep brown bedroom eyes. Someone with stamina and patience in bed. Hands that immediately make me wonder what they'd feel like on my body. A great butt. Someone I notice the very first time I see him because that means there's chem—* Her eyes locked onto the handsome young man in the blue Boston Marathon tee shirt and black shorts making his way through the crowd. He moved with grace and confidence. Her heart raced as she bit her lip. “Yum! Someone like him,” she couldn't help saying out loud. *Slut!* Her inner tart chided. “Guilty,” she laughed. Concentrating hard, she tried to will him to head in her direction. For good measure, she sat up, tightened her scarlet Red Sox jersey around her, and stuck out her chest. Just as he reached her, something in the distance caught his attention and he looked away. *Damn!* She frowned.

But Fate was watching over her. A water bottle fell from his backpack as he sped past. She picked it up and called after him. “Hey! Marathon man! You dropped

something.” When he turned around, she gave him her warmest smile and waved the blue bottle. When he literally sprinted back to her, she hoped it meant he liked what he saw. As he beamed when he took the bottle from her hand and didn’t move on, she was positive. *No one gets that excited over a water bottle.*

“Thanks. Is this spot taken?”

“Be my guest.”

“I’m Mark, by the way.” He smiled and stuck out his hand.

“Anne.” She slid her hand into his and he squeezed. *Did I just feel a spark? Yes I did!* The warmth and strength she sensed was exquisite. *I wish he didn’t have sunglasses on. I’d love to see his eyes.* She didn’t want to let go. The way he held on, neither did he.

“Anne,” he repeated slowly. He said her name so tenderly, it was as though he was caressing it. She felt tingles all over.

“That’s a lovely name. My favorite aunt is named Anne,” he added warmly.

Realizing they were still holding hands, they blushed and let go.

Mark spread out his tattered blue blanket. The two expanses of cloth ended up only an inch apart. She smiled. *It’s not that crowded yet. He’s making it look like we’re together to scare off any competition. Be cool. It’s his job to make the first move. Go back to your iPad.*

She watched him with one eye as he settled in. Since it was a hot day, she wasn't surprised when he pulled off the blue tee. But she couldn't stop herself from doing a double take at what she saw. *Oh my God!* She stifled a deep moan. It wasn't that his upper body was so muscular it boasted that he worshipped at the gym. It was simply, purely, *beautiful*. Remarkably smooth skin. Perfectly defined pecs, arms, and abs. It was as though Michelangelo's David came to life and decided to picnic beside her. She sighed. *If all you turn out to be is eye candy for the day, I can live with that!* Realizing she'd been staring at him wide-eyed and open-mouthed, she blushed. She was relieved her oversized Ray Bans made her gawking less obvious.

As she worked with her tablet, she noticed him scan the crowd, look at her, then nervously look away. The third time he did that, her heart ticked up. *Get ready. He's working up the nerve to say something. Comment about the Sox. Guys love that.* When he failed to say something the fourth time, she decided he needed some encouragement. Under her tee shirt, she had on the top of her new pink string bikini. She planned to remove the jersey only if the day got unbearably hot. Now, however—. She pulled it off and put it in her bag. She then made a production of untying and retying the strings of her top. Out of the corner of her eye, she saw him pretend to look elsewhere while he watched her. *Aha! Got your attention!* Lying back, settling on her blanket, and closing her eyes, she pictured the scene from his perspective. *Sweet young thing reclining on a white comforter, wearing white shorts and two thin pink bits of fabric triangles covering her ta-tas. He's a guy. All he can think about is my tantalizing breasts. Let's see how long it takes.* Five minutes later, she heard him rustling through his backpack. She smiled to herself.

He cleared his throat. Hemmed and hawed. “I hope you don’t think I’m being forward. Since it’s so sunny, I was wondering if you’d like to borrow my sunscreen.”

When she lifted up on her elbows and looked at him, she melted. With his sunglasses pushed up onto his head, she could now see his deep, deep brown eyes—her favorite. His face was the perfect combination of apprehension, sincerity—and interest. His smile was warm. Everything about the moment said, ‘genuine sexy good guy’—not, ‘charmer looking to get laid.’ *Yes please. I’ll have one of those!*

“Thanks.” She took the blue tube. “It’s the one thing I forgot,” she lied. As a nurse, she was hypercautious about skin cancer. Sunscreen was actually the first thing she’d packed. She made a point of keeping the conversation going as she slowly and deliberately applied the lotion to every bit of skin that showed.

The way he couldn’t take his eyes off wherever she touched made her warm all over. The top of her right foot. The top of her left foot. Her right leg. Her left leg. Her right arm. Her left arm. Her face. Her neck. Her right shoulder. Her left shoulder. The skin bordering the pink triangles. Her stomach—where she paid special attention to the area between her navel and the top of her shorts. Part of her felt guilty at deliberately torturing him—but only a small part.

She handed him the tube. “Would you mind doing my back?” she asked innocently.

His face lit up like he’d just won the lottery. “Sure. Glad to help,” he said with a forced casualness. His eyes went wide and his breath caught when she lay down, reached around, and untied her top.

“You can’t be too careful. Besides, I don’t like tan lines,” she winked.

He was as thorough as she hoped.

She closed her eyes and swallowed any number of moans and sighs as his strong hands caressed her. She couldn’t stop herself from sinking into a fantasy in which he would get so excited by having his hands on her body, he’d gradually get more brazen. Applying the lotion to the back of her legs, he’d move his hand up her thigh until it rested against her pussy. She’d press back against it, so he’d feel how wet she’d become. He’d slide his hands under her panties and squeeze her bare ass. He’d massage the sides of her breasts, pressing his hands as far as they would go under her. She’d lift herself up enough so he could cup them and feel how hard her nipples were. When he squeezed, she’d moan deeply. Unable to resist any longer, he’d pull his blanket over them, pull down her shorts, and take her from behind right there.

She would object, of course. “People might see what we’re doing!”

“I don’t care,” he would say, his voice filled with desire. “I’ve never wanted a woman so much in my life! You are the sexiest woman I’ve ever met! You are a goddess. The answer to all my dreams! I need you right now.”

Such overpowering yearning would ignite her own lust. She wouldn’t be able to stop herself from begging, “Fuck me, baby! Fuck me now!”

Her moist sex and erect nipples pressing into her blanket only added to the agony.

When he said, “Done,” she was so deep in a sex haze she forgot she was topless. She propped herself on her elbows, turned, and looked intensely into his dark eyes with unfiltered hunger. His face mirrored her desire—especially since he was admiring what he could see of her naked breasts. When she noticed his hand placed strategically in front of a bulge in his shorts, she abruptly came to. Turning scarlet, she quickly lay back down and refastened her top. “Uh. Thanks,” was all she could manage.

The embarrassment passed quickly when he asked if she would do his back. She jumped at the chance. When finished, she insisted—strictly because she was a nurse—that they reapply sunscreen every couple of hours. By the end of the day, Mark was untying and retying her bikini top—which both knew was a sign of things to come. The chemistry between them was obvious to anyone watching them.

The couple spent the day sharing their picnic goodies and learning as much about each other as possible. They were stunned not only at how much they had in common, but how many times they’d been in the same place in Boston and had never met. Each had attended the Pops concert and fireworks the preceding five years. Both loved medieval and renaissance music and had been at all the performances of the Boston Camerata the last two years. They’d both run the Boston marathon the preceding year—but for different charities. A pediatric nurse at Massachusetts General Hospital, she was part of the team supporting MGH. Mark, who worked at a nonprofit that focused on helping women in developing nations, raised money for one of the cancer charities.

Both had ended relationships during the last few months, but the breakups had been amicable enough that neither was still grieving and gun shy.

The most surprising coincidence was that they both had learned to play the oboe—for the same reason. Their parents said, “It’s an unusual instrument. It will make your college application distinctive.” Discovering this fact, however, unleashed a back and forth so suggestive Anne couldn’t believe she was doing it.

She bit her lip and looked deep into his eyes. “You must have a really talented tongue. I’d love to see what you can do with it.”

He leaned in and said darkly. “Well, the trick is to take your tongue and just barely, ever so gently, place it against...,” he paused and gave her a naughty look, “*the reed*—while making your audience squirm with delight. I pride myself in getting...*a reed...to vibrate just so.*”

She squeezed her thighs together and couldn’t stop herself from picturing him with his head between her legs placing his wet tongue against her ‘reed.’

“And *you*,” he said with a naughty smile, “must have developed impressive breath control and a great embouchure. I bet you can do amazing things with that mouth.”

“I’d like to think so.” She put her hand gently on his thigh and moved it north an inch. “You’d be amazed at how long I can keep a suction—around *the reed*, of course. Most girls give up long before me.”

The grin he responded with was pure lust. “So, what brand of instrument did you learn on?”

“I had a RS Berkeley.”

“Impressive. You’re that good?”

“I never met an oboe I couldn’t handle.” She said with a certain amount of swagger. “What’s hidden in your case?”

“Nothing as exotic as yours. A Yinfente.”

“Hmmm,” she frowned. “That’s rosewood rather than ebonite, right? Isn’t that a little *soft* for a guy like you?” There was more than a hint of disappointment in her voice.

“Trust me. My Yinfente is plenty hard,” he shot her a sexy grin. “Come back to my place and try it, if you want.”

By the time the concert began, Anne was walking on air. She’d never felt this comfortable with any of the guys she’d dated. She felt safe, seen, accepted—and very aroused—by Mark. She was impressed that he was much more interested in learning about her, than talking about himself. Something about him inspired trust. She also loved the way he doted on her—and how he couldn’t stop staring and grinning at her. She was positive he was sitting there wondering what she looked like naked. Since she was doing the same with him, she didn’t mind.

The music was wonderful. Of course, they had to comment on the oboists. When it was time for the fireworks, he took her hand, and they raced to a spot along the water that gave them a great view. Standing behind her, he wrapped his arms around her. As the fireworks exploded and the sky sparkled, she leaned back into his hard chest and sighed. After the magnificent red, white, and blue finale, she turned to face him. Without a second’s hesitation, they kissed. Then kissed some more. The

kissing was deeply sensual. It was gentle, loving, and punctuated by deep sighs from both of them. They were in no hurry to move things along and get tongues involved or grind their bodies together. She luxuriated in how large and soft his lips were. It was the most romantic moment in her life.

On the way back to the blankets to pack things up, her head was spinning about what to do next. Being with him felt so wonderful, she didn't want to say goodnight and just go home. But she had a rule about never sleeping with a guy on the first date—especially when, technically, this wasn't even a date. She was relieved when he took the lead. After stuffing everything into his backpack, he stood and shifted his weight awkwardly from one foot to the other. "Um. I don't suppose you'd like to come back to my place and see my oboe, would you?" he asked nervously.

She cocked her head and twirled her hair coquettishly. "Your Yinfente? How could I resist?"

Relieved, the two of them burst out in laughter. Holding hands, they headed out of the park.

Anne told herself she wouldn't sleep with him. She'd honor her rule. But once they entered his apartment, the passion between the two of them exploded. In less than a minute, they were naked and in his bed. Mark was so excited, he ripped the first condom in two trying to open the foil packet. Their first coupling was desperate and furious. Both climaxed powerfully. When their breathing calmed down, they looked at each other, saw something reflected in the other's face, and laughed.

“Sorry,” he stroked her cheek, “I couldn’t help myself.”

“You probably noticed,” she laughed, “I was ripping off your clothes as quickly as you were tearing off mine.”

Admitting that a mindless, but delightfully primal passion had taken control of their bodies and turned them into rutting beasts let them relax. She hoped having gotten that out of their system, they could move on to more sensual, gentler lovemaking. But Mark was a guy in his twenties and had one speed. He was respectful of her needs, however, and amusingly goal oriented. He made sure not only that she had an orgasm each time they went at it, but that she always came first. He didn’t hold back from giving her oral sex—although she appreciated his enthusiasm more than his technique. Wanting to return the favor, she demonstrated that her mouth was as talented as she claimed. Taking every inch of his large cock, the combination of the suction she created, the way she teased his penis with her tongue, and knowing to back off right before he came produced a powerful orgasm when she decided to let him come. After swallowing everything he jetted into her mouth, she sat back on her heels grinning like a Cheshire cat. He saluted her in appreciation.

Between how romantic the entire day felt—plus the great sex—she knew she was falling in love with him. It was crazy. But everything felt so right, she couldn’t stop herself.

When they woke up from such an unexpectedly amazing day—and randy night—they agreed to an exclusive relationship. They also promised to get tested so they’d have more options for birth control. They were mature enough to worry they

were moving too fast. They planned their time together—and their expectations—appropriately.

The couple navigated the summer and Thanksgiving without incident. Both said “I love you” the first time on Christmas Eve. They agreed there would be no big surprises on Valentine’s Day. Mark gave her a gold, heart-shaped locket with their pictures in it. She gave him a watch he’d been eyeing. As the snow melted off Boston’s streets, however, and the first crocuses poked out of the ground, Anne couldn’t shake the feeling ‘something was up.’ It wasn’t anything she could put her finger on—no tangible signs he was backing away or cheating on her. She dared to hope her intuition was telling her he was going to propose on the Fourth. But she thought it was more realistic it had something to do with his job.

He’d been given a major promotion that required longer hours, heavier responsibilities, and regular trips to the non-profit’s Chicago office. She had mixed feelings. She was proud of his accomplishments and happy he could reconnect with people he knew from when he went to college there. But she missed him desperately when they were apart. His trips were more frequent and lasted longer. And his mind often seemed to be elsewhere even when they were together.

Anne had learned from her last relationship the dangers of getting too wrapped up in her boyfriend’s life and not having activities and friends of her own. As Mark spent more time out of town, she decided to honor a promise she’d made to herself about getting into better shape. She joined the gym closest to the hospital and became a regular at the spinning class that began shortly after her shift ended. It was a perfect way to decompress from the stress of her job, get in shape, and make friends. Among the regulars she immediately hit it off with were Kaitlyn and

Heather, two nurses she recognized from the hospital. Anne always took a bike directly behind them. She didn't feel comfortable being in the front row, and she couldn't help but envy their tight, shaped behinds. Frankly, it was trying to get an ass like theirs that motivated her to work so hard in class.

After showering, the three of them would always have coffee and swap stories about the day. As the girls got to know each other better, they inevitably talked about their relationships. Kaitlyn and Heather were married and had been together for a few years. Anne used them as a sounding board for her hopes and concerns about her relationship with Mark. It was a wonderful friendship. The three of them developed a warm, tight bond. The only women Anne felt closer to were her mother and her sister.