

Let's Talk Dusty!

The Ultimate Forum for Dusty Springfield Fans
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Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

<http://www.dustyspringfield.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=5816>

Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **T.T. Thomas**

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Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 7:50 am**

Well, it was no secret to DS, initially, that I was quite put off to have to like the new GF, Teda.

"You met her in REHAB!" I objected.

"I met you at an AA meeting," she responded, looking quite proud of herself.

Hmmm. Good point. Ok, I'll meet her---or meet her again---because I had met her years earlier through another friend, and I recalled that my first impression was that she was, without reservation, quite mad. Whacko. Nuts. Crazy.

So the appointed meetup happened, and it immediately became a laugh fest. The woman was quite mad---and extremely funny. Dust adored her. Ok, fine. But don't make me spend a lot of time with her! LOL...Madam thanked me for not outright hissing, and we all went on our merry way. She and Teda had just taken a place, I believe on Hollywood Blvd..or it could have been Franklin Blvd, but I think it was Hollywood.

So one morning---and by morning I mean 2 a.m., LOLOL....I get this call, and we have the usual chit-chat about this and that. (You may wonder how I remember all this---well I *do* have an ear for dialog, but even if it's not word-for-word perfect, it's close enough replication for you to get the idea, the flavor, even the tone!)

"Where's Teda?" I asked, not really caring.

"In jail," she said, without missing a beat.

Then we both laughed really loud for about five minutes. I guess Teda had some kind of disorderly conduct warrant outstanding (as if she had ever been orderly!), and they picked her up on that and threw her into Sybil Brand Institute---local jail for women.

So I'm thinking *opportunity*, but...Dusty's talking *bail*. **THUD**. She had been faithfully going to jail to visit Teda every single day for a week and hadn't told me. Evidently the law breaker was getting out the next day but had a court date, two days hence, in Beverly Hills, and if she didn't beat the rap, she'd be going down river for about a year. Or is that up the river? Well far be it from me to tear the lovebirds apart...heh. I mean the (much later) troubles hadn't really escalated at this point--trouble was always in the air, but they always seemed to sort it out.

"She needs a character reference in court," Dusty said, without preamble.

"Really? Who's crazy enough to do that?"

"Well, you're not totally crazy, but maybe you'd do it for me?"

"Huh? Qu'est que ce 'not totally crazy'???"

More laughter. "Anyway" says she, 'if you would do it, I have a very special thank you gift for you---from both me and Teda."

"Handcuffs?" I joked.

More laughter.

"Well, in case your character reference doesn't work, we have to find homes for her five kittens---her cat just had kittens. Actually, even if it does work, we have to find homes. *Good* homes, she emphasized."

"Where's the gift part of this tearjerker?" I asked.

"Well you don't need to be insensitive. See, I knew you weren't a cat person, you're a dog person. I've always known it."

"Wha---?? No, it's just that I'm not a *Teda person*," I cried, "and OK, yes, if I keep Teda out of prison, I get one of her kittens---"

"It's from both of us," she clarified

"And, OK, thank you, but I feel like I just won two week all-expenses paid to Pittsburgh!"

"They have fabulous steel mills," she offered. "So you'll do it?"

Looonnnngggggggg silence. Giggles. Full on laughter. From both of us.

"OK, so what do I have to do---I don't know when I'm going to have time to write a letter, but---"

"No, no letter," she said, "you have to come and tell the judge why Teda deserves to stay out of jail."

"Well it's going to take me a good year to think of a reason," I said.

"Missy Tarra?" (was that a sniffle?)(Or a laugh) (I better be careful here--it could be either one...I'll go with sniffle).

"Oh Jesus, OK, OK, don't cry. Please don't cry. When and where?"

"Day after tomorrow."

My friends, as you know, I write fiction. But I have never written anything quite as compelling as the speech I gave the judge that morning. OMG...I don't remember it, of course, but it was along the lines of....yes, Your Honor, she is a very good person, at heart, and yes, Your Honor, I'll guarantee, she goes to her meetings, that she won't drink, that she will report in when needed, etc etc etc. Everyone deserves a second chance Your Honor.

"Miss B has had five chances," he said, glaring at me.

"I know that Your Honor, but she was drunk for the last four chances, but now she has her support group and we, well I, will guarantee a changed Teda."

"Miss Thomas, either you're a very good friend or terribly delusional. Alright, you may go Miss B., and please, don't let me see you in here again."

Both Dusty and Teda would have looked at me with eyes full of gratitude and relief, but they were somewhere between feeling shocked and wanting to die laughing. LOL...we picked Teda up around the back of the court house, and I was thinking we would all go to a celebratory breakfast, but Dusty said, no, first let's go get the kitten.

I waited in the car while they went into the apartment and came out with a darling black and white kitty.

"He needs a name," Dusty said, "but it has to *suit him*."

"Murphy!" I said, "in honor of Judge Murphy who has rewarded me with a...a cat."

"Now if you won't love him, I won't give him to you," Madam said, finding my humor very funny but she was trying to be stern.

"I already love him," I groused. "and look, he loves me back." Murphy proceeded to relieve himself on my nice black dress pants. The kind you go to court in. When you're not the prisoner.

"See, that's because he's frightened," she said taking him out of my arms.

"I want my cat back," I protested.

She didn't answer. Teda rolled her eyes but gave me the "this might be a good time to say nothing" look. So I said nothing, just looked sad. Finally, she handed him back to me. "I've calmed him down," she said. "See you don't rile Murphy up...again."

Oh, yes ma'am! I kissed Murphy and petted him and coo-coo'd him, and not counting that he looked like he was going to bolt from the arms of the crazy lady holding him, we bonded. Awkwardly, of course, but my innate understanding of how living with Teda could prove troublesome for at least six of his nine lives, I actually did fall in love with Murphy. Yes, yes, at first sight. ::sigh::

We drove to the local pet store where Dusty picked out everything I would need while I waited in the car with Murphy.

She had to get help out with the bags, and some guy was carrying a big roe-colored, carpeted, three-story house. With veranda. Oh no...there goes my eclectic decor!

"Nice!" I lied. "What is it?" Of course I knew what it was...years earlier I had bought the same thing for my kitty Rewrite. Rewrite got the feline leukemia thing after about 7 years, and I swore no more cats.

"He needs his own home," she said and made the universal sign for "give me some tip money?" and money changed hands, whereupon she tipped the guy carrying the house. "He might be in trauma for a few days because we've taken him from his mum."

I so related.

We took the whole kitty and kaboodle to my place, and Dusty set up the catbox, the house, the feeding station and the toy box. Then she had to go because Teda was waiting. LOL...to think I coulda blown that court appearance...and, uh, no. Nope. Teda was a good person, basically. Dusty loved her. I did what any sane person would do: I took the kitty and said thank you!

So Murphy and I became the best of friends, and I loved that little guy to pieces. Dusty would visit him at my place, and when he was diagnosed with feline leukemia, we took him to her special woman vet somewhere in West Los Angeles. He lasted another few months. We both cried. But honestly? I think she cried more. She was like that.

A couple of times I mentioned another kitty but she said it was too soon.

Did I ever get another cat? I did. Dusty had returned to England, and I got Oscar Wild. He was a pretty little thing, a bit fey, I think, with the best manners I've ever seen in an animal. I told her about him and she was happy. I told her Nicholas would love him.

"I doubt it," she laughed. "He's far too spoiled to want to share the limelight."

So there you have it...due to one late night phone call, I managed to keep Teda out of jail, keep Dusty smiling and keep Murphy who, bless his heart, was dubious but willing!

"He'll get used to you," she once told me. "Just listen to him. You can't pick him up and pet him like a dog. Let him come to you. And talk to him, but keep your voice down. And if he doesn't want to sleep with you, keep the door open in case he changes his mind."

I was about to give her "the look" but when I looked up, she giving it to me! Alrighty then, women/mood swings, cats/mood swings---this should be easy as I'd had lots of practise! LOL...I can't tell you how often we laughed, later, when she conceded she never thought we'd last. I think she was referring to me and the cat. ;-)
Meow. There's a moment in one of her songs that perfectly captures "the look." I've seen it often but there's a moment right at the very end in one of the youtube vids of Reputation that I love. Go watch the vid again, you'll see it. That look is part sexy kitty and part don't try to pull the wool over my eyes, Missy Tarra! LOL

Someone will have to show me how to grab a screenshot from youtube. I tried this <https://www.dropbox.com/s/ut8ell5gduvp8ag/Screenshot%202013-12-23%2021.51.22.png> Don't know if it'll work.

Of all the things I learned from DS, and I learned a lot, the biggest one was that you can't always say what the gift will be, and even when you think it's not what you wanted, you find out it's what you needed all along.

Merry Christmas to all here who love Dusty; believe me when I tell you, she loved you back.

With love...T/3

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **dusty nut**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 8:09 am**

Happy Christmas to you Tara. Just read your article which I loved. You were so very lucky to have Dusty in your life and to be a good friend to her. You both certainly shared a lot of laughter.

The shot worked and yes, I could see what you meant about the expression. 😄🌟❤️🌹

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **IWannaBeABluesSinger**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 8:58 am**

Great story Tarra - thanks for sharing. Merry Christmas and here's the picture:



Screenshot 2013-12-23 21.51.22.pjpg (33.94 KiB) Viewed 3891 times

Maggie

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **darren2722**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 9:30 am**

Welcome Back Tarra. Glad to have you back on the forum. I hope you're new book will be a big success. 😊

Thank you for sharing with us such a great story. Beautifully written as usual, and in just a few paragraphs we again get the essence of Dusty's personality and caring nature. 🙌🙌

Thanks also for being such a good friend to Dusty, and explaining Teda's appeal to Dusty, to us disbelievers who without knowing her (or only the Horrible parts) were struggling to find anything nice in her personality that would suggest why Dusty fell in love with her : Her (Teda's) humor and love of animals were at least two things she had going for her.

Have A Wonderful Christmas Tarra. 🎉

P.S It would be absolutely fantastic to hear any further recollections from you in the future. 😊

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **karen**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 9:40 am**

As has been said , thanks for sharing with us Tarra,have a lovely Christmas and a Very Happy New Year.. 🎁🌹

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Cas19**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 9:51 am**

Loved the story Tarra, happy to see you posting again, everything you write is really interesting.
Have a great Christmas and New Year.

Cas x

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Cardiff Bluesgirl**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 1:32 pm**

nice to see you back and an interesting tale too. 😊

loved all the kitty side of it , sounds typical Dusty 😊

but still feel the same about the woman of the story and her devastating mistreatment of Dusty.. 🙄

have a good Christmas and thanks for sharing some Dusty tales with us. 🙌

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Beautiful soul**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 1:45 pm**

What a fantastic story to wake up to!! The long awaited "cat, and the courthouse, then goodbye", to paraphrase

(badly) the old Patsy Cline song. 😊

Thanks for being such a good friend of Dusty's and being so generous in sharing your memories-- they are like diamonds to her fans! ❤️

Wishing you, Karyn, and Teddy a very Merry Christmas, and a great New Year! 🎉

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Zoey**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 4:40 pm**

Hello Tarra! I didn't know you before, but I'm glad you're here now! Thank you for sharing the story, I hope you have a really lovely Christmas. 😊

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Cecelia**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 6:44 pm**

Hi Missy Tarra: I must say that is one of the best Christmas presents for those of us that love Dusty. It was a wonderful story and well said. Here's hoping you and yours have a wonderful holiday and a very happy and healthy New Year. And it is a great time for all of us when you return and share all your beautiful stories.
Cecelia

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **boztiggs**

Posted: **Tue Dec 24, 2013 8:09 pm**

Great story TT!!!!

Neil 😊

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Dotty86**

Posted: **Wed Dec 25, 2013 12:58 am**

Welcome back Tarra 😊 Another great story. Thanks for sharing 🙌

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **allherfaces**

Posted: **Wed Dec 25, 2013 1:40 am**

Thank you, sweet T3. I really really needed the smiles you gave me tonight.

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **trek007**

Posted: **Wed Dec 25, 2013 1:04 pm**

Thanks for the memories Tarra.

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **jeffery**

Posted: **Wed Dec 25, 2013 11:59 pm**

★ That was a great gift Tarra. 🐶

Dog, or kitty it doesn't matter.

Dusty recognized that unconditional love they give us.

Thanks for thinking of us this Christmas season.

May peace, and love fill your holiday this evening. 🌹

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Corinna**

Posted: **Sun Dec 29, 2013 6:15 pm**

Wow T3, that was quite some story... Thanks for sharing, it's a treasure that reveals so much about Dusty. ❤️

And you're great at giving people second chances. And third. And probably fourth. 😊😄

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **LilCajunGirl**

Posted: **Tue Jan 14, 2014 5:07 am**

Wow. I have tears. Such a great story and memory.

Touched my heart! ❤️

I suspect "That Woman" had at least some redeeming qualities, because DS loved her. However, I still would like to have a crack at her. And by "crack" I mean with a baseball bat!!!

Re: Dusty's Gift To Me Is my Gift To You

by **Beautiful soul**

Posted: **Tue Jan 14, 2014 3:08 pm**

LilCajunGirl wrote:

Wow. I have tears. Such a great story and memory.

Touched my heart! ❤️

I suspect "That Woman" had at least some redeeming qualities, because DS loved her. However, I still would like to have a crack at her. And by "crack" I mean with a baseball bat!!!

Another good Southerner! 😊 welcome sister! 😊