



Color Me

Blaine D. Arden

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Official Description: Jonah Fisher and Scott Eeley may both be Deaf, but they couldn't be more different.

Scott is a color consultant who doesn't interact well with the hearing. He watches his gorgeous new neighbor swim every morning, but has no idea how to approach him. He doesn't even know his name.

Jonah is a bouncer with an 'I'm Deaf, deal with it' attitude. He doesn't like the way Scott lets people treat him. So why can't he stop thinking about him?

Original Prompt:

Dear Author,

There's a new guy that's just moved into my building. I see him swimming laps in the complex pool every day in his little speedo-esque suit. I can tell from his tats that he's a bit of a bad boy (my favorite kind), but I'm too shy to approach him. Is he as tough & intense as he looks or is the cuddly teddy bear with an edge that I'm secretly looking for??

Photo Description: A hard-bodied man leans against a pale wall, one hand dragging his black Calvin's low over his hip. A swirling tattoo graces one muscular arm from shoulder to elbow. Light-brown eyes stare out challengingly from under damp dark hair. He has a hint of a beard, and a double silver chain drapes around his neck over lightly-furred pecs.

This story was written as a part of the M/M Romance Group's **"Hot Summer Days"** event. Group members were asked to write a story prompt inspired by a photo of their choice. Authors of the group selected a photo and prompt that spoke to them and wrote a short story.

Download the story from the Author's website (pdf, epub, mobi and lit formats) or Goodreads, read it online or find it in Don't Read in the Closet, Volume 2.

Genre: contemporary

Tags: gay m/m, deaf, tattoo, 'retired' bad boy, paranormal elements, being out in love

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Color Me Details

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From Reader Review Color Me for online ebook

Sophia says

Nice satisfying short read that features two deaf heroes. One is a designer and the other a part owner in a bar and grill. Both men have the support of their families, but have personal issues. Jonah hasn't gotten past the death of his friend and Scott is still ultra-sensitive about being deaf which comes out in his work place and he carries around a unique secret.

The plot is fairly simple, but was well-written and is paced well for a short read. The characters are very enjoyable especially when they are first tentatively trying to get to know each other.

Recommend!

Wendy Ann says

What a wonderful story! It has some great humor ("Sugar Daddy") and I love that both main characters are deaf. I think the author was able to give us better insight into the unique ways that people use their other senses to experience situations if one of their senses (like hearing) is gone. One memorable passage that demonstrated this for me:

Jonah saw his head fall back and he lowered his cheek to Scott's stomach so he could feel his reaction.

Loved Scott's unique color ability and Jonah's protectiveness. Fantastic characters and a fantastic story! Thank you:)

L-D says

In this story, Scott loves to watch from his balcony as his neighbor swim laps in the apartment complex pool. He thinks he is being surreptitious, but his neighbor knows that he is watching. There was a slight twist to this story in that not only are both men deaf, but Scott sees peoples' colors. I'll have to admit that I wasn't really sure about how the colors fit into the story until it was explained somewhat at the end. I think I would've enjoyed the story just as much if Scott's unusual view of the world was omitted. Perhaps more development into the fact that both Scott and Jonah are deaf and how they connect that way.

I like the characters of both Scott and Jonah and I also liked Scott's family and how they look out for him. I give this story 3.5 stars because of my own confusion about the colors but I did enjoy the characters. I also liked the insight that Scott was being perceived as stuck-up because he was not good at reading lips.

Don't Read in the Closet is a collection of short stories published for free for members of the M/M Romance Group. The best part of this series of shorts is that they were based on a photo and a reader request for a story. This was not my favorite photo but here is the link to the photo and reader request that inspired this story (in fact I like the cover art of the book better than the photo):

Leaundra says

Cute and sweet story and I liked that they were both Deaf. I think Sign Language is such a beautiful language.

Lumina says

I liked the idea of this story. The characters were great and what little we learn about their friends they were well done too. But I know nothing about Jonah's accident, just that there had been one. And those color spots, were they even useful somehow? And Jonah's friend who died... meh... why was it even there? So that he could tell Scott his father was his sugar daddy? Not cool...

Still, the story had a nice flow and I enjoyed it.

Bubbles Huntly Honest & Direct Opinions says

[they are out at a bar and Scott sees J talking to and then kissing and then running his thumb along some guy's cheek and Scott is sad and jealous and thinks J has a boyfriend. Then later that night Scoot and J have lame sex and it is never mentioned again that J had multiple boyfriends or what the point of that scene was... (hide spoiler)]

A Girl Has No Name says

3 stars!

Color Me is telling us the story of **Scott and Jonah - two deaf men, that couldn't be more different.**

While Scott thinks that he has been admiring Jonah unsuspectingly from afar for quite a while, Jonah is well aware of the gorgeous man watching him swim his laps every morning. Due to a painful episode from his past, a misunderstanding is leading to a few difficult first moments between Scott and Jonah.

I definitely enjoyed the story and the author's desire to create **interesting characters**. I however have the feeling that the story left a lot of questions unanswered - mainly with regard to the color dots Scott is seeing. I enjoyed this paranormal element, but I would have liked to get more information on it. I am pretty sure that this book would have worked better with a few more pages.

Still - **an enjoyable and free short read** for inbetween.

Sadonna says

Really cool story about two guys who admire each other from afar and then make contact. Unusual story in that both men, Jonah and Scott, are deaf and each has made his own way in the hearing world - differently. The author uses their lack of hearing to further the development of their relationship, but that in no way detracts from the core of the story which is two very different people meeting and trying to build a relationship. Well done.

Leenchen says

Inhalt:

Scotts neuer Nachbar ist sexy, athletisch, eine Augenweide und doch weiß Scott nicht, wie er an ihn rankommen soll. Durch Zufall treffen sie immer mal wieder aufeinander, aber der Nachbar scheint ihn nicht zu mögen. Erst später findet Scott heraus, dass Jonah, sein Nachbar, ihn mit seinem Vater gesehen hat und falsche Schlüsse gezogen hat. Trotzdem ist Jonah faszinierend für Scott, denn er ist farblos. Scott kann nämlich Emotionen und Körpersprache in Farbflecken sehen und interpretieren, aber Jonah besitzt keine Farbflecken und zieht Scott an wie eine Motte vom Licht angezogen wird.

Mit Happy End

Fazit:

Die Story beinhaltet weniger Sex als erwartet, aber das war nicht so schlimm, denn hierbei ging es mehr um die Vorurteile, die Menschen mit Behinderten haben. Nicht nur, dass Scott und Jonah beide taub sind und damit schon schwer zu kämpfen haben, auch ihre Homosexualität wird an einigen Punkten schwer kritisiert. Durch die wechselnde Perspektive erhält man darüber hinaus noch die verschiedenen Empfindungen durch eben jene Vorurteile.

Da wäre zum Beispiel Scotts Kollegin, die ihn wie einen Zurückgebliebenen behandelt. Scott glaubt, dass das nur daran liegt, dass sie eine Ziege ist, in Wirklichkeit aber findet Jonah heraus, dass sie glaubt, dass alle Gehörlose Lippenlesen können und Scott ein Arsch ist, weil er es ihr absichtlich schwerer macht, dabei kann er es so gut wie gar nicht.

An sich mag ich solche Szenerien gar nicht. Es ist typisch in Gayromance-Büchern, dass alle Männer in der Umgebung schwul sind und dass hier durch Zufall zwei schwule Gehörlose aufeinander treffen, das war mir ein wenig zu viel Zufall. Aber es blieb nur bei den Beiden und damit wurde es wieder realistischer für mich.

Bewertung:

3 Sterne für eine doch leicht verwirrende Boyslove-Geschichte

Alaska says

[I want to know how exactly Jonah got hurt, why he doesn't get along that well with his parents and why he thinks studying is not his th

Isa K. says

Meh~ This was an okay story. On one hand, nicely written and rather substantial for a freebie. On the other I was expecting the author to actually use the deafness of both MCs to do something interesting and I didn't get that. Instead things are described in terms of sound exactly the same way they might be in any other book, with little clauses tacked on to remind you that the characters can't actually experience those sounds. There was so much potential here! Rather than describing a Scott laughing and pressing up against Jonah, Arden could have described the feel of the vibrations or the details of expression. Make us see and experience the world as a deaf person might.

Sign language in this book is not the unique language and culture deaf advocates claim it is, but rather an excuse to do normal dialogue with brackets instead of quotation marks. Really disappointing, because sign language itself is an interesting topic ... so another missed opportunity to do something unique.

But I think the hardest part was the fact that the POV jumped back and forth between the MCs. That kind of structure works okay with books where you have time and space to develop things, but in a short story ... well by the time I had gotten used to being in one character's head, we jumped into the other's. I kept getting Jonah and Scott's details and stories confused. The army of minor characters made this even worse. Who belongs to whom? Seriously this book had more minor characters than most 300 page novels have CHARACTERS (period). Here's my count: Ethan, Cooper, Nathan, Richard, Emmett, Natasha, Kerry, Rosa, Sean, Isaac, Kim, Ginny, Simon, Allan, Guido (!), Ruth, Hannah, Morris Selby....

And to be honest, very few of those people were actually important enough to give a name to. By the time I was halfway through the book I had gotten so lost in who was who to whom I no longer cared about the love story :(

Lacey says

3.5 stars

Overall, this is an enjoyable story about two deaf, gay men working things out and getting together. I liked that Jonah and Scott didn't follow the stereotype during sex - Scott was so cute when he took over! Certain parts could have been fleshed out more. I thought there could have been more explanation about Jonah's past. I'm assuming his injury is the reason for the career change, but we never really learn anything about that period of his life. Also, I thought more could have been said about Scott's special ability.

Marte - Thunderella says

*** 2,5 plot hole stars ***

The bad:

The story in itself wasn't particularly good. It had a **whole lot** of plot points, loose ends and characters, which were crammed in to this not-so-short story.

The story suffers from a "compression syndrome" (yeah, I made that up)... trying to compress a whole book into a short story which leaves the result less desired. A lot of the plot points were **interesting**, but they left **holes** all over the story.

Like the paranormal aspect. Scott has the ability to see color spots which reflects people moods, or aches or even pregnancies! I've read about this sort of ability in another book (can't remember which, though), and I think it's pretty cool. However, it was **never explained** or **used** for anything in the story, though, which I kind of expected when one of the MCs has this an ability! The only thing the MC found out about his ability was that instead of surrounding himself with colors to try to drown out the color spots he should go for "black and white" instead. Which happens to be the other MC, who only wears colorless clothes and has a black and white-ish apartment, and didn't have any color spots surrounding him (except the red for his hurt ankle). But why? Why did he have this ability? Why didn't he see any "mood colors" with Jonah? **Why, why, whyyy?** The paranormal aspect could, and maybe should, have been **left out** of this story. It didn't add anything crucial to the story, it was cool, but it only raised more questions than it answered.

Sigh, it could have been so much **better**!

The good:

What I **really liked**, though, was the description of the deafness. Not only (!) because the subject is close to me, but because the descriptions were **accurate**. Now, I think that is very important. I don't think a story is automatically fantastic, just because there's a deaf character in it or the story involves sign language. Well, I try not to, anyway. I was going "yes, yes, yes" with the description and I could totally identify.

How can you tell someone is angry? They usually raise their voice, right? How do you know if a deaf person is angry, then? Well, it shows in how they sign.

Scott's hands moved fast as he signed, yet his movements were shaky, wild. Scott was angry. Jonah must have his a nerve.

Jonah signed, his movements sharp.

When someone for instant, performs something, you applaud them, right? You can even clap harder to make more noise, so you can tell the one your applauding that you really liked the performance.

How do deaf people applaud then? They can't hear the the clapping of hands, of course they can see it, but they can't hear it it, which is kinda the point.

...their hands signing applause.

It's really weird if you're not used to it, but seeing a whole bunch of people waving their hands like that is really amazing! A real visual applause. :D

If you want someone's attention, you say "Hey" or start talking or call them over, right? What do you do to get a deaf person's attention, then?

Scott tapped him on his shoulder.

Which is frikkin' inconvenient when you're at the grocery store and your hubby takes off with the shopping cart and you're standing there with 4 liters of milk, bread, a cheese and whatever other stuff you've picked out which you really want to dump in the cart, and can't call him back, dammit!

Usually the sex scenes in the books I read have the MCs moaning and panting and babbling, and generally being very vocal. Well, how can you tell that the person you're doing something to, really likes what you're doing, if you're deaf? No hearing the sounds to judge the reaction, remember?

...he lowered his cheek to Scott's stomach so he could feel his reaction.

Jonah couldn't resist looking up to see Scott's reaction.

Resting one hand on Scott's lower stomach, Jonah bent down and licked the tip again, tasting Scott. He licked his way down to the base and up again, feeling Scott's stomach quiver under his left hand. (...) He licked around the head, smiling at the rumble he felt beneath his hand. Scott definitely liked this. (...) The rumble beneath his hand became more pronounced, as did the quivering. Scott was getting close.

Oh, and how is the signing after coming, hm? ;)

Jonah's hands moved loosely, as if they were weightless.

Conclusion!

The accurately described deafness did not make the story, nor did it save it. The story was too full of holes. And *not* the fun kind.

Recommended?

Sadly, no.

A short story in the collection "**Don't Read in the Closet, Volume Two**" from the MM Romance Group Hot Summer Event 2011.

Click [HERE](#) for the story online or [HERE](#) to download the whole collection for your reading device.

Prompt:

(view spoiler)

There's a new guy that's just moved into my building. I see him swimming laps in the complex pool everyday in his little speedo-esque suit. I can tell from his tats that he's a bit of a bad boy (my favorite kind), but I'm too shy to approach him. Is he as tough & intense as he looks or is the cuddly teddy bear with an edge that I'm secretly looking for??

Sincerely,

Courtney

Genre: Contemporary

Tags: deaf, tattoo, 'retired' bad boy, paranormal elements, being out in love

(hide spoiler)]

SueM says

Way to go Blaine! The spots of color thing was really intriguing although it had puzzled me a bit at first! Jonah and Scott were in many ways the opposite of each other - Jonah a strong physical type, Scott a quiet artistic type - but their personalities complemented each other beautifully. Thank you for writing this story; I really enjoyed it.

CAS says

"Food, the language of the male." :)

Loved every single thing about this story.

I really enjoyed the loving, supportive circle of family and friends both men have in their lives, it added extra depth and warmth to the story.

I would love to read more about Jonah and Scott...
