

CUDDLES ON CLEMENTINES DAY

By Jeff Dunne

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CHARACTERS

GABBY	A cuttlefish at one of the big aquariums
LOGAN	A squid, and tankmate of Gabby

SETTING

A tank at the Baltimore (or wherever) Aquarium.

SCENE

(It is a large tank in the Baltimore (or other city) Aquarium. Logan, a squid, is staring out at the people when Gabby, a cuttlefish, swims up.)

GABBY

Hey, Logan!

LOGAN

Oh, holy Neptune! Gabby, you scared the plankton out of me! What are you sneaking up on a squid like that for?!

(Gabby gets right up next to Logan, clearly inside its personal space. Over the next several lines, Gabby keeps sidling right up to Logan, who keeps moving away to make some space.)

GABBY

What're you looking at?

LOGAN

The air-breathers out there. There're so many of them here today?

GABBY

Yeah. I was just up at the surface, and heard that the aquarium's having some big event. Something called 'Clementines Day'.

LOGAN

You mean those tiny oranges?

GABBY

That's what I'm thinking.

LOGAN

I guess that explains all the people. I once grabbed an orange when the keepers weren't looking. Oh, they're delicious.

GABBY

So I've heard.

LOGAN

Okay, what gives?

GABBY

(Now backing off...)

What do you mean?

LOGAN

Why do you keep rubbing up against me?

GABBY

No reason. It's just what I do. What comes natural, you know?

LOGAN

You never used to do this.

GABBY

Sure I did.

(Gabby rushes forward, rubbing up against Logan, who pushes him/her away.)

LOGAN

No. You didn't. Not once. And between you and me, I was okay with that. Cephalopods are solitary creatures.

GABBY

No we're not. Well, I'm not.

(Gabby rushes up, but meets a Heisman tentacle.)

LOGAN

Enough. What in the deep dark blue is with you today?

(Gabby hesitates, then spills it.)

GABBY

Alright, fine. You know how I said that I was up at the surface just a bit ago? Well, I overheard some of the keepers talking. Oh, that reminds me.

(Gabby hands Logan half a sandwich.)

I didn't see any of the little oranges, but I was able to grab this. I saved you half. Anyway, so I was up there, and overheard one of them talking about me. It was the blonde girl with the big elbows.

LOGAN

She's great.

GABBY

Yeah. Anyway, she's talking about me. She says, and this is a quote, "I think we should have a keeper chat this afternoon about Gabby, since everyone's so fascinated these days with cuddle fish".

LOGAN

No way.

GABBY

I swear on my grandmother's denticulated suckers. That's exactly what she said.

LOGAN

I don't believe it.

GABBY

So I think it's pretty logical to conclude from this that I... must be a cuddle fish.

LOGAN

Uh huh.

GABBY

And you know how last week I was telling you I just didn't feel fulfilled lately, like there just wasn't anything meaningful in my life?

LOGAN

We talked last week?

GABBY

(Blowing right past this...)

Well, I think it's because I've been denying my inner nature. As a cuddle fish. If that's what I am, then I should... you know... be cuddling. A lot.

LOGAN

A cuddle fish?

GABBY

Uh huh.

LOGAN

(Thinking about it for a few moments, then...)

Fine. Whatever.

(Gabby get's all excited, and rushes up, snuggling up to Logan, who sighs in resignation and then proceeds to focus on the sandwich. S/he takes a bite, considers, then...)

Tuna. I like it.

(Lights out.)