

Aphrodite's Pendant

Crimson Rose

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Julie pulled into the outdoor flea market, parked in the furthest spot away and got out of her car smiling ear to ear. It was a beautiful summer morning with clear blue skies and shining sun above and countless rows of tables ahead for her to browse and hopefully pick up a few interesting pieces of jewelry. It was the perfect day to lazily meander around the flea market looking for deals. And if anyone claiming to know her knew anything about her it was that she lived for shopping, jewelry and great deals.

On any given day she wore no less than twenty pieces of jewelry – from the three rings or studs she wore in each ear to the rings she wore on every finger and thumb, she swore each piece held some significance. Her navel was pierced when she was fourteen to honor a friend who died of cancer while her tongue was pierced a year ago to better pleasure her husband. Everything had its meaning.

Flea markets were a new luxury as an ever failing economy made shopping in her normal high-class shops a thing of the past. Discovering the joys of meeting strangers while looking for deals, she was hooked the first time she and her husband Greg stopped at a yard sale three years back. Lacking her husband's patience, however, it took her months to figure out slow and steady won the bargain race. Walking across the parking lot, she stared out at the rows of vendors peddling their wares and her smile broadened. She had a good feeling about today.

Julie walked around for more than an hour looking at tables covered in everything from chainsaws and clothes, to knick knacks and really tacky and cheap costume jewelry that looked seventy years out of date. But just as she was going to walk away something caught her attention. Lying under some old-fashioned necklaces was another that looked simply stunning. Digging through the pile she picked the item up by the pendant – a large teardrop ruby dangling from a gold and platinum chain. At first she thought it was glass, but the more she looked at it, the more she was convinced it was the real deal.

“Oh that would look so lovely on you,” said the woman at the table. “That’s one of my favorite pieces, but sadly, like everything else you see here, it has to go.” She sighed in the attempt at pity, hoping Julie would buy something. “It is a family heirloom actually. It has been passed down from mother to daughter for more generations than I can count. According to my great grandmother, that is the pendant worn by Aphrodite – the Goddess of love, beauty, and pleasure.”

Julie only half-listened to the sales pitch as she continued turning the pendant over in her hands. Every item had a fantastic story behind it that she knew was most likely an embellished half-truth, but from what little she paid attention, this one was the icing on the cake in its outlandishness. “Why would you sell such a priceless thing?” Julie asked. “If that story is true perhaps you might sell it to a museum or something. I bet you could get a lot more for it there than at a flea market.”

“Oh honey,” the woman smiled “I could never sell it to a museum. That piece deserves to be worn... to be seen, not hidden away in some glass case for people to gawk at.”

“How much are you asking for it?”

“Twelve-fifty. As in One-thousand-two-fifty,” the woman replied. “That is real platinum, gold and ruby you hold in your hands.”

“Ouch! That’s a bit more than I was expecting to spend today. Would you take six for it?”

“Less than half the asking price? I think not.” the woman laughed. “Tell you what, I like you and I want you to walk away with it around your neck so I’ll let it go for eleven-fifty.”

“I only have nine hundred on me and that was supposed to buy me several new pieces.”
Sitting it back on the table, she turned to leave.

“Wait! Can see in your eyes you want the pendant so it’s yours for nine hundred.”

“Why would you give it to me so cheap all of a sudden? It’s not stolen or anything is it? Or fake? That’s it isn’t it? The ruby isn’t real at all is it?”

“I’m selling it to you cheap because that’s all you’ve got and I have the feeling it’s destined to be with you now. And no, it is not stolen or fake. In fact, I have a jeweler’s letter that verifies it is one hundred percent real at stated.”

“Sorry I jumped down your throat like that. When someone suddenly and greatly lowers their price it sets my bullshit meter to overload. I’ll take it.”

Handing over her money, Julie put the necklace on and as the cool metal touched her skin she felt goosebumps forming as her entire body began to tingle with excitement. Placing the jeweler’s letter in her purse, she walked away a happy customer.

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Most of her money spent on a piece she knew was worth at least ten times what she paid for it, Julie weaved her way between tables and stalls for another half hour before coming to one of the few spots selling more than junk and her eyes were immediately drawn to hundreds of sealed plastic packages containing jewelry. Behind the three long tables stood a small booth, a sign reading: **BODY PIERCING BY BARBARA**. Perusing the wares, Julie saw stud earrings and captive bead nipple rings to everything in between. There was even a table dedicated to men’s jewelry and for a moment she imagined her husband with a Prince Albert.

“Looking to get some new piercings today?” asked the tall, slender woman running the tables and booth. “Or do you just need the jewelry?”

Looking up, Julie smiled at the pretty brunette as her eyes were drawn to her many piercings. Ears done multiple times. Right nostril. Three thin rings in her left eyebrow, five in the right. And as she watched the woman talk she notices two in her tongue. “Oh, I’m just looking to see if anything catches my attention.”

“Well, take your time. If you need any help please ask. I’m Barbara and this is my shop.”

Julie looked at a small sign hanging on the booth door listing the various prices. They were much cheaper than going to an actual shop and above the price list was a certificate stating that Barbara was a certified tattoo artist and piercer. Moving to a table covered in barbells and rings of every shape and size, she picked up several items and examined them.

“Looking for some new nipple jewelry?” Barbara asked startling Julie.

“Um, well, not exactly, no,” Julie stammered. “I don’t have pierced nipples.”

“Oh, that’s a shame. You really should think about getting them done.” She leaned closer to Julie and talked softly so that only Julie could hear. “I got mine done a few years ago. Not only does it drive the guys wild, but the rings have a way of making the nipples nice and hard all the time.”

“Doesn’t it hurt like hell?”

“Only for a minute,”

“I’ll think about it.”

“Tell you what, let me make you a deal. The normal price for nipple piercing is \$45. If you buy two sets of nipple jewelry I will pierce yours for free.”

Julie looked at the woman in surprise. “Why would you do that?”

“Because I think rings will really look good in your nipples, and I am just that nice,” She smiled.

Julie absent-mindedly played with the pendant hanging around her neck as she considered Barbara’s deal. It was a crazy thing to do, but for some reason the more she thought about it the better it sounded and the hornier it made her feel. Looking back down at the table as her cheeks flushed pink, she picked out two sets of rings. The first pack containing two platinum rings with ruby captive bead and heart-shaped dangle, and the second a pair of barbells with sapphire heart ends.

“I’ll buy these.”

“You know those are only for nipples, right?”

“I know.”

“Then step inside,” Barbara smiled, opening the door to the small piercing booth. Once they were both inside, she closed and locked the door so no one came by any opened it while her client was half naked. “Go ahead and take off your shirt and bra and I’ll set up. They will be a whole lot lighter than the dangles so I strongly suggest going with the barbells now and moving to the dangles after the holes have healed.”

“You’re the expert,” Julie said, handing Barbara the little plastic package containing the barbells she picked out.” The brief moment their skin made contact making her clit tingle with excitement, she pulled her tee shirt off over her head and draped it over the right arm of the chair. Reaching back, she unhooked her bra and let it slide down her arms. Placing it on top of the shirt, she nervously bit her lower lip.