



Wand-Losing & Other Things You Shouldn't Be Doing

Gabbo De La Parra

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The seven city-states of Aletta are facing their first encounter with an off-planet force. It's up to Max Maitheas, governor of the city-state of Anatolia (closest city to the alien landing) to embark on a diplomat journey to find out the intentions of the interlopers.

Captain Rezzu Ki Muselet leads the first Colviri-Human mission since Nova Gaia, a human planet, became part of the Colviri system. A recognition mission to a remote planet where they hope to discover signs of life.

What Rezzu wasn't prepared to discover was a thriving civilization and to become mesmerized by the eyes of the head diplomat in charge of receiving them. Green and wonderful like the sky of his home planet.

Both Max and Rezzu have secrets, and in their ability to surpass their deceptions, they might also find love.

This story was written as a part of the M/M Romance Group's "**Love's Landscapes**" 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.

Photo Description:

A painting of a handsome man in semi profile, part human part machine, looking at one of his hands. His machine parts and clothes are done in gold, copper and brass tones with clouds resembling cogs in different sizes surrounding him. He wears a top hat adorned with goggles and two feathers, one of a pheasant and the other of a peacock. He's the embodiment of Steampunk imagery.

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The M/M Romance Group strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

Wand-Losing & Other Things You Shouldn't Be Doing Details

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From Reader Review Wand-Losing & Other Things You Shouldn't Be Doing for online ebook

Lia Black says

I can always tell an author who really enjoys his or her characters. True to form, this quirky little sci fi ditty is sprinkled with Gabbo De La Parra's intelligent wit and sense of fun. Zero angst, a good amount of sizzling, uninhibited sex (virgin smurgen) and a hint that there is likely more to come from this universe. An entertaining read from an author who (I suspect) creates worlds just to see what kind of fun is to be had in them.

K says

Probably only just falling under 4.5 stars

Sci-fi/Steampunk/fantasy

Very imaginative and creative story of the reuniting of a race separated by time and space. Max's people use technology to modify their bodies and have control of the planet's magic, whereas Rezzu, whose spaceship lands on Max's planet on a mission to discover what happened to the 1000 people sent there centuries before, have bred with other races to give them white hair and longer lifespans. The pair, as Governor and Ambassador, find as they get to know each other they are attracted to each other - and through Max losing his wand yet again, that Rezzu can also control the planet's magic, and that he is Max's *other half*. This is one of those stories that you just kind of fall into and get captured by. I really enjoyed it.

Kaa says

I should have listened to ??????. Insta-love and barely any plot isn't my thing - I skimmed a lot of the second half and if it hadn't been for a challenge I would have DNF'd.

Alison says

Really enjoyed this one. Would love to read about some of the side characters and how they got to where they are.

For those who are interested, here are two FREE short stories starring members from the same Nova Gaia family:

Darkest Before Dawn (The Masked Man Serenade)

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

Story:

<https://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/...>

How I Lost it on Planet X

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1...>

Story:

<https://www.goodreads.com/topic/show/...>

Sandra says

Offered for FREE from the M/M Romance Group's Love's Landscapes event. Thank you too all the amazing authors who participated!

This had a very interesting premise, and I appreciate the complex world building that went into it. That being said, the world building may have been too complex for such a short story, as I got a little bogged down with names and planets and histories.

It started off light and fun, and I loved Max's character. Rezzu was a little... meh. He just didn't seem up to the task, and I know he kept saying "I'm not a diplomat" but he really didn't do anything to ease tensions of an alien ship landing on a planet. Why couldn't he just tell them their reasons for being there right away? It seemed as if he forgot since he was all caught up in Max.

There were plenty of funny moments. But after halfway I wasn't feeling their chemistry as much. Things turned on a dime and seemed to get more 'serious' although it felt forced. And those last 4 or so chapters just dragged things on unnecessarily. I'm all for a HEA, but we don't need *every* loose end tied up. And was it just me, or did it seem to be trying too hard to set up a prequel with Rezzu's Dad's romance?

Jeanne 'Divinae' says

I thought this was a good story. It is based on a futuristic society. We follow Max, who is a genius and tons to get in trouble. Mostly, for losing his wand. You can only lose so many... Everyone has a wand to help wield magic. The core of their planet is full with magic/energy. Max moves up in the ranks and becomes the youngest Governor. In fact, only after a few days, on his birthday, an unknown ship lands near his city. They have never met others from outside their world. Though, they know there are others. Hundreds of years ago, a group of them were left behind, to fend for themselves. Which, they did well. Why, they were in the first place was lost over the years though. One of the things about these humans is that some of their flesh is made out of a special metal(that can feel and is warm).

Rezzu, is the captain of the spaceship. His people weren't really expecting to find a thriving society but it is what it is. So, Rezzu has to play diplomat and Captain.. Reezu comes from a planet that consists of two races. In fact, his fathers are one of each. Another thing is that his lifespan is longer than a human's. But if he is lucky enough to find his mate, when they merge, so do their lifespans. He is thrown through a loop when he meets Max.

Together they have to figure if what is between them is more than lust. Also, more importantly, they need to figure out if they are going to forge an alliance or go to war.

I wasn't so sure about this story when I first came across it, but I glad I chose to pick it up and read it. It

ended up being a very good story and watching them unfold.

M'rella says

What Serena said in the second paragraph of her review.

Sunny says

This was so much fun! I laughed and grinned at so many parts of the story, bit my lip at the steamy bits, and appreciated the more serious moments. Max and Rezzu were an entertaining couple.

Other things I enjoyed ever so much:

Content warning of robotic foreplay

The world the story is set in

The sly, tongue in cheek humor

The dialogue

Rezzu's sister, Keda

The wands...how they are created and how they work

What I wish had been done differently:

I wish we had witnessed the initial meeting. The Colviri didn't even know the planet was inhabited, what was their reaction to finding the mechanical humanoids?

I didn't understand Rezzu not sharing his mission sooner. It didn't make sense to me and I wish he hadn't delayed telling Max. I also didn't understand his reaction to the magic.

The telling of Colviri history and how Rezzu's fathers got together was a little rushed and confusing.

Some of the writing got a little unwieldy/confusing in the last quarter of the story.

Mostly, though, I just sat back and enjoyed the ride.

One word to describe this story?

Exuberant :)

Vivian says

Gorgeous imagery in this steampunk, sci-fi romance.

Easy to fall in love with a man that's half machine when presented so exquisitely. Texture and color combined to in a manner that defies cyborg and is more akin to tattooing in its decorative appeal. Max is theatrical and performs his entire existence to his own specifications--he's arrogant and freaking adorable. When he meets Rezzu the two spark. The overall tone is sensuous. Loved the premise and the extensive background for the characters, very rich and engaging. Yum.

~◊~Doxni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~◊~ says

Feathers like eyes

Metal and flesh

Unruly heart

Virtuous mage

Fun, lyrical, and creative as hell, this story surpasses even the gorgeous image prompt. De La Parra builds an entire world, one brimming with various planets, other species, magic, technology, flying pets, and peacocks with feather eyes.

Steampunk meets sci-fi with a dash of space opera (that would be the funny bits), *Wand-Losing & Other Things You Shouldn't Be Doing* is a true original brimming with brilliant imagery.

Max and Rezzu dance an elaborate courtship tango, and let's say the final penetration is divine:

You're going to fuck me hard until no other name can escape my lips...until you flood me with your seed..until I'm nothing but a squirming mass belonging only to you.

Annika says

I'm really torn about rating this story. For one the world building was great but left open quite a bit of questions for me (why the enhancements and how do they work, especially why when there is magic, how did the first settlers survive and make the planet inhabitable etc).

I went with the prompt which implies a hostile attack and the winded way it all turned out was kind of disappointing. Not that I was looking for hostility taking place but there was no good reason to conceal the purpose of the visit.

Regarding the writing, there were passages which were almost lyrical and then again others total cliché, my mood changed from being amazed to sighting about reading the same clichés and phrases again.

And I have personal pet peeve, that's acrobatic sex, which makes me just roll my eyes.

Jaye McKenna says

Gabbo's unique turn of phrase makes this a really fun read with some seriously hot moments.

Cari Z. says

If you like a clever turn of phrase, if you like reading something with a certain elegance to it, and if you don't mind a story that tends to meander all over the place in its journey toward the end, then this is the story for you. It's got some serious sexiness, it's set in a delightful, well-built world, and the characters are just odd enough to be quirky, not annoying.

I needed to come back to this story when I was in a more patient place, but it was well worth it.

Bookwatcher says

Rezzu and max, two represents of two races, the Colviri and Alettans. Enemies or lovers?

It's a very erotic short (VERY) and also full of humor in a solid plot. No surprises for me. I read Septima Luna, so I KNEW this writer would, again, make me have a good time.

Thank you Gabbo, for this great freebie!

I loved it! 5 stars

Serena Yates says

Set in a version of the far future that is as imaginative as it is unusual, this story mixes elements of fantasy (magic) and science fiction (the setting is Aletta, an abandoned human colony rediscovered a thousand years later) with a touch of Steampunk (the ex-colonists use body enhancements and technology reminiscent of the Victorian era). The characters are engaging, and the situation is challenging: humans have found and interbred with aliens called Colviri and are approaching the still purely human ex-colony to offer their help - only to be presented with a few surprises.

Max, the appointed diplomat for the Alettans, and Rezzu, the captain of the Colviri-Human spaceship, are in charge of trying to figure out each party's motivations and intentions. Of course, they end up being so busy with purely interpersonal, ahem, issues, that the entire situation almost gets out of hand.

If you like creative settings for futuristic stories, if you enjoy reading about two men who try to keep their own secrets while revealing those of the opponent, and if you're looking for an entertaining read with lots of fun technological and magical details, then you will probably enjoy this free novella.
