

Eyes On The Sky

By Kirstie Olley

I first saw him when I was forced to stay back at work, labouring over an Expression of Interest for a contract my company was desperate for. They were so desperate they actually paid me overtime. If they hadn't I would've left the office long before the moon rode in the sky.

He sat, elbow propped on the very thin sill beneath the train window, staring through the scratched-on graffiti up at the moon. She was fat and full in the sky and his eyes were full of her.

He was tall and slim – not an underfed slim, but that lean, muscular slim that hides more strength than you expect. His eyes, shimmering silver with the moon's reflection, were blue under all that light and his blond beard was kept trimmed close to his face while his hair flared out in loose golden curls.

I wondered who he was, watching the sky with eyes full of melancholy. My heart ached and the next day all I could think about was him.

Desperate to see him again I worked late, this time unpaid, and left in time to catch the same train. I wasn't sure he would be on the train, he had been dressed casually so may have been visiting a friend on a once-in-a-while trip. I walked the entire length of the train, checking every car. My heart skipped a beat when I found him in the front-most car, elbow on the sill, staring up at the moon.

I sat across from him, hands folded in my lap, and watched him.

He didn't glance at me once, but that didn't deter me.

The next day I didn't care to stay back at work, so I sat at the train station reading as train after train clacked by.

When my train pulled up he sat by the window directly in front of me. His eyes bored through the concrete roof of the station. I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that his eyes were trained where the moon hung in the sky.

I sat across from him again, admiring the strong cut of his jaw and the beauty of his expression as he watched the moon. Again he didn't notice my presence.

Saturday arrived and I couldn't get him out of my mind. I wanted the weekend to be over so I could go back to work, stay late and catch that train. My friends dragged me out to go dancing with them, and though I went I insisted on dancing by the window so I could look up at the moon – knowing he would be doing the same somewhere.

When Monday arrived I don't think I've ever been happier. But something gnawed at my stomach. He never looked at me. He didn't know I existed. Fine, tonight I would change that.

At the station I read my book, pulse thrumming, while I waited to finally talk to him. What would I say? What would he say? What would happen after that? I could barely focus on the story in my lap. Then something caught my eye in the tale.

Star-crossed lovers filled this tragedy. The Sun and the Moon, Apollo and Artemis, in love, but never able to meet. During the night, when he could roam the earth she rode the sky, and during the day, when she wasn't trapped in the sky, he was instead.

The train screeched to a halt in front of me.

I boarded the train, my head hurting. It was a coincidence, wasn't it? I just happened to read a story about a man in love with the moon. Right?

He wasn't in the car I boarded, but he sat in the next one along.

I seated myself beside him and stared at him. His golden hair ruffled out from his head. I swallowed as the thought crossed my mind that his hair gleamed like the sun's rays. I was being silly. Gods don't walk the earth and myths are just stories.

His eyes shone, sad and silver and full of her. There was no mistaking his expression.

I swallowed hard and opened my mouth.

"Are you..." I trailed off; I couldn't say it.

Slowly, reluctantly, he tore his eyes away from the moon. He looked at me, eyes a little wide, like he never expected there to be another person on the train.

"I'm sorry, did you say something?" He asked, his voice like a creaky old door from lack of use.

"I... er, I wanted to tell you..." I frowned and looked away. "Sorry, no, I wanted to ask you..." My eyes flicked down to the book in my lap.

His eyes followed mine and widened again.

"It's tough being a celebrity." He sighed.

I couldn't talk for a few moments. He watched me, calm, waiting for me to collect my thoughts with the sort of patience only an immortal could possess.

"So you are? Apollo, I mean?"

"In a fashion. Apollo is just a name I've been given. I have thousands of them. But essentially, yes, I am the sun."

My heart burst while my mind broke.

I don't know why I didn't doubt him, I just knew that he wasn't lying. But that wasn't what mattered, what mattered was he was there, on the train, looking at the woman he loves and can never have.

The train pulled in to a stop.

I glanced at the sign and felt shocked to see it was my stop. I apologised, dipping into a curtsy because that was all I could think of to do when departing the presence of a god, and I exited the train.

On the platform I watched as the train hissed back into motion, clutching the book to my chest with tears in my eyes.

Apollo looked up at Artemis and I watched as the memory of me faded from his eyes and filled with the sight of her.