



## HE'S GOT TO GO

*A laugh-out-loud trainwreck of romance and meddling friends...*

### **SPECIAL SHORT STORY/CHAPTER ONE**

*Out Foxed by the Twin Brother:  
Night of a Thousand Red Flags*

Amy Vansant



## CHAPTER ONE

*Yeah.*

The date had been a bad idea.

Dr. Digby Hyde checked his watch and doubted the time.

*That can't be right.*

Could it be he'd only been on this blind date for an *hour*?

He looked up. His date had stopped talking.

*Oh no. Did she ask me a question?*

He chewed at his lip.

"Um..."

She stood and flashed him a grin.

"I have to go to the little girl's room. I'll be right back. Don't miss me too much."

She walked away, buttcheeks twitching like they were in the middle of a tennis match.

Digby slumped back in his chair.

*Whew.*

She'd smiled. *That's good.* He didn't want

to be rude, but they had *no* connection. That was clear before she finished her Caprese salad.

Digby's twin brother, Jake, had set him up with her. Jake said Scarlett would be *perfect* for him—said she was his buddy's cousin or something—he'd been fuzzy on the details.

That should have been his first clue.

*Bastard.*

Digby thought Jake said Scarlett was a nurse, but she only talked about *knitting*. When he asked if she was a nurse, she'd giggled.

*What did that mean?*

He sighed.

It wasn't *total* stupidity that had him sitting in that Italian restaurant. The date would keep Jake and his mother off his back. It would prove he was *trying* to find love.

He wasn't—but this would shut them up until Thanksgiving. Maybe the end of the year.

He was fine alone. He *liked* alone. Dating was the ninth circle of hell. He'd taken a date to one of his brother's matches and she'd ditched him for Jake's teammate—Paolo, the Ferrari-driving midfielder—before halftime.

It was his fault. He'd effectively thrown

her into a meat market full of six-packs and European accents.

*Genius.*

Digby folded his napkin and set it on the table to signal the server they'd be leaving. The server cleared the plates and hovered nearby, waiting for Scarlett to return so he could hit them with the dessert menu.

Digby wasn't worried about Scarlett having a sweet tooth—she'd had that Caprese salad as her entrée. This was not a girl who ordered dessert.

Ten minutes from now, he'd be in his car headed far, far away. He'd be alone, and that was *fine*. Dating now wasn't fair to anyone—he was in the middle of his medical residency, on call all sorts of hours, sometimes working for days at a time—he couldn't expect anyone to understand.

But, the evening wasn't a total loss. His pappardelle bolognese was the best meal he'd had in a while. Scarlett *was* pretty in an obvious sort of way—large blue eyes, blonde hair, great body. She hadn't knocked him over with her conversational skills, but nobody's perfect. She'd chatted about some kind of online business she had with toy animals—but for adults, or—honestly, he couldn't wrap his head around it.

He might have tuned out at some point.  
He shook his head, chuckling to himself.  
*Jake is living on borrowed time.*

“What’s so funny?” asked Scarlett, returning from the ladies’ room to retake her seat.

He looked up. “Hm? Oh. Nothing.”

“You’re giggling to yourself for no reason?” she teased.

He nodded. “More or less.”

She pursed her lips, eyeing him, and reached into her purse to produce a tiny knitted fox of burnt orange yarn. She stood it on her palm so its puffy white face could stare at him with black eyes.

“What do you think?” she asked.

He wasn’t sure what to say.

“What is it?” seemed the most obvious option.

Her brow creased. “*Amigurumi.*”

He nodded, though he wasn’t sure if he’d misheard something or if she was speaking in tongues.

When he didn’t comment further, she huffed.

“*Japanese crochet.* I just finished telling you about how I’m an influencer. This is a big part of what I do.”

He nodded. Maybe that was the part he’d

missed. He knew there were toys involved and something...*medical*?

He sniffed. "Right. Sorry. I missed the, uh, that word—"

"*Amigurumi*."

"Right. That. What does that mean?"

She nodded to the fox. "That's what he *is*. It's Japanese for little stuffed crochet creatures."

He nodded. "Ah. Right. I remember now."

*Lie.*

She cocked her head. "How can you not know? They're literally *everywhere*."

He smiled. "I think they're *figuratively* everywhere, or it would be pretty weird. Foxes in the cabinets, foxes on the street—"

She scowled. "What?"

"Nothing. Sorry." He sighed. "I don't get out much."

She smiled. "Because you're a busy *doctor*."

He nodded and looked pleadingly at the waiter hovering nearby.

*Save me.*

Scarlett thrust the fox at him.

"Diagnose him," she said.

His lips parted, hanging like that for a few beats until he realized she wasn't planning to explain any further.

"I'm sorry, what now?" he asked.

She bounced the fox. "*Diagnose him.*"

"Are you saying the puppet is sick?"

Her eyes flashed with what looked like rage.

*Yikes—where did that come from?*

"He's not a *puppet*," she said through gritted teeth.

"No, okay, but—" He scratched his head.

"Are you asking me to look him over like a *doctor*?"

She nodded. "Yes—why else would I have brought him?"

He took a deep breath.

*Ohmygod Jake you are so dead.*

He took the toy from her hand and checked its undercarriage before returning it.

"Mr. Fox looks pretty healthy," he said as cheerfully as he could.

She crossed her arms against her chest and refused to take back the fox.

He suddenly had a creeping feeling Miss Scarlett was a few eggs short of a dozen.

"His name is *Kitsune*. Do you know why?" she asked.

"Uh, because baby foxes are called kits?"

She blinked at him. "They are?"

"Yep."

"Oh. Well, *no*. Kitsune is Japanese for fox."

"Ah. I should have guessed that."

She nodded. "But Kitsune is *not* healthy."

She left him hanging with the toy in his hand, her expression dark.

He swallowed.

*Tread lightly.*

"Um, Scarlett, I—"

She pouted. "He's *sick*. You didn't look at him close enough. *Diagnose him.*"

At a loss, he flipped the fox again and poked at its stuffed belly. He heard a shutter click and looked up in time to catch Scarlett pointing her phone at him.

"Did you just take a picture of me?" he asked.

"It's his first doctor visit," she said, beaming like a proud mama.

Digby nodded.

*Oh boy.*

Scarlett had rounded *odd* and was speeding toward *terrifying*.

While witnesses were still nearby, he diagnosed the thing. He poked the fox's pudgy belly again and peered into its face.

He'd think the thing was *cute* if not held at virtual gunpoint to assign a disease to it.

"He's a little bloated. Could be gas," he



told her.

He tried again to hand it back.

Scarlett refused to take it.

“It’s not *gas*. It’s something more *serious*,” she said.

“Oh, so now you’re the doctor?” He forced a smile. “See? You don’t even need me.”

He wagged the fox like a cat toy, hoping she’d take the bait.

*Please take this stupid fox.*

She didn’t move.

“I guess pointing out that I’m a doctor and not a *vet* won’t change your mind?”

She frowned harder.

He sighed. “Okay. How about gastritis?”

She clucked her tongue with disgust. “More *deadly*.”

“What do you have against this poor fox? Are you *trying* to kill him?”

She didn’t laugh, so he dropped his focus on the toy again.

“Colorectal cancer?”

Her lip curled. “Ew. *No*.”

He ran through bloating diseases in his head, suspecting she wanted something *unique*.

He had a thought.

“How about Ogilvie syndrome?”

She perked with excitement.

"Is that *fatal*?"

Digby looked down at the fox, feeling a little guilty condemning the thing to death.

"It can be but—"

He heard the click again. Scarlett had taken another photo of him with his patient. Before he could comment, she placed her phone on the table and snatched the fox from his hand. With a tragic expression, she stroked the toy against her chest.

"Oh, Kitsune. Poor Kitsune." She glanced up at him. "Take a picture of us like this."

He looked at the phone and then at her.

"What—?"

"Take a *picture*."

He picked up her phone and took a photo of Scarlett smothering the sick, crocheted fox between her breasts.

"Got it?" she asked, her expression shifting from heartbroken to joy so fast it looked painful.

He pushed the phone toward her.

She dropped the fox in her purse and pulled out a tiny crocheted frog.

"What about her?" she asked.

Digby shook his head.

*Oh hell no.*

"Can I get you any dessert?" asked the waiter arriving table side.

Digby's attention shot to the man.

"No." He cleared his throat. "Just the check, please?"

The server nodded and turned on his heel to leave before Digby could throw his arms around him to hug him for intervening.

Scarlett smiled.

"How did you know I never eat dessert?" she asked, batting her eyelashes.

"It's obvious, right?" he said.

She grinned, and Digby's shoulders relaxed a notch.

*I might live to see the end of this evening.*

Scarlett put the frog back in her purse.

*Even better.*

He took a deep, cleansing breath as the waiter arrived with the check. He stabbed his credit card into the folder and thrust it back at the server before he could leave.

Scarlett made idle chit-chat about her interview process for potential advertisers and something about V and X crochet stitches. He nodded at what he felt were the appropriate times.

The evening felt normal again.

He signed for the meal, and they headed outside.

Scarlett turned to him, beaming.

"That was lovely," she said.

He nodded and clapped his hands together. "Yep, well, I guess—"

"Would you walk me home?" she asked.

He turned to her.

"You *walked*?" he asked, sounding a little screechy.

They'd met at the restaurant. He'd assumed they'd get into separate cars and speed off in opposite directions.

He'd *counted on it*.

She pointed to the end of the block.

"I'm around the corner in those apartments there."

He turned. The apartments *were* close. There was no way he could say *no* to such a simple request.

He looked around.

*On the other hand, it looked like a safe neighborhood—*

"Would you walk me?" she repeated.

He nodded. "Sure. Of course."

They strolled around the corner and through a parking lot to her townhouse door. No wonder she'd suggested they eat where they did—she could throw a stone from her window and hit the place.

"This is it?" he said as she pulled her keys from her purse. "Great. I'll—"

"Come in for a second?" she purred.

He winced. “I would, you know, but I have early hours—”

She shook her head and pressed her lips tight, holding her breath like a child.

“Just a *second*?” she begged. “I have an actual medical issue I’d like you to see. It’s a matter of life and death.”

He squinted at her.

“You didn’t mention anything *life-threatening* during dinner—”

She put a hand on his arm. “I was embarrassed. I’m sorry. I swear, it will take *two seconds*.”

He sighed.

It was official. This date would never end.

He stared into her eyes, running through the possibilities.

Was the invite a trick? Did people purposely hook up with doctors to get free medical advice? Or was it worse—was she trying to lure him into a trap? Would an axe drop from the ceiling? Would he wake up hogtied in her basement?

She moved in to clutch the front of his shirt, staring up at him with wide eyes.

She *looked* desperate...

*Fine. Whatever.*

They were in Miami. She didn’t have a

basement.

He nodded. "Okay, but then I *really* have to go."

She squealed and opened the door.

She didn't seem *sick*.

As he moved to follow her inside, he noticed a young woman sitting in front of the townhouse next door. A menagerie of plants on a pony wall had obscured her until he had one foot in Scarlett's door. Shadows darkened the woman's face, but her eyes sparkled beneath the porch lights as their gazes met.

Her eyes seemed unusually wide.

Almost...

*Alarmed?*

She shook her head at him.

*Wait. What?*

Digby paused.

What was that? Disapproval? A warning?

*Is the neighbor telling me not to—*

Scarlett jerked him inside and shut the door behind him with her heel.

He froze.

*Shit.*

Scanning the room for weapons, he glanced up.

Low ceiling.

*No room for an axe...*

“I’ll be right back,” she said before slipping down a dark hallway.

Digby watched her disappear into a room and shut the door.

He glanced at the front door.

*Should I go?*

He saw the neighbor’s head shake in his mind’s eye, but he couldn’t just *run*...

*Could I?*

He didn’t want his brother’s friend pissed off because he was rude to his cousin. Maybe the guy didn’t know how weird she was—

*Wait a second...*

Of course, he *knew*. Why else would he be begging people to go on dates with her?

Digby put a hand on his head.

*I’m such an idiot.*

Scarlett was *way* too pretty to need people to set her up on dates—

He’d turned to leave when the door down the hall opened, casting light across the hallway.

Scarlett stepped out.

His jaw fell slack.

She’d changed into a *sexy nurse* costume with white thigh-high stockings and a skimpy skirt.

How did she change that fast? Had she been wearing it under her dress all night?

He wasn't sure what to say. The date had gone *okay*, but it hadn't gone *naughty-nurse* okay.

Not that it mattered because, *metaphorically*, she'd stepped out of the room wearing a *giant red flag*.

"Uh..."

She stepped forward and took his hand to pull him toward the entrance of a darkened room. Inside, he saw the silhouette of a bed.

He shook his head.

*Nope.*

"Scarlett, look—"

She flipped on the light.

His eyes widened.

*Holy Muppets.*

Hundreds of stuffed crochet animals sat in neat rows along the back wall, one on top of the next, piled five feet high. She'd built a step-like custom shelf to display them. In the corner sat a ring light on a stand, a computer, and what looked like a box of props.

He didn't know what to make of it all. Maybe this was...*normal*? Until this evening, he'd never realized how little he knew about crocheted animal culture.

He cleared his throat. "Did you make all of those?"

"Most of them," she said, turning to him.



"I need you to diagnose them."

"That's your medical emergency?"

She giggled. "Not *all* tonight, of course. We'll shoot one or two?"

"Shoot?"

He glanced behind him, expecting someone to jump out of the darkness. It would either be his brother screaming he'd been punked or a man wearing a leather mask holding a chainsaw. Right now he had even money on both.

Scarlett bounced on her toes with giddy excitement.

"You're *perfect*. So *photogenic*," she said.

He put his back against the door to keep an eye on the room and the hallway.

"Scarlett—look, they're cute, and you seem sweet and, uh, talented, but—"

"There's a bonus," she said, pressing against him.

He backed into the doorjamb as she ran her hand up his chest.

"I'll be *naked*," she whispered.

He shook his head.

"When? *Why*?" he asked.

Her brow creased, as if she couldn't understand why he didn't get it.

"I'll lay on the bed naked and put the *amigurumi* all over me."

She shuddered with what looked like pleasure, and he imagined cops finding his bloody body wrapped in a floppy-eared, crocheted bunny costume.

She continued.

“You’ll pluck my little babies off my body, diagnose them, and put them aside—”

He slid into the hall.

“Look, I need to *go*—”

Scarlett followed him, unbuttoning his shirt as they moved. His back hit the opposite wall, and she writhed against his body as he gripped the remaining buttons to stop her progress.

“Scarlett—”

“It’s like strip poker—the more you diagnose—”

“Yeah, no, I get the jist—”

She untucked his shirt with a yank and shot an icy hand across his naked belly.

He yipped.

“What if I turned off the camera for a bit?” she asked, breathless.

His eyes bugged. “There’s a camera on *now*?”

He rolled against the wall down the hall, Scarlett moving with him until they reached the living room.

The front door was *so close*.

Before he could make a run for it, she jerked his shirt to get his attention, glaring back at him when he looked down at her.

“Are you trying to *leave*?” she asked.

His eyes darted to the door.

*What gives you that idea?*

She stomped her foot. “Why would you answer my ad if you’re not into it?”

He paused his escape plans to stare into her angry little face.

*Wait.*

“What *ad*?” he asked.

She huffed. “What *ad*? My ad. I think I was pretty clear about what I needed.”

He raised a palm. “Wait, wait, *wait*. Back up. You placed an *ad* for doctoring stuffed animals?”

“*Amigurumi*,” she growled. “You know I did, and now you’re acting like a total *jerk*.”

He squinted a single eye at her.

“Do you know Jake?”

“Jake *who*?”

“My brother, Jake? My twin?”

“There’s *two* of you?”

He scowled. “For now.”

She shook her head. “I don’t know him.”

Digby sucked his tooth with his tongue.

*I’m going to kill him.*

Everything made sense now. Jake had set

him up. The whole thing was a joke.

He tucked his shirt back into his pants.

"I'm sorry, Scarlett. There's been a mistake. I have to go kill someone."

He left her there, pouting in fury. As he let himself out, he caught the eye of the next-door neighbor.

"How'd that go?" she drawled.

He heard her laughing as he strode back to the restaurant parking lot, checking over his shoulder every few steps to be sure Scarlett hadn't followed with an army of thugs in crocheted vests.

Once safely in his car, he dialed his brother.

"*Jake, you sonuva—*"

That's all he could say before he had to hang up.

He couldn't get another word in.

Jake was laughing too hard.

**GET THE BOOK:** [\*He's Got to GO\*](#)



©2025 by Amy Vansant. All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by any means, without the permission of the author.

All characters appearing in this work are fictitious.

Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

*Vansant Creations, LLC / Amy Vansant*

*Jupiter, FL*

<http://www.AmyVansant.com>