

His Tongue

Lawrence Schimel

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Scott Murphy's lover, Marvin, died seven years ago thanks to AIDS. Since then, Scott has become so withdrawn that he has ceased to function as a sexual being. "Scott no longer had sex—not with a lover, not even with himself. He had so given up any sexual activity, he had now forgotten how to enjoy the intimacy of another body, the slide of skin on skin."

Scott is visited by old boyfriends, including his dead lover, in "A Queer Christmas Carol," the author's take-off on the Dickens classic. Their mission is to bring Scott back to life by showing him his past, present, and future life. Marvin is dead and Scott is called to task for dying along with him.

This queer version of Dickens is just one in this collection of thirteen stories touching on subjects ranging from new trysts with old boyfriends to erotic practice with a college polo team captain to lovers meeting in a museum courtyard. Characters range from religious gay Jews to drag queens to lovers tricking with others outside their relationships.

"Cruising the Clinic" is a story about a patient's sexual fantasies while waiting to see a doctor in a sexually transmitted disease clinic. While facing the humiliation and fear associated with being examined and treated, the patient's mind wanders, analyzing each of the other patients and dealing with his attraction to another patient.

His Tongue certainly provides readers with sexual fantasy and excitement. Schimel's stories go beyond the fantasy level so prevalent in most erotica, beyond the mere titillation of sexual desire, arousal, and fulfillment. Each tale draws enough depth in character development to lure readers into wanting the story to continue so that the personalities can be further explored. Characters appear real to life rather than the idealized sexual gods so often portrayed in the gay erotica genre.

Schimel is a Lambda Library Award winner and is the author and anthologist of a variety of books of gay erotica.

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