The Sexuality Re-Evaluation

by VigilantSycamore

Summary

Sheldon hadn't really given much thought to it. He just assumed that, as a Homo novus, he was above such base urges.
And then Amy Farrah Fowler turned his life upside down.

Turns out, Sheldon Cooper does have a "deal" after all.
The Mistletoe Tradition

“Why is there a semi-parasitic plant hanging from the ceiling?” Sheldon asked Leonard and Penny.

“It’s mistletoe, Sheldon,” Leonard reminded his friend. “It’s kind of a tradition.”

Leonard and Penny were holding a Christmas Eve party in Penny’s apartment. Sheldon had turned down the invitation at first, but then he’d found out that Amy was coming. That had been more than enough to change his mind.


“Hypocrite,” Penny said while pretending to cough.

Sheldon glared at her. “I’ll have you know I’m very consistent in my views on kissing!”

“Weren’t you just kissing Amy in the hallway?” Penny asked him.

“…And those views are ’kissing is gross, unless it’s with Amy,’” the theoretical physicist finished.

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“Hey, can I ask you guys a favour?” Penny said to Sheldon and Amy. “It’s for a friend from work.”

Sheldon and Amy were holding hands while trying to limit their interactions with the crowd when Penny walked up to them and asked them if they could do a favour for a friend from work. Sheldon wasn’t too happy about being interrupted, but before he could complain Amy agreed.

“Why would you say that?” Sheldon whispered as Penny led them to her work friend.

“Because it’s the nice thing to do,” Amy explained.

Sheldon looked sceptical, so Amy added that Penny had asked for a favour, so she would owe them if they agreed.

Of course, that turned out to be irrelevant when Penny stopped in the middle of the living room. Sheldon and Amy stopped two feet away from her.

“I don’t understand,” Sheldon said. “Where’s your work friend?”

“I lied,” Penny grinned.

That just confused the two scientists more. “So what was the point of this?” Amy asked.

“Look up,” Penny told them.

They looked up and saw the semi-parasitic plant. It was directly above them.

“Have fun,” Penny said as she left them underneath the semi-parasitic plant.

Sheldon and Amy looked into each other’s eyes.

“Well,” Sheldon began, “it is tradition. We might as well get it over with.”

Amy tried not to show her disappointment. When she saw the semi-parasitic plant, she’d hoped
Sheldon would be more enthusiastic about the idea of kissing in public. (He was already enthusiastic about it in private.)

They kissed.

It was a fairly chaste kiss, but it lasted a long time. When they finally pulled apart, Sheldon said, “I think we did it wrong. We should kiss again, just to be safe.”

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The party was over and Sheldon was panicking.

He’d kissed Amy before (he’d done a lot more than that seven days ago) and he’d enjoyed it every time, but the symptoms he was experiencing now…

He would have called them unprecedented if the Council of Sheldons wouldn’t have laughed in his face and pointed to his eidetic memory. He’d experienced these symptoms before… on one or two occasions.

Differential diagnosis told him that the most likely causes were sexual arousal (as if) and infection by an alien parasite (also highly unlikely given his impeccable hygiene).

Oh darn, he had impeccable hygiene! That meant his immune system was ridiculously untrained! If he really was infected, he’d be dead by the time he woke up! Then who would solve the mysteries of the universe?

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Leonard and Penny were sleeping in Leonard’s bedroom this night. Which meant that it took about half a minute less than it would have otherwise for them to be woken up by three knocks, followed by Sheldon saying, “Leonard and Penny.” Then the same again. And a third time. As usual.

“What is it Sheldon?” Leonard groaned sleepily.

“If I die…” Sheldon began. There was a short silence before he finished with “don’t let anyone touch my spot.”

“You can count on us,” Penny reassured him just as sleepily as Leonard.

“And make sure only Amy reads my notes,” Sheldon added.

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The next morning Sheldon woke up to find that he hadn’t died yet. That ruled out the alien parasite. And left sexual arousal as the most probable cause.

Oh boy.
And Sheldon had thought he’d been nervous when he’d been picking out a gift.

He’d wracked his brains for a suitable Christmas Newtonmas present to no avail (it’s not like he could give someone the same gift for Newtonmas and for their birthday, especially when said birthday was a week before Newtonmas Eve), so he decided to ask Penny for help. (“I can’t give her the same gift two occasions in a row, Penny!” Sheldon shot down her suggestion, not telling her that it had been the only idea he could think of.) She suggested something that fit Amy’s interests, so Sheldon decided to make a list.

Dr Amy Farrah Fowler’s top interests:

1. Dr Sheldon Lee Cooper
2. Neurology
3. Little House on the Prairie
4. …

Hadn’t Amy once tried to explain to him that conlang she’d developed?

Dr Amy Farrah Fowler’s top interests:

1. Dr Sheldon Lee Cooper
2. Neurology
3. Little House on the Prairie
4. Linguistics

The first option was out - the lizard brain Sheldon had forgotten he had disagreed, but there was nothing worse than redundancy. Fortunately, that still left him with three options. For each one, Sheldon set up a tournament bracket to find the best possible gift in that category to give to Amy - that took him a day - then pit the three finalists against each other. Eventually, he was able to find and purchase the best gift.

And now he was standing outside Amy’s apartment. He’d texted her to expect a surprise (giving any details away would have been a huge spoiler, but not warning her at all would have been rude). He recalled being nervous when he fretted over what to get Amy for Newtonmas. But now he was too nervous to even knock!

He didn’t know if he’d been standing outside for fifteen seconds or fifteen minutes before he finally raised his knuckles towards the wooden barrier.


Amy opened the door.

“Hi Sheldon,” she said, smiling at him. “Merry Newtonmas.”

“Merry Newtonmas, Amy,” Sheldon smiled back. He reached to the left, picking up something to the left of the doorway. When he held it in his arms, Amy saw that it was a large cuboid neatly and thoroughly enveloped in wrapping paper that had diagrams of atoms and neurons on it.

“Thank you Sheldon,” Amy said. “Do you want to come inside?”
'No, lizard brain, that's not what she means,' Sheldon thought. ‘She’s going to unwrap the present and she wants me to be there when she does.’

“Yes, thanks for asking,” Sheldon said.

They sat down on Amy’s couch and Sheldon handed Amy the carefully wrapped gift. Amy unwrapped it, cutting the tape with scissors and making sure not to tear the wrapping paper. When she was done and saw what the gift was, she didn’t know what to say.

It was a book: a large tome, the cover illustrated with stick figures and fictional characters speaking in various languages, the title reading ‘From Sindarin to Esperanto: a Comprehensive Analysis of Constructed Languages’.

Amy’s face lit up, and in the blink of an eye she was passionately kissing Sheldon.

Amy was the first one to break contact. “Sorry,” she said looking down. “I should have told you I was going to kiss you.”

Sheldon smiled at her. “It’s alright Amy. I love kissing you.”

They started kissing again.

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Quite a long while later, the two of them were on their way to a storage unit. Once they’d finished their make-out session, Amy had informed Sheldon that she had a present for him too, but that it wasn’t in her apartment. She also made Sheldon promise not to try to guess what it was.

“We’re here,” Amy said as she stopped in front of a storage unit door. She reached down to lift the door up.

“I can’t wait to see it!” Sheldon said excitedly as he helped his girlfriend lift the door.

Once the door was all the way up, Amy watched her boyfriend run inside and take in his surroundings. His jaw dropped when he realized where he was.

“This is the bridge from Star Trek: the Original Series,” he said. Sheldon eyes were full of admiration, gratitude, and joy.

“Yep,” Amy said as she followed him inside.

“How…?”

“I asked around the Star Trek forums if I could hire someone to build a recreation of a set from the show, and eventually found a small company located in Pasadena that recreates sets from all sorts of franchises.”

Sheldon looked at Amy. “Amy… I’m going to kiss you now, if that’s okay.”

“Yes,” Amy said.

And the two scientists started their second make-out session that day.

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“Science Officer’s log. Stardate minus three oh seven oh one seven point six. The symptoms I’ve
been experiencing continue to manifest themselves and my diagnosis is that I am experiencing sexual attraction to one Amy Farrah Fowler. This is… not unexpected, but certainly unprecedented. I’ll need to re-evaluate certain things in light of this turn of events. However, at present I have other matters to attend to.”

Sheldon stopped the recording and began acting out a scene that could have been in the show during the sixties, running to each station to do an accurate impression of each character.

“Mr Sulu, fire photon torpedoes!”

“Firing photon torpedoes.”

“Cap’n, the shield’s cannae take much more a’ this!”

“Captain, the enemy vessel could have destroyed us already if it hadn’t retreated. The logical conclusion is that something we did damaged it.”

“But what could it be?.. Of course! The comms!”

“There transmission didn’t make sense because it wasn’t a message. Their ship’s shields must be susceptible to disruption by specific radio frequencies. They assumed the same was the case for us, so they sent out the same transmission at a wide range of frequencies.”

“And our attempts at communicating disrupted their shields! Exactly, Mr Sulu! Mr Chekov, can you identify the frequency that caused them to retreat?”

“It veel take some time Keptin, but I can do eet.”

See? Like something right out of the show.
The New Year's Celebration

“So, you remember how the Christmas Eve party was such a success?” Penny asked.

“Well, two of us weren’t there because we don’t do the whole ‘Christmas’ thing, but go on,” Howard joked.

“Actually, we were both part of that Christmas D and D game,” Raj pointed out, “I think Mariah Carey is stunning, and last year you stapled mistletoe to a Santa hat and wore it all day on Christmas just so Bernadette would keep kissing you. Well, Christmas Eve, on Christmas Day you stapled the mistletoe to your belt instead.”

“Don’t remind me,” Bernadette ordered Raj. “My father visited when Howard was wearing that.”

“Anyway,” Leonard said, “we’ve decided to have another one for New Year’s!”

Sheldon stared at Leonard and Penny. “Two parties in one week? What are you two, animals?”

They ignored him. “And we’d love for all of you to be there,” Penny said.

“I don’t know,” Sheldon said. “I feel like I’m kind of partied out.”

“We should totally come!” Amy said. “Ohmygod, is there going to be a countdown?”

“Can’t have a New Years’ party without a countdown,” Penny affirmed.

At this point, the pitch of Amy’s voice was rising thanks to her excitement. “We could kiss at midnight!” she told Sheldon. “I’ve always wanted to do that!”

At the mention of the word ‘kiss’, Sheldon’s eyebrows shot up. “We’re going to that party,” he proclaimed.

Leonard and Penny shared a discreet fist bump.

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Three days later, on New Year’s Eve, Sheldon and Amy were dancing.

“Amy?”

“Yes Sheldon?”

“I’m really glad we decided to go to this party.”

“I’m glad too.”

There were thirty seconds left until midnight.

At the other end of the living room, Stuart was standing awkwardly next to Raj.

“Twenty seconds until the countdown,” Stuart said.

“Yep,” Raj agreed. “Good thing I’m here with Emily. I finally have someone to kiss at midnight.”

“Oh, good,” Stuart said. “Uh, so do I.”
“Really? Good for you, Stuart. What’s her name?”

“Uh, you know what, I should really go… find her…” Stuart said before leaving.

Back in their own corner of the living room, Sheldon and Amy were also talking about the countdown.

“Can you believe that eight days ago we were kissing in this room and now we’re about to do it again?” Sheldon asked.

“I know,” Amy replied. “It’s so romantic!”

“Romantic? Try insane,” Sheldon said. He was smiling though.

“Alright everyone!” Penny shouted. “Ten! Nine! Eight!” As Penny counted down, most of the guests joined in. “Seven! Six! Five! Four! Three! Two! One! Happy New Year!”

Penny and Leonard kissed.

Raj and Emily kissed.

Howard and Bernadette kissed.

And Sheldon and Amy kissed.
Knock, knock, knock.

“Penny.”

Knock, knock, knock.

“Penny.”

Knock, knock, knock.

“Penny.”

Penny opened the door. “What is it Sheldon?”

“I don’t know what I am.”

“I’m pretty sure you’re a Vulcan.”

“I’m not talking about my species,” Sheldon said. “I mean my sexuality.”

Penny blinked. “And you’re asking me about this?”

“You have a Tumblr blog, I figured you’d know more about this kind of thing than the rest of the group.”

“That is such an overgeneralization,” Penny said, “but you’re right. Come in.”

“Thank you,” Sheldon said as he walked in. “And for the record, if I was an alien it wouldn’t be a Vulcan. My ears and eyebrows look too human, if anything I’d be a Time Lord.”

“…Right.”

Penny sat down on her couch. Sheldon stayed standing and looked at her pointedly.

“Sit down, Sheldon.”

“Thank you,” Sheldon said as he sat down. “I’ve thought of myself as asexual ever since I understood the concept of sex,” he said, getting right to the point, “but recent events suggest that I was wrong.”

“I’m guessing Amy brought this on?” Penny asked.

Sheldon nodded. “That vixen’s been wreaking havoc upon my limbic system ever since her birthday,” he said. “Longer, actually.”

Penny didn’t know what Sheldon meant by ‘limbic system’ but she tried not to think about what kind of ‘havoc’ he was referring to. “So, my first guess would be that you’re either straight or bi or pan-“

“I don’t know what that last one means, but if it’s anything like the other two I doubt it applies to me,” Sheldon interrupted. “If I was heterosexual or bisexual, I’d have experienced attraction to
people other than Amy. The fact that I have not proves both hypotheses false.”

“Aww,” Penny said, “that’s strangely romantic. And by the way, pansexual basically means being attracted to people no matter what their gender is.”

“That still doesn’t sound like me. Isn’t there anything else?”

Penny considered for a moment. “I suppose, if you’ve thought of yourself as ace for so long, it could be something else on the asexual spectrum. Maybe you’re demisexual?”

“And what does that mean?” Sheldon asked.

“A demisexual person is only sexually attracted to people they’ve already got an emotional connection to,” Penny explained, “so they seem asexual most of the time.”

Sheldon thought about this. “It would explain a lot,” he said. “Penny, you’re right! I, Doctor Sheldon Lee Cooper, am demisexual!”

“It’s good you’re adjusting so well,” Penny said.

“I’m going to Skype Amy and tell her I’ve re-evaluated my sexuality!” Sheldon said in excitement. “Thank you, Penny!” Sheldon ran back to his apartment, stopping to gently close the door behind him.

“You’re welcome,” Penny said.

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“And that’s when the conference was over,” Amy finished telling Sheldon about her day. “What about you?”

“Oh, something interesting happened to me,” Sheldon said. “You see…” Sheldon froze. This was something for him to tell Amy in person. He’d have to explain the context, and he couldn’t tell her about his growing physical attraction to her over Skype! Quick, find a meaningless anecdote that sounded like something that would fascinate him! “…I found a penny on the subway that dates back to 1938.”

Chapter End Notes

I’m writing Sheldon as demisexual because it explains why he did not display signs of sexual attraction before he met Amy, but did display evidence of being attracted to her, particularly by season nine. I’d just like to note that Sheldon may be a demisexual who self-identified as asexual until now, but that does not mean that this is always the case with asexuality. Additionally, if I’ve gotten anything wrong about sexuality, I apologize. Hopefully though, I have not, but if I have then please tell me so that I can work on avoiding the same mistake in the future.
In retrospect, it was quite fortuitous that the day after Amy’s return to Pasadena was the third Thursday in January, a month with five Thursdays in it. When better for Sheldon to tell Amy that he was demisexual than Date Night?

“What did you want to tell me?” Amy asked.

Sheldon gulped. He hadn’t expected himself to be this nervous. ‘I could make something up instead of telling her,’ Sheldon thought. ‘Wait. No. Terrible idea.’

Besides, Amy probably already knew that Sheldon had something big to tell her: after all, once she’d returned to Pasadena, he’d pulled out all the stops to make their first day back in the same city special short of moving date night.

Concluding that the best course of action was to talk to her about this now, Sheldon started speaking. “Amy, ever since your birthday last calendar year, when we had coitus for the first time, I’ve been…” he paused, trying to find the right words. “I’ve been experiencing physiological symptoms that I honestly never expected to experience,” he said at last. “I considered several hypotheses, but eventually I had to conclude that I was experiencing sexual attraction towards you. That had never happened to me with anyone else.”

That part had been easy to say. It was this next part that would be difficult. “Because I had never experienced those symptoms before, I have long held the belief that I was fully asexual, but being attracted to you has… has proven me wrong, and led me to re-evaluate my sexuality. After I consulted Penny, she helped me realise that I am, in all likelihood, demisexual.”

“What does that mean?” Amy asked.

“It means that I do experience sexual attraction, but I have to have a strong emotional connection to the person I’m attracted to first. In any other scenario, I react exactly as I would if I was fully asexual,” Sheldon explained. “I hope that this will not alter our relationship dynamics too severely,” he said, warily.

Amy smiled at him. “Of course it won’t, Sheldon,” she reassured her boyfriend. “You’re still the same genius I fell in love with.”

“So this doesn’t change anything?”

“Not unless you want it to,” Amy replied. “I admit, I see this as an opportunity to increase how frequently we have coitus, but I’m not going to push you into anything.”

Sheldon considered this. “Well, I suppose I could draft an amendment to the physical affection section of our agreement, which would make coitus semi-annual rather than annual… or even more frequent than that,” he suggested.

“You do want to change things, don’t you?”

“Alright, I do,” Sheldon admitted. “But don’t tell anyone, or I’ll never hear the end of it.”

“You have my word, Sheldon.”

“I’m glad,” Sheldon said.
They leaned closer together, and kissed.

It wasn’t a chaste kiss, but it wasn’t an intense one either. Somewhere in between. There was definite exchange of mouth microbiota going on, but Sheldon didn’t really care right now. He and Amy kissed for four minutes and thirty six seconds before coming up for air.

“You know,” Amy said, grinning, “I think I like the idea of our new tradition.”

Sheldon smiled at her, then shifted position slightly.

“Well,” he said slyly, “in that case…” he stayed silent for a few seconds.

The suspense would make the foreplay even more effective.

“I’m going to need a pen and paper to draft the amendment,” he said at last. “I think the best course of action would be to make coitus an optional activity on date night in addition to birthdays and anniversaries.”
The Orientation Conversation

Sheldon, Amy, Raj, Howard, Bernadette, Penny, and Leonard were having dinner at Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment. It was Chinese food tonight.

“I have an announcement to make,” Sheldon said. “Amy and Penny already know this, but I have recently discovered that I am in fact demisexual.”

“And that means…” Howard said.

“Demisexuality means only experiencing sexual attraction to people you already have an emotional connection to,” Raj explained. “Like how Sherlock had to become friends with John before they became lovers.”

“I told you before,” Leonard said, “Sherlolly for life.” He turned to Sheldon. “And I’m glad you’re telling us about this.”

“Well,” Sheldon shrugged, “you’re my friends. If something important happens in my life, you deserve to know. Like when Walmart put their bread on discount, so I had to stop shopping there.”

Leonard decided not to get Sheldon started on how discounts and special offers are an indicator that not enough people are buying the product, which means another shop would be a better place to buy that product from.

“Sheldon’s not the only person here with a sexual orientation other than straight,” Amy said. “I’m bisexual.”

“I did not know that,” Penny said unconvincingly. Of course she’d known. “I’m bi too, by the way.”

“I think most of us are bi,” Leonard said. “I know I am.”

Howard decided to join the conversation. “I’m… kind of bi? Raj, you know about this stuff for some reason. What’s it called when somebody’s only kind of bisexual?”

“I think that would be bi-curious,” Raj said. “What about you Bernadette?”

“I’m pansexual,” Bernadette said. “Gender doesn’t matter to me.” Noticing Howard’s expression, she added, “but I’m not open to a three-way.”

Howard accepted this and the conversation continued.

“I have no idea what I am,” Raj said. “Normally, I just say I’m straight and move on, but I think it’s time I stopped kidding myself.”

“Hear, hear!” Penny cheered.
“Alright, everything’s ready,” Amy said, “now I’ll just go turn the camera on.”

“Actually,” Sheldon said, “that’s not necessary anymore.” He showed her the remote control he’d purchased while they were broken up. “I can now control the camera with the push of a button. Neat, huh?”

“Remote control of technology always is,” Amy agreed.

Amy sat down next to Sheldon and Sheldon pressed the button.

“Hello,” Sheldon said to the camera. “I’m Dr Sheldon Cooper.”

“And I’m Dr Amy Farrah Fowler.”

“And welcome to:"

“Fun with Flags,” they said in unison.

“Today will be a special episode of Fun with Flags,” Sheldon explained. “You see, I recently found myself re-evaluating my sexual orientation: I had believed myself to be asexual, but it appears that I am in fact demisexual. If you’re confused about what that means, I only experience sexual attraction towards people I already have an emotional connection to.”

“And, as those who follow me on Twitter may already know,” Amy added, “I myself am bisexual.”

“As such, we’ve decided to dedicate today’s episode to a specific kind of flag: pride flags. There are far too many pride flags to go over all of them in detail, but we will discuss thirteen flags, before going over some of the other pride flags. First: the original pride flag.” As Sheldon said this, Amy held up a flag with eight horizontal stripes in the colours of the rainbow.

“This flag was designed by Gilbert Baker, an openly gay activist. In 1974, he was challenged by Harvey Milk to create a symbol of pride for the gay community, and designed this flag, which was first flown in the San Francisco Gay Freedom Day Parade on June 25 1978.”

“There are two main hypotheses as to the origin of the flag: the first, that Gilbert Baker was inspired by gay icon and actress Judy Garland’s singing the song ‘Over the Rainbow’, as well as the Stonewall riots that happened a few days after Judy Garland’s death; the second, that Gilbert Baker was inspired by the Flag of the Human Race, which was flown at college campuses during demonstrations for world peace in the 1960s.”

As Sheldon explained this second hypothesis, Amy held up a flag with five horizontal stripes – red, white, brown, yellow, and black in descending order. She then put the flag back down again and picked the rainbow flag back up.

“Gilbert Baker assigned specific meaning to each of the eight colours,” Amy explained. “In descending order: pink signified sex, red signified life, orange signified healing, yellow signified sunlight, green signified nature, turquoise signified art, indigo signified serenity, and violet signified spirit.”
“After Harvey Milk was assassinated on November 27 1978,” Sheldon said, “demand for the rainbow flag increased. To meet demand, the Paramount Flag Company began selling a version of the flag which did not have the hot pink stripe you see here – Baker also eventually removed the pink stripe due to the unavailability of the material,” he explained while Amy held up the second rainbow flag.

“The flag we know today,” Sheldon said once Amy swapped this flag for the modern-day version, “was designed in 1979 to resolve a problem caused by removing the pink stripe: when hung vertically from San Francisco’s Market Street lampposts, the centre stripe was obscured by the post itself. The best solution was to change the design to one with an even number of stripes, so the turquoise stripe was also omitted.”

“The flag came to nationwide attention in the United States in 1989,” Amy said, “when John Stout sued his landlords for attempting to prohibit him from displaying the flag from his apartment balcony in West Hollywood.”

“The rainbow flag, or Gay Pride Flag, is used by all members of the LGBTQI+PAD+ community – or LGBTQQIAPAAD+ community, if you believe that allies should be included in the initialism,” Sheldon said. “However, there are also other pride flags which are used for specific groups within the community.”

Amy held up a purple flag with a Labrys in an inverted black triangle. “For example, the Lesbian Pride Flag. This flag was created in 1999 by Sean Campbell, but is not as popular now as it once was due to the relative obscurity of the two symbols it combines: the labrys, or double-headed axe, became popular with lesbian culture in the 1970s as a result of the popularity of the female empowerment publication Labrys Magazine; while the black triangle has similar origins to the pink triangle used by the general gay movement: in Nazi Germany, a black triangle denoted so-called ‘anti-social’ behaviour, including lesbianism. Taking a symbol used to persecute a group and turning it into a symbol of pride for that group is a great example of empowerment, and I hope this flag sees a resurgence of popularity soon.”

“Another example of a pride flag,” Sheldon said, “is the Bisexual Pride Flag.” Amy held up a flag with three horizontal stripes in a 2:1:2 ratio: pink, purple, and blue. “Pink represents same-sex attraction, blue represents opposite-sex attraction, and purple represents attraction to both sexes. This flag was created by Michael Page and inspired by the bi angles symbol: two triangles, one blue and one pink, which overlapped to create a third purple triangle. The Bisexual Pride Flag is also sometimes used for all people attracted to multiple genders.”

Amy held up a flag with three equal horizontal stripes – pink, yellow, and blue, in descending order. “This is the Pansexual Pride Flag, which has been found on various internet sites since mid-2010. The colour pink represents those who identify within the female spectrum, blue represents those who identify within the male spectrum, and yellow represents non-binary attraction, such as androgynous, agender, bigender, and genderfluid people.”

“Then there is the Transgender Pride flag,” Sheldon said as Amy held up a flag with horizontal light blue, pink, white, then pink and light blue again. “This flag was created by Monica Helms, a transwoman who chose light blue and pink because they are the traditional colours for baby boys and baby girls respectively. The white stripe in the middle represents those who are transitioning, intersex, or identify as having a neutral or undefined gender, and the symmetry of the pattern signifies transgender people finding correctness in their lives.”

Amy held up a flag with lavender, white, and dark green horizontal stripes. “This is the Genderqueer Pride Flag,” she said. “The lavender stripe represents people who identify as both male and female,
the white stripe represents people who fall outside of the female-male binary, and the dark green stripe represents people who do not identify as female or male.”

Amy switched to a flag that had a purple circle against a yellow background. “This is the Intersex Pride Flag,” Sheldon explained. “Yellow represents neutrality in gender as opposed to the gendered connotations of blue and pink, and the circle symbolizes wholeness.”

Amy held up a flag with pink, white, purple, black, and blue stripes. “This flag is the Genderfluid Pride Flag. The colour pink represents femininity, the colour white represents all genders, the colour purple represents both masculinity and femininity, the colour black represents genderlessness, and the colour blue stands for masculinity.”

The next flag had yellow, white, purple, and black horizontal stripes. “This is the Nonbinary Pride Flag. It was invented by Kye Rowan in 2014,” Sheldon said. “Yellow represents gender without reference to the gender binary, white represents those with many or all genders, purple represents a mixture of female and male, and black represents genderlessness.”

“This is the Biromantic Pride Flag,” Amy said as she held up a flag that appeared similar to the Bisexual Pride Flag, but with a heart split into three corresponding but darker horizontal stripes. “The colours have the same meanings as they do on the Bisexual Pride Flag, and the heart represents romantic attraction as opposed to sexual attraction.”

“It is a similar case with the Panromantic Pride Flag,” Sheldon explained as Amy held up the corresponding flag.

“And this,” Amy said as she put that flag down and held up a flag with four horizontal stripes, which were black, grey, white, and purple, “is the Asexual Pride Flag. The black stripe represents asexuality, the grey stripe represents grey-osexuality and demisexuality, the white stripe represents non-osexual partners and allies, and the purple stripe represents community. This flag was created by an AVEN user called standup in 2010.”

The next flag Amy held up had a thick white stripe, a thick purple stripe, and a thick grey stripe with a black triangle dominating the left side. “This is the demisexual pride flag,” Sheldon said. “The black triangle represents asexuality, the grey stripe represents grey-osexuality and demisexuality, the white stripe represents sexuality, and the purple stripe represents community.”

The next flag Amy held up had a similar black triangle on the left side, but with only three horizontal stripes: white, green, and grey, with the green stripe being very thin. “This is the Demiromantic Pride Flag. We’re not sure what these colours mean, but based on other Pride Flags we can infer that white may represent sexuality, green may represent aromanticism, black may represent asexuality, and grey may represent grey-osexuality.”

Amy now held up a flag with green, yellow, orange, and black horizontal stripes. “This,” Sheldon said, “is the Aromantic Pride Flag. This flag was created by the Deviantart user cameronwhimsey. The green stripe represents aromanticism, as it is the opposite colour to red, which usually represents romance. Yellow represents various forms of queerplatonic love because the yellow rose symbolises friendship. Orange represents lithromantics – people who can enjoy being in romantic relationships and experience romantic attractions towards others, but only in theory – because orange is between red and yellow. And the black stripe represents romantics who choose to reject traditional romance.”

Amy switched to another flag: this one had black, grey, white, green, white, grey, and black horizontal stripes. “This is the Agender Pride Flag,” Amy said. “According to the Gender Wiki’s Pride Flag Page, black and white both represent the complete absence of gender while grey represents being semi-genderless. In addition, green represents nonbinary gender as it is the inverse
of purple, the combination of colours associated with the male and female genders. This flag was created by a Tumblr user with the screen name transrants in 2014.”

“There are, of course, many more pride flags,” Sheldon said. Amy turned on her Bluetooth and selected Over the Rainbow from her iTunes. As the song began, Sheldon took a deep breath and began to recite slowly while Amy briefly held up each flag he mentioned. “A few examples would be: the Two-Spirit Pride Flag, the Bigender Pride Flag, the Trigender Pride Flag, the Hermaphrodite Pride Flag, the Androgynous Pride Flag, the Genderflux Pride Flag, the Biromantic Heterosexual Pride Flag, the Biromantic Homosexual Pride Flag, the Panromantic Heterosexual Pride Flag, the Panromantic Homosexual Pride Flag, the Panromantic Asexual Pride Flag, the Polygender Pride Flag, the Pangender Pride Flag, the Panfluid Pride Flag, the Panflux Pride Flag, the Demigender Pride Flag.”

Sheldon stopped, walked over to the kitchen, came back with a bottle of water, drank some water, took another deep breath, and resumed.

“The Demiboy Pride Flag, the Demigirl Pride Flag, the Deminonbinary Pride Flag, the Demifluid Pride Flag, the Demiflux Pride Flag, the Endogender Pride Flag, the Endoboy Pride Flag, the Endogirl Pride Flag, the Genderplus Pride Flag, the Genderpositive Pride Flag, the Gendernegative Pride Flag, the Greygender Pride Flag, the Cavusgender Pride Flag, the Gendervoid Pride Flag, the Neutrois Pride Flag, the Autochorissexual Pride Flag, the Graysexual Pride Flag, the Autosexual Pride Flag, the Ceterosexual Pride Flag, the Abrosexual Pride Flag, the Lithromantic Pride Flag.”

Amy decided to help Sheldon out, and took over for a while. In response, Sheldon took the remaining flags and held them up as Amy spoke. “The Lipstick Lesbian Pride Flag, the Butch Lesbian Pride Flag, the International Bear Brotherhood Pride Flag, the Androphilia Pride Flag, the Gynephilia Pride Flag, the Victory Over Aids Pride Flag, the Marriage Equality Pride Flag, the Ally Pride Flag, the Homoflexible Pride Flag, the Heteroflexible Pride Flag, the Feather Pride Flag, the Boi Pride Flag, the Twink Pride Flag, the Leather Pride Flag, the BDSM Pride Flag, the Furry Feline Pride Flag, and the Furry Canine Pride Flag.”

Sheldon went to the kitchen and came back with a second bottle of water, which he offered to Amy. Amy took it and thanked him before taking a drink and facing the camera again.

“If this channel gets one thousand subscribers, we will make a Pride Flags version of the Periodic Table song,” Amy promised.

“Amy!” Sheldon said. “That is a brilliant idea!”

They both faced the camera and said, in unison: “We’d like to thank the LGBTQQIPAD+ or LGBTQQIPAAD+ communities on Tumblr, Deviantart, the Gender Wiki, and other similar websites for helping us find out more about these Pride Flags and the sexual orientations, and/or gender identities, and/or fetish communities that they represent.”

Sheldon pressed the stop button on the remote and the camera stopped recording.

Chapter End Notes

Just to explain the timeline of this: this chapter is set one week before The Valentino Submergence, hence why they still use the old title of the show.
Also, I researched the flags myself, but I’m worried my research may not have been
adequate, or that I screwed up by skipping over by not going into details about a specific community's pride flag. It's not much of an excuse, but I was kind of overwhelmed by how many there were. Should I have listed the flags in a different order? Let me know in the comments please.
Fun with Flags had become quite an internet sensation since last Sunday’s episode. Heck, it had gotten featured, not to mention already earning them hundreds of subscribers. Sheldon and Amy had already planned a special live episode for Valentine’s Day, and since they didn’t want to deviate from this plan, they decided to make a video reacting to the response the pride flags episode had received on Wednesday – halfway between the two Sundays, more or less. Now it was Sunday, and time they were ready to begin the live episode.

“Okay…” Amy said. “We are live in five… four… three… two – wait, oh shoot, I already pressed the button. We’re live!”

Sheldon quickly faced the camera. “Hello,” he said to the viewers, “and welcome to a special live edition of: ‘Dr Sheldon Cooper,” he began.

“And Doctor Amy Farrah Fowler present,” Amy continued.

“Dr Sheldon Cooper’s Fun with Flags,” they finished in unison.

“Consider today’s episode a special Valentine’s gift to you, our viewers,” Amy said.

“It’s also my gift to you,” Sheldon said, smiling at Amy. When she smiled back, he added, “That was clear, right? Cause you’re not getting anything else.”

Amy focused on the camera again. “Since we’re live, you’ll finally be able to reach out to us with your flag thoughts and flag questions.”

“Allow us to answer a few quick ones that we get all the time,” Sheldon said. “Yes, I really am a doctor. Yes, she really is my girlfriend.”

“No, I just blink a lot, it’s not Morse code for ‘rescue me,’” Amy added.

And then the first call came and everything got off track.

***

Sheldon tried to bring the show back to flags, but there wasn’t much he could do when Amy insisted that they had to show compassion to Raj. I mean, Sheldon did feel sorry for his friend, but this was supposed to be about flags!

Fortunately, Amy’s idea to set up Raj with a member of the audience saved the show.

“Before Emily, I was alone for so long,” Raj said. “I… I don’t know if I can do that again.”

“Well, here’s something that might cheer you up,” Sheldon said. “The flag of the Isle of Man is nothing but three legs sharing a weird pair of underpants. So, you think you’ve got problems…”

“I have an idea,” Amy said. “Maybe someone in our audience would be interested in meeting Rajesh. I can attest that he is a kind, handsome, intelligent-“
“Rich parents, don’t forget rich parents!” Raj interrupted.

“… spoilt astrophysicist,” Amy finished, “who not only–“

Amy was interrupted by another call.

“Oh,” Amy said. “Well, that was quick.” She answered the call and said, “Hi, you’re on Fun with Flags.”

Turns out, it was Stuart calling. “I’m lonely too,” he said. “The last time I was on a date was the time when we went out and Sheldon asked you to be his girlfriend.”

Remembering that made Sheldon happy again. “You told me to try it again without the quadruple negative,” he said to Amy, looking at her fondly. When Amy smiled back, Sheldon decided it was time to be more sympathetic to Raj and Stuart. After all, if he hadn’t gotten back together with Amy, he’d be miserable right now.

“Stuart, Amy deemed you good enough to go out with you before I asked her to be in a relationship with me,” Sheldon said. “So, clearly, you must be a catch. And Raj, I acknowledge how painful break-ups can be, but pain has an evolutionary purpose. It provides information from the environment that behaviour isn’t good for us. I’m sorry you’re suffering. When Amy and I were broken up, I also suffered. And this may sound surprising, but… I’m grateful for having gone through it.”

Amy looked at Sheldon. “You really mean that?”

“Yes,” Sheldon replied. “I believe that our relationship now is stronger than ever.”

“So do I”, Amy said softly.

“When we were apart, I learned how important you are to me,” Sheldon said. “And I realized that when two people are in love, sometimes they need to be more open emotionally than they would be with other people.”

“Aww, you guys are the best couple,” Raj said. “You’re right, I should learn from this.”

“If you want, you can talk to me about it,” Stuart said.

***

After that, the show got back on track. Raj and Stuart hung up before Raj went to the comic book store. Kripke called again, and Amy ended up disconnecting him again, but they got a few other calls too. Mostly thanking them for the episode about pride flags and asking them if they were going to do a sequel (“It’s definitely a possibility,” Amy said.)

There were other questions about flags too. All in all, it was an appropriately fun episode.

Especially when Penny and Leonard burst in, throwing confetti everywhere.

After the live show ended, Sheldon and Amy congratulated each other on a successful live show and a lovely Valentine’s Day. Meanwhile, Penny and Leonard cleaned up the confetti.

“Did you know that the singular of confetti is confetto?” Sheldon asked Amy. Linguistics trivia had always fascinated her.

“Interesting,” Amy said. “What context would one use that in?”
“You have a confetto in your hair,” Sheldon said, using that as an excuse to run his hand through Amy’s hair.

Then they kissed.

Once they broke apart, Sheldon whispered, “You know, the Coitus Frequency Amendment to our Relationship Agreement does include a clause for romantic holidays… if you’re interested?”


The two of them hurried into Sheldon’s bedroom.

“Well,” Penny said to Leonard in the living room, “at least they’re having fun.”

“I really did have fun with you today, though,” Leonard said.

“I really did have fun with you today, too,” Penny said before she kissed Leonard.

Ultimately, every member of the group had an interesting Valentine’s Day. For Sheldon and Amy, it was special because of the livestream and because this was the first time they had coitus in Sheldon’s bed rather than Amy’s.

Chapter End Notes

Alright... this chapter borrows a lot more from an actual episode of the show than previous chapters do. However, it’s also the first chapter where we get a significant divergence from the actual show. And yes, that is some more of that implied Sturaj. Also, I know that it’s after Valentine’s Day when I’m posting this, but in my defense, I planned this before I got writer’s block again.
“Sheldon, I was wondering about the next episode of *Fun with Flags,*” Amy said. “What do you think it should be about?”

Sheldon looked up at her from his spot. “What do you mean?” he asked.

“Well,” Amy said, “we’ve already decided to do that live episode, but that’s the week after that. On Valentine’s Day,” she added under her breath. “And with our series on flags that are combinations of two or more *other* flags over, we’ve got a blank space there.”

“Hmm,” Sheldon said. Then his eyes lit up like the metaphorical lightbulb above his head. “I know! How about we make an episode about pride flags? It would be the perfect opportunity to reveal our sexualities to the world, and I’ve already learned a lot about pride flags since I realised I was demisexual. Did you know that the original pride flag was inspired by the Flag of the Human Race?”

“I thought it was inspired by *Somewhere Over the Rainbow,*” Amy said. When Sheldon looked at her blankly, she elaborated, “It’s a song from a movie.” Sitting down next to him, Amy added, “I think it’s a great idea, although…”

“Although?”

“Well, we’ve already told our friends, but I think we should let our families know before we tell the rest of the world.”

“That’s a good point,” Sheldon said. “I’ll get on the train to Texas and tell my mom tomorrow. Do you want to come with me?”

“Sure,” Amy said. “As for my family… my mother already knows, she looks at all my social media, but the rest of them don’t. I’ll tell my aunt Elisa, whenever one of us wants the whole family to know something we just tell her and by the end of the day everyone else knows too.”

“Oh, I remember her!” Sheldon said. He shuddered. “I heard more gossip that day than I cared to hear in my life.”

“So we have a deal?” Amy asked.

“Deal,” Sheldon said.

And so they went to Texas the next day.

***

“Shelly! Amy!” Mary greeted her son and his lady friend. “Come on in, both of you.”

Sheldon and Amy both thanked Mary as they came in. They’d called ahead, and it was the evening, so Mary had prepared dinner for them.

“Now, Amy, I don’t know what *you* like,” Mary said, “but I hope it’s spaghetti with hotdog slices in it, and strawberry Quik to drink.”
“Oh, Amy, you’re in luck!” Sheldon said. “My mom makes the best of both of those!”

“I’m sure,” Amy smiled.

The three of them chatted over dinner, catching up on both work and social lives. Eventually, Sheldon said, “There’s actually something I… we wanted to tell you about, mom.”

“Well, what is it?” Mary asked.

“You remember how when George Jr was teasing me about being a virgin, I said I didn’t care about sex? Well, it turns out I do. I’m demisexual.”

“Okay,” Mary said, nodding. “What does that mean?”

“It means I only feel… that way… towards people I have an emotional connection to,” Sheldon explained. “Like the connection I have with Amy.”

“So you two have…”

“We have,” Amy said.

“And are you demisexual too?” Mary asked Amy.

Amy hesitated. “Actually, I’m bisexual.”

“Well, good for you,” Mary said. “I’m proud of you – both of you – for telling me. I know this kind of thing can be tough for some people.”

“What do you mean?” Sheldon asked.

“Shelly, I live in Texas,” Mary said. “The only reason you never knew how many of our relatives aren’t straight is because most of them are still in the closet.”

“Uncle Bob?” Sheldon asked. “I heard a rumour about him once.”

“Actually, she’s your aunt Babs now,” Mary told him. “Those rumours were so far off.” Moving on, Mary asked Amy if they’d told her family yet.

“Actually, I told my aunt Elisa, and she’s probably telling everyone else right now,” Amy said. “My mother already knows. Hopefully everyone else’s reaction will be more like yours and less like hers.”

“What did your mother say to you when you told her you were bisexual?” Mary asked, concerned.

“She, uh…” Amy looked down.

“It’s okay, Amy,” Mary said. “You don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to.”

“She told me I was a sinner for being attracted to women,” Amy said quickly. “And that I was going to go to hell for it.”

Sheldon’s jaw clenched and his hand’s grip on his fork tightened, but he didn’t say anything. If Amy’s mother had been there, he would have given her a stern talking-to for saying something like that to her daughter – actually, his mother would probably be the one giving her the talking-to. Mary looked almost exactly like Sheldon in that moment.
“Well what does she know?” Mary asked, slowly and with forced calmness. “She should treasure and accept her daughter no matter who you’re attracted to. Besides, I’m a devout Christian, and I know very well that if everything the Bible calls a sin was a sin, I wouldn’t be doing half the things I do at least once a month. I’m sure the rest of your family will be more accepting,” she finished.

“Well, Aunt Elisa was,” Amy said, smiling now. “Thank you Mrs Cooper.”

“Please,” Mary said. “Call me Mary.”

Chapter End Notes

This chapter takes place before the last two chapters. Why? Eh, I figured Sheldon would tell his mother about something like this before telling the internet. I just forgot to write a chapter like this until now.

Mary Cooper may have been unintentionally offensive on a few occasions (I can only think of three), all in her earliest appearances, but she definitely comes of as a very tolerant and accepting person, so it was only natural that she quickly accepted that Sheldon is demisexual and Amy is bi.

Although I am feeling kind of guilty for basically glossing over Amy's mother and her reaction to Amy being bisexual. I included it because I knew I couldn't just ignore Amy and her mother - and since the Sin Closet is a thing, I doubt that Amy's mother is very enlightened about human sexuality - but the chapters of this story are relatively short and simple, so if I do go into more detail it would be in a separate chapter so I can handle it properly. That said, I feel like now that I've included this topic, I should come back to it at some point. I'll leave the choice of whether to do so up to you, though.

So, what do you think? Tell me your thoughts on the story and on the choice in the comments. I appreciate all feedback!
As usual, everyone was having dinner at Sheldon and Leonard’s apartment. What was less usual was that Stuart was there too. Apparently he and Raj were now an item.

“We really hit it off on Valentine’s Day,” Stuart said, “so we decided to start meeting up regularly.”

“It took two weeks, but eventually we decided to get together,” Raj said.

“You know,” Sheldon told them, “if you need somebody to write a relationship agreement for you, I’m your man.”

“Thanks Sheldon,” Raj said slowly. “We’ll remember that.”

Stuart whispered to Raj, “I’m new to this, are relationship agreements a normal thing or just something Sheldon does?”

“It’s just a Sheldon thing,” Raj whispered back, “but it’s best to just roll with it.”

“In other news,” Sheldon said, “I decided to finally get that two-for-one ticket offer, so now I’ll only be contributing half as much as before to our cinema fund.”

“Oh, cool,” Leonard said. “You know, I’ve got that too. Between the two of us, we could take the cost of two tickets out of the fund to buy four.”

“Why would we do that?” Sheldon asked.

“Sheldon, I think Leonard’s suggesting a double date,” Amy explained.

“Oh!” Sheldon said. “Well, it would make it easier to follow a schedule if the four of us all go to the cinema as a group. Do you think we should do it?”

“Of course,” Amy replied. “I think it’s a great idea.”


“Sure, let’s do it,” Penny said. “What movie are we going to go see?”

And after a long debate, during which Sheldon made a pro-con list on his whiteboard, they eventually decided to watch Zootopia.

***

“Good morning Leonard,” Sheldon said happily.

“Ugh,” Leonard replied, turning around.

Sheldon stepped back in fear. Leonard’s nose and eyes were red and that ‘ugh’ sounded like he had a blocked nose.

“I’m sick,” Leonard said.
“Stay back!” Sheldon said. “I’m getting the disinfectant.” He ran into the bathroom, ran back out with a spray can in his hand and started spraying disinfectant in the air.

Penny walked out of Leonard’s bedroom, displaying the same symptoms. “I think I’m sick,” she said.

Sheldon started spraying disinfectant in her direction too. “I cannot take care of two sick people at once,” Sheldon said. “I’m calling Amy.”

***

“Well,” Sheldon said, “I guess we’re not going to the cinema after all.”

“No,” Penny said, “you guys should go. We’ll manage.”

“We can’t just go to the cinema while our best friends are sick,” Amy said. “We should stay here with you.”

“What if you do that and one of you gets sick?” Leonard asked.

“Not me,” Sheldon replied, putting on a surgical mask. “I’ve taken precautions.”

“Look, just...” Penny paused, reached for a box of tissues and blew her nose. “You guys can still go to the cinema. Leonard and I will be fine,” she told Sheldon and Amy while throwing the tissue into the trash can.

“But we’ve already bought the tickets,” Sheldon said. “And we ordered all four tickets at once, so we can’t get a refund on just yours.”

“Well, maybe you can ask somebody else to go with you,” Leonard suggested.

“You two really want us to do this?” Amy asked.

Leonard and Penny nodded.

Sheldon and Amy looked at each other.

“So,” Sheldon said, “who do we ask?”

***

Aside from themselves and Leonard and Penny, Sheldon and Amy’s social group contained to other couples: Howard and Bernadette and Stuart and Raj.

“Both Howard and Bernadette are integral members of our group,” Sheldon said. “Stuart has the potential to be integral, but he only started joining us for dinner regularly three days ago, and before that it had been years since the last time he did. I think that’s a point in Howard and Bernadette’s favour.”

“True,” Amy agreed, “but at the same time, this could be an opportunity to integrate Stuart more closely into our group’s social dynamics. Since Howard and Bernadette are already closely integrated, there is no need or opportunity for that with them.”

Sheldon thought about this before saying, “So, if we interact with Stuart more now, it will be easier to adjust to having a new addition to our group?”
“That is correct.”

“So they’re head to head now,” Sheldon said. “You know, Bernadette is a far more dominant personality than either Stuart or Raj – that’s useful if there’s a conflict with another group about seating… but it could cause problems if there’s a disagreement within our group about where each of us would be sitting.”

Amy thought for a moment before saying, “Both Stuart and Raj have an interest in animated movies, whereas Bernadette has said in the past that she doesn’t like, quote-unquote, ‘cartoons and stuff’.”

“That’s a good point,” Sheldon said. “I think Stuart and Raj may be the better option, then.”

***

Sheldon and Amy entered the comic book store and saw Stuart and Raj talking at the counter.

“Hello Stuart, Raj,” Sheldon greeted.

“Sheldon, Amy, hi!” Raj said.

“Hey guys!” said Stuart.

“Hello,” Amy said to them. “We have two spare tickets to see Zootopia, if you guys want to come with us.”

“I’m up for it,” Stuart shrugged. “I thought you guys were going to see that with Leonard and Penny, though?”

“Well, we were,” Sheldon said, “but then they got sick and told us we should go anyway, which left us with a choice between you two or Howard and Bernadette.”

“And you chose us?” Raj said. He smiled. “I am so going to gloat to Howard about this. I’m in.”

“Great,” Sheldon said, “because we have to be at the cinema twenty-four hours and thirty-five minutes from… now.”

Chapter End Notes

And Sturaj is actually happening now.
I'm a bit disappointed in myself for not writing more interactions between them, but I might amend that if I do a follow up to this chapter - and I probably will.
Let me know what you think in the comments!
“Now *that*,” Stuart said, “was a good movie.”

“Yeah, the story was thrilling and the subtext was so clever,” Raj said.

Sheldon was puzzled. “What subtext? I don’t understand.”

“The discrimination against carnivores and the various stereotypes about the different species are an allegory to racial prejudice and discrimination,” Amy explained.

“Oh,” Sheldon said. Then he chuckled. “It was clever, wasn’t it? Especially the part where the villain was revealed to be one of the herbivores, and her motivation highlighted the toxic nature of prejudice against other groups within society.”

“And they gave Shakira a role in the movie, which is great too,” Raj said.


Raj’s jaw dropped. “You don’t know who Shakira is? ‘Objection’? ‘Hips Don’t Lie’?”

“Why would a pelvis be dishonest?” Sheldon asked.

“She’s a singer and she voiced Gazelle,” Stuart explained. “‘Objection’ and ‘Hips Don’t Lie’ are two of her songs.”

Sheldon and Amy said “ah,” simultaneously.

***

“Let me see if I understand this,” Sheldon said. “He’s cheating on her with a woman with breast implants, so these two people whose costumes are supposed to resemble Batman and Superman beat him up?”

The music video finished, and the next one started playing.

“I think that’s about right,” Amy agreed. “I’m starting to understand why Rajesh is such a fan, her songs tend to have a high quality.”

“I concur. Although I am puzzled by her dancing style – why does she undulate her hips like that?”

“Well, part of it is probably because she can do it,” Amy hypothesised, “but the main reason is most likely that the movement is attractive.”

“It is?”

“Yep,” Amy said, staring intently at the screen. “It is.”

“Oh,” Sheldon said. “I don’t see it.”

“Well, maybe I should do it, and you can watch,” Amy suggested.
Sheldon looked at her. “Are you trying to seduce me?”

“Who, me?” Amy feigned innocence. “I just want to dance for you.”

Sheldon smiled and kissed her. “You are a vixen, aren’t you?”

Amy smiled back and kissed him.

***

“Well,” Stuart said, “I think we’ve established that neither of us can do the dance that Shakira does.”

“I’m crushed,” Raj said. “Maybe if we took up yoga…”

“I’m going to stop you right there, I am not flexible enough for yoga.”

“So we’ll start with the simple stuff, work our way up. We’d be yoga partners,” Raj pointed out.

“Fine,” Stuart conceded. “But only because you look great wearing yoga pants.”

“I do, don’t I?” Raj smiled. “And soon, you will too.”

“Okay,” Stuart said. “I don’t think yoga will be enough to build this up.” He gestured at himself.

“Stuart, I cook. A lot. You’ll be fine.”

Stuart smiled at Raj. “You spoil me.”

“Well, this way I can use the Boyfriend Bonus to pay less for comic books,” Raj joked.

“Uh, no,” Stuart replied, “you have to pick one kind of Boyfriend Bonus, and I know you’re not giving up the other one.”

“Fine,” Raj said, “but technically I haven’t cashed in the other one yet.”

“Well, no time like the present.”

Chapter End Notes

I'll leave what happens before and after those scenes up to your imaginations.
So, what did you think of this chapter? Let me know in the comments.
“So, Leonard and I have kind of an announcement to make,” Penny began. They looked at each other and smiled, then Leonard said, “We’re getting remarried!”

Everybody started congratulating them. Well, almost everybody.

“I’m confused,” Sheldon said. “When did you get divorced?”

“There was no divorce,” Penny said. “We’re just having a proper wedding ceremony this time.”

“Oh,” Sheldon said, “very well.” He raised his glass to them. “Kudos.”

“Can I come?” Stuart asked.

“Yes, of course you can come,” Penny told him. “You’re our friend.”

Stuart pumped his fists triumphantly.

“You look like a dork,” Raj told him.

“You like that about me,” Stuart replied.

Raj thought about it for a moment. “Yeah I do,” he said at last, smiling at Stuart.

“I’m still your maid of honour, right?” Amy asked Penny.

“It’s just a ceremony Amy,” Penny said. “It’s not a real wedding.”

“But hypothetically, if I wore a purple satin dress with a sweetheart neckline, would you be able to stop me from standing near you during the ceremony?”

Penny rolled her eyes. “No.”

“I accept.”

“Who’s going to officiate?” Bernadette asked.

“Actually,” Penny said, “we were thinking of asking you.”

“Great,” Amy said, “now I’m just the lousy maid of honour.”

“Does that mean I still have to be the best man?” Sheldon asked.

“Not if you don’t want to,” Leonard told him.

“Eh,” Sheldon shrugged. “I already have a speech prepared. I’ll start figuring out who to invite. My mother, obviously… oh, and Robert Downey Jr!”
Yeah, right now I'm just stealing ideas from the Season 9 finale.
I'll try to come up with something more creative for the next chapter, which I plan to have written and posted before the end of the month. I've got nineteen days, y'all.
Penny decided that she should have learned by now to not be surprised to find the kitchen full of petri dishes.

“Why is the kitchen full of petri dishes?”

She decided that she should also have learned not to ask that question.

“We’re cultivating bacterial cultures,” Amy told her, looking up from a petri dish with a green liquid on top of the petroleum jelly. “They’ve been genetically engineered to produce dyes of various colours.

“Why?” Penny asked.

“Easter’s coming up,” Sheldon said, as if that explained everything. “If we’re going to be painting Easter eggs, we might as well do some science in the process!”

“You could just buy the dyes from a grocery store,” Penny pointed out.

“Where’s the fun in that?” Amy asked.

Penny didn’t have an answer to that, so she turned and left Shamy to their science.

***

“Hello,” Sheldon said to the camera, “I’m Doctor Sheldon Cooper.”

“And I’m Doctor Amy Fowler,” Amy added.

“And you’re watching Doctor Sheldon Cooper and Doctor Amy Fowler present Doctor Sheldon Cooper’s Fun with Flags!” they said in unison.

“We have a special episode for you today,” Sheldon said. “To celebrate the fact that we’ve reached one thousand subscribers, we’ve finally made a Pride Flags song!”

“So, without further ado, allow us to present…” Amy said as Sheldon grabbed a drum from the table and started a drumroll.

“Footprints on the Moon, and the Pride Flags Song!” Amy finished as Sheldon ended the drumroll.

Sheldon walked over to the camera and turned it to show Howard at his keyboard and Raj with his guitar. The two of them started playing a song to the tune of the Periodic Table Song.

***

The Wolowitz family was celebrating Passover at Howard’s house this year. All of Howard’s friends knew his relationship with his religion was… well, ‘loose’ would be an understatement… so they weren’t really expecting Howard to put much effort into it.

They were wrong.
Howard spent the day before Passover started preparing the house, and had already ‘sold’ all the chametz in the house to his non-Jewish friends for the duration of the holiday. Well, except for Stuart – he did live with them, after all. Since they were his friends, and there was no rule against inviting gentiles, Howard invited all his friends to the Seder.

Sheldon, Amy, Leonard, and Penny arrived together. Sheldon did his trademark knock and Howard opened the door.

“Hey guys,” he said, smiling. “Come on in. Raj and Stuart just got here too.”

“It’s cleaner than usual,” Sheldon said once he entered the house. “I like it.”

“Well,” Howard shrugged. “You know, I cleaned the house from top to bottom to get rid of any chametz that was left. I did not expect to find that much…” he trailed off.

“It was the first time he cleaned the house without me having to make him,” Bernadette said, walking into the room.

After that, Howard and Bernadette introduced their friends to Howard’s family. That went smoothly (Sheldon had asked Amy to give him a crash course on social etiquette on the way to the Wolowitz house). Soon, it was the evening and everybody went into the dining room for the Seder. The door to the dining room was left open.

Each place at the table had a Seder plate. The Seder meal consisted of lettuce dipped in salt water, a lamb bone, a charoset, horseradish and beetroot paste, celery, and a roast egg. These foods were arranged clockwise in that order and, aside from the lettuce, each food was on its own, smaller plate. The Seder plate itself had an ornate pattern on it with Hebrew writing in the centre. To the right of the plate was a cup of wine.

There was also a book called a Haggadah at each place at the table. The table also had an extra cup of wine, as well as three Matzot on top of each other. Each chair had a cushion on it for people to lean on.

The Seder is meant to start with the youngest person present asking four questions, and the father answering. In this case, the youngest person present was Ben, Howard’s five-year-old second cousin once removed. Ben asked the questions and his father, David, answered.

“Why do we eat unleavened bread?”

“To remember when the Israelites fled Egypt before they could add yeast to their dough.”

“Why do we eat bitter herbs?”

“Because they represent the bitterness of slavery.”

“Why do we dip our food in water?”

“To recall the tears the Jews shed as slaves.”

“Why do we eat in a reclining position?”

“It is a symbol of freedom from slavery.”

Howard was pretty sure that Ben and David had practiced that even though the questions were supposed to be spontaneous, but he didn’t say anything.
Once the questions were asked, the Seder could start. The first part of the ceremony was Howard breaking the middle Matzah and hiding the largest piece. Once that was done, the children went off to search for it.

“I remember when I was a kid,” Howard sighed happily. “I found that piece three years in a row.”

In the end, it was an eight year old, Esther, who found the afikomen. She came back with it to exchange it for a prize, and Howard gave her a Neil Diamond CD.

After that, they read from the Haggadah. Everybody read part of the Haggadah, some in Hebrew and some in English – Howard read first, then Bernadette, and so on clockwise around the table. As the story of each of the ten plagues was read out, a drop of wine was spilt as a symbolic reminder that the Jews’ liberation is tinged with sadness at the suffering of the Egyptians.

Howard got to read the final words of the Haggadah too: “Next year in Jerusalem!”

Afterwards, they sung various songs for the rest of the evening.

***

Two days later, it was Easter Sunday. Normally, they’d just eat a bunch of chocolate eggs, but this year Sheldon and Amy insisted on painting and boiling actual eggs. Now everyone was eating eggs with technicolour shells – and because the dye seeped into the egg whites and the yolks, those were tinged with the same colours.

“These eggs are really good,” Leonard said. “Where did you buy the dye for these?”

“We didn’t,” Sheldon said. “We made it ourselves.”

“Well, the bacteria made it,” Amy said. “We just genetically engineered the bacteria and cultivated them.”

Leonard put down his plate, which still had some eggs on it.

“All of a sudden, I’m not hungry,” he said.

“You know, I thought that at first,” Penny said, “but these are actually really good!”

“You knew?” Leonard asked.

“We all knew!” Raj said.

“Yeah, we kept it from you to see how you’d react,” Stuart explained.

“Thanks, guys,” Leonard said sarcastically.

***

“To a successful endeavour in biotechnology,” Sheldon said.

“And two vernal festivals,” Amy added.

They clinked their glasses of cherry cool aid together, then drank from them.

“So,” Sheldon said, placing his right hand on Amy’s left thigh. “Will we be taking advantage of the ‘holidays and birthdays’ clause of our relationship agreement?” Sheldon decided to add a smoulder
“Hoo,” Amy said. She cleared her throat. “Thought you’d never ask.”

***

“Science Officer’s Log. Stardate: minus three oh seven seven three six point oh five. Recent events have been optimal. Amy and I now having regular coitus, and ‘Doctor Sheldon Cooper and Doctor Amy Fowler Present Doctor Sheldon Cooper’s Fun with Flags’ has reached one thousand subscribers, and I’ve recently had the honour of participating in two festivals in one week. And the attempt to use biotechnology to produce food dye has been successful, with no cases of food poisoning so far. If I believed in tempting fate, I would hesitate to say this next part, but as I don’t, I will: things are going great! End log.”

Chapter End Notes

So, how was my portrayal of Passover? If you noticed anything I got wrong about the Seder, please let me know. Hopefully, I got it right though. You'll notice that I went into a lot more detail about Passover than Easter - that's because I personally tend to go into more detail on stuff I have to research than on stuff I have experience with. Also, for me Easter tends to amount to ‘chocolate and eggs’. Anyway, I hope you liked this latest chapters. There are more to come, but it's going to be a while.
By now, all of Amy’s relatives knew she was bi, and she was getting flooded with responses from them, whether they were texts, emails, or letters. Right now, she was reading the emails she’d been getting.

‘Amy, you should be very proud of yourself.’ That was from her uncle on her mother’s side. ‘I hope everyone around you accepts you for who you are.’

‘I know from experience that coming out can be difficult, but I promise you things will improve.’ That one was from her second cousin Nat.

‘Every time someone steps up and says who they are, the world becomes a better, more interesting place. So, thank you.’ That was from another uncle, Uncle Raymond.

There were many more responses like that. Reading them, Amy smiled. Then she read what her aunt Miriam had sent her.

‘I always knew your mother was right. There is something wrong with you after all. And now you’ve corrupted this family with your delusions. I hope you’re happy.’

Amy slammed her laptop shut.

***

“Amy?” Sheldon asked. “Is everything okay?”

“Go away, Sheldon,” Amy said, her voice muffled by the door. There was something different in her voice, though. Sheldon struggled to place it, but… had she been crying?

“Amy, you sound upset,” Sheldon said. “Is it okay if I come in to comfort you?”

He heard her groan. Seconds later, she unlocked and opened the door. “Fine,” she said. Sheldon almost gasped when he saw her face. Her eyes were red. She had been crying.

“Amy, what happened?”

Amy went inside, leaving the door open for Sheldon to come through. Sheldon followed her in, then closed the door. Amy fell back onto her couch.

“I was reading emails from my family,” Amy said, “and they were all telling me how… how proud they were of me for coming out… but then I read one from my aunt Miriam.”

Sheldon was worried that he knew where this was going. For once in his life, he truly hoped he was wrong. “What did she say?” he asked, keeping his voice level.

“She said that my mother was right,” Amy told him, “and that there’s something wrong with me.” Her voice broke.

Sheldon’s nostrils flared. Then he calmed himself, and leaned forwards. “Amy, you are perfect,” he reassured her. “There is absolutely nothing wrong with you. If anything, there’s something wrong
with her. But you?” He looked her in the eyes. “You are the most amazing woman I have ever known.”

“Do you really mean that?” Amy asked.

Sheldon nodded. “You’re tied for first place with my mother and Mee-Maw,” he said.

Amy hugged him. After a moment, Sheldon hugged her back.

“Do you want me to stay here and watch *Little House on the Prairie* with you?” he asked.

“That sounds great,” Amy said.

Sheldon reached for the remote to turn on the TV.

As he found the series on Netflix, he resolved to have words with this Miriam. As Wil Wheaton could attest, nobody upset his lady and got away with it.

But for now, she needed him. So he’ll be there for her.

***

The next day, after their friends found out what had happened, they did everything they could to comfort Amy as well. They all reassured her that no matter what, she was their friend and her identity was as valid as anyone else’s.

In the end, the rest of the Fowler family were informed of what Miriam had said to Amy and their response made it clear that the former was no longer welcome. They told Miriam that if she thought their family had been ‘corrupted’ then she should be glad that she doesn’t have to worry about being part of it anymore. And then they reassured Amy that Miriam was wrong – that there was nothing wrong with Amy, and that she was absolutely not delusional.

Having one’s identity rejected by a family member is one of the worst experiences a person can go through. It’s a form of discrimination much harder to endure than discrimination from a stranger, because a family is supposed to be accepting. Fortunately, in Amy’s case, most of her family did accept her, and those who didn’t were swiftly shown the door. And fortunately for everyone, sooner or later everybody finds people who accept them for who they are.

Chapter End Notes

Originally I was going to have another scene at the beginning where Sheldon got into an argument with a youtube troll. It would have been a way to point out the ridiculousness in some of the arguments that homophobes/biphobes/etc use. I have yet to see any one of them use an argument that even comes close to making sense. However, I ultimately decided to cut that scene as it distracted from the point of the rest of the chapter.

And that point is that being discriminated against by a family member can be devastating. It's something I've never had to experience, and probably never will, but a lot of people have gone through something like that. The point of this chapter is that a person's support network is extremely important - rejection from someone in her support network was devastating to Amy, and fortunately the rest of said support network was there to comfort her.
That said, this isn't something I have a personal frame of reference for. There is a chance that I got something wrong when writing this chapter, that something I wrote was insensitive and I just didn't realize it. If that is the case, please point it out so I can change it and avoid making the same mistake in the future.
This chapter is lighter than the last one. It's also more of a follow up to the Fun with Flags subplot than anything else. You can also see my "Penny is a nerdfighter" headcanon here - the same one that popped up a few times in "5 Times Penny Totally Wasn't A Potterhead (And One Time She Admitted It)" - as well as a few references to various episodes of the show. See if you can catch all those references.

This wasn’t the first time that the gang were refreshing the screens on their computers while chanting “refresh.” However, it was the first time that Penny was doing the same thing. Because this time, they weren’t trying to get tickets to Comic-Con. No, this was about VidCon.

Penny really wanted to go, and so did Leonard. Sheldon and Amy were pretty much guaranteed a place since, as a result of their new-found fame as the presenters of Fun with Flags, they were going to be among the featured creators. Howard had decided to stay in Pasadena with Bernadette, but Raj did want to go and Stuart accepted the offer to go with him. (“What the hell,” he’d told his boyfriend. “This place might as well be closed most of the time anyway.”)

As such, Penny, Leonard, Raj, and Stuart were the ones refreshing their computers.

“Yes!” Penny said. “I have the ticket!” She started doing a victory dance. “I’m going to VidCon!”

Leonard momentarily stopped refreshing his computer, looked up at her, and smiled at her. It was great to see her this excited about something.

He smiled even more when Penny kissed him.

Twenty minutes later, they all had tickets to VidCon.

They decided to get to VidCon on another party bus. Naturally, this meant that Raj was on the stripper pole before they hit the freeway, which led to the girls and Stuart throwing dollar bills at him.

“Oh my god, that’s Hank Green!” Penny said, her voice rising a few octaves.

“Oh yeah, that is him,” Raj said.

Then Penny saw who Hank was talking to. “Oh my god, that’s John Green!”

“You wanna talk to them?” Leonard asked.

Penny looked at him as if he was crazy. “Are you crazy? They’re the Green brothers, what am I supposed to say?”
“Just say you love their videos,” Leonard said.

Penny scoffed at that.

“Look, I have experience with this kind of thing,” Leonard said. “One time I ran into Patrick Stewart at a convention. I was so worried about saying or doing something embarrassing that I ran the other way before he even saw me. Trust me, you will regret it more if you don’t talk to them than if you do.” He paused. “Well, unless you cry, but Bill Gates didn’t even make fun of me for that.”

Penny was still apprehensive, but eventually she caved.

She ended up befriending the brothers – which, when she realized it on the party bus back to Pasadena, caused her to geek out again - especially thanks to their mutual fondness for Harry Potter. This was, after all, what had originally piqued her interest in the videos.

***

Meanwhile, Sheldon was starting to feel overwhelmed by the amount of fans he had. He’d always expected the show to get popular, but it was something else to see it in person. Still, he and Amy continued signing autographs.

A lot of their fans were part of the LGBTQ+ community, which wasn’t surprising considering the video that had made the channel so popular.

At one point, the crowd around them dissipated, but Amy figured it wouldn’t be long before more fans showed up. She could tell something was affecting Sheldon, and now she had a chance to ask him about it. “You okay?”

“I’m feeling a little overwhelmed,” Sheldon said. “I knew we had a lot of fans, but…”

“It’s still a lot to take in when you’re seeing them face-to-face, isn’t it?” Amy asked. She placed her hand on Sheldon’s. “I get that.”

“I know,” Sheldon said. “But I don’t want to feel overwhelmed. It’s not fair to our fans.”

“I’ll help you through it,” Amy said. “We’re here together, after all.”

Sheldon smiled and kissed her on the lips. Somebody cheered. If it hadn’t been for the different voice, they’d have thought it was Penny.

Chapter End Notes

The next - and last - chapter is coming Sunday 6th March 2018. The title is the Pride Parade Participation.
The Pride Parade Participation

Chapter Notes

This is it. The final chapter. I hope you've all enjoyed the story. This whole story started with Sheldon re-evaluating his sexuality, then realizing he was demisexual - and his coming out led to everybody else doing the same. I didn't really have a frame of reference to describe SF Pride when I wrote this, so I based my descriptions on pictures I found on Google Images - I Googled "San Francisco Pride 2016" and used what I found as a frame of reference. I'll put links to the pictures in the notes at the end.
I hope my descriptions managed to do justice to the Pride parade, but I doubt I managed to capture the full awesomeness of it.

Penny, Amy, Sheldon, Leonard, Howard, Bernadette, Raj, and Stuart were having dinner at Sheldon’s and Leonard’s apartment.

“You know, Pride’s coming up,” Penny said. “We could go.”

Sheldon hummed in agreement. “It is only thirteen hours and twenty-nine minutes by train from here to San Francisco.”

Howard nearly choked on his drink. “Thirteen and a half hours on a train with Sheldon? Are we sure we can handle that?”

“It’s thirteen hours and twenty-nine minutes,” Sheldon corrected him. “If you’re going to round the time up, how will I know if when you say you’ll be somewhere in fifteen minutes, you won’t actually be there in fourteen? Do you have any idea how much of a disaster that would be?”

“It’s either thirteen hours and twenty-nine minutes on a train with a Sheldon who’s happy he’s on a train, or about one and a half hours on a plane with a Sheldon who’s cranky that he’s not on a train,” Leonard pointed out. “I don’t know about you, but I like the first one better.”

Howard considered this. “We’re taking the train.”

A few days later, when they were on the train and Sheldon was reciting everything he knew about the train they were on – and he knew a lot about it - Howard announced that he wished they’d taken the plane.

***

The gang had each worn Pride t-shirts and brought two Pride Flags each: the Rainbow Flag and a separate flag for their specific identity.

Millions of people were waving Pride Flags at the parade.

A few dozen people were carrying one giant Pride Flag, holding it horizontally.

At one point, the gang saw a four people on stilts, wearing colour co-ordinated hot pants and
leggings. One wore green, one wore blue, one wore yellow, and one wore red.

A group of people wearing Pride t-shirts were marching, led by a man with a blue glitter beard. He was wearing swimming trunks with his phone tucked into them, and was proudly waving a Pride Flag in the air.

Seven men were carrying one pride flag on their backs, like a giant cape shared between them.

Amy was the one who made the cape simile. Sheldon kissed her. Seeing this, the rest of the gang cheered and kissed their significant others.

Sheldon could hardly believe how quickly things had changed, or the fact that he was fine with that change. Six months ago, he didn’t give much thought to sexuality beyond assuming that he was ace, but after December… in fairness, demisexuality was on the asexuality spectrum for a reason. Until he met someone he had a strong enough emotional connection with, he might as well have been ace. But once he re-evaluated that part of himself, everything had started changing – it turned out that his social group was more diverse than he’d realized, and it was him announcing his demisexuality that brought that diversity to light. Before, he doubted any of them would have gone to Pride, but now…

Yes, a lot had changed. And part of him was scared by that – he’d gotten used to the old routines. But it turned out that those routines weren’t quite what he needed, so it was time to find some new ones.

Chapter End Notes

And here, as promised, are the links:
https://www.google.co.uk/imgrres?

https://www.google.co.uk/imgrres?

https://www.google.co.uk/imgrres?

https://www.google.co.uk/imgrres?

Also, I want to thank you all for reading this story. It’s been fun writing it, writing about these characters - and in the process, I got to learn a few things myself, like learning about Pride flags or about the Passover seder. I think that, and seeing how people respond to what I write, are possibly the two best things about writing fanfiction.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!