

# Our Experiences with Dating, Demisexuality, and Alterhumanity

*Sol System 10/18/2021*

Our understanding of and formation of romantic relationships is uniquely dissimilar from that of most other people we know in our lives. For us to develop romantic feelings for someone, even "puppy love" or temporary infatuation, they must first be an extremely close friend of ours--someone who we trust with ourselves in a unique way, and who therefore accepts what we are on all levels. Someone who knows about our identity weirdness and identity queerness, and not only accepts but engages with those aspects of our identity.

We've never had the experience of a "first date," and considering someone romantically or sexually at first glance (or at first meeting) is an idea that feels completely foreign to us. While we *can* try to force ourselves to see someone in that light, it feels disingenuous and uncomfortable at best.

We've given our hand at casual relationships, but they've never been more than awkward and unsuccessful for us, largely due to a mismatch in relationship expectations and emotional commitment. We know what casual relationships are supposed to be like: no strings attached, no serious or long-term commitments or emotions, etcetera and so forth. But we just can't seem to function within them. With romance, it's only ever all or nothing. With sex, it's the same way: we understand the idea of hookups conceptually but just don't find them personally interesting or desirable.

We attribute part of this disconnect of sexuality and romance to our nonhumanity and alterhumanity. Everyone within our system is a creature which mates, ideally, for very long periods of time or for life. Additionally, almost all the creatures within our system have *very* nonstandard ideas around what dating should look like, because of their instincts and expectations.

The dragons, for example, have complex courtship rituals involving gift-giving, showcases of power or intelligence or other forms of ability, tests of dominance, and other things which are ultimately non-conventional and somewhat incompatible in the

casual human dating or hookup scene. The basilisk leans towards intricate shows of dominance and physical endearment, in lieu of his species' winding dances. The canine has a strong tendency towards preferences that can be disguised as human, but they, like the dragons, still suffers from season-dependent drives. Most of the year, they have more low-drive instincts.

But none of these feelings are particularly unusual for the species we individually are, they're just unusual when you try and put them into typical Western human dating and relationship paradigms. The real crux of the matter is that if everyone in our system were to be in separate animal bodies that match what they look like, surrounded by others of their species, they would likely *not* be classifiable as demisexual. We would all just be 'standard' or 'typical' animals for our species.

For a long time, we felt unsure if we should "really" call ourselves demisexual because of this, since our perspectives on romance and sex are all technically just due to situational factors. It felt almost like attending a meetup for redheads when you'd had your hair dyed permanently red in some sort of bizarre accident involving cranberry juice that wasn't your fault: we struggled with the idea that we were stealing resources, or that we were imposters imposing on spaces where we didn't belong.

Eventually we ended up reasoning that we weren't being particularly fair to ourselves with how we were framing our use of the label. Whether we like it or not, these factors—our nonhumanity, our plurality, and everything else about us that's affecting the mix—are permanent. They could even technically be shoved into "from birth" types of understandings if we wanted to get specific, though it'd be a little nontraditional. We recognized that we were holding ourselves to unrealistic standards that we would never apply to anyone else, all over a *label*. A label whose purpose was, by definition, to be used and experimented with to help the lablee better translate their own experiences and gain community/resources as needed.

It took us a long time to finally get that through our thick skull, but once we did and took the label for ourselves, we were infinitely grateful.

With that all said, our demisexuality isn't the only way that our nonhumanity affects our dating lives: we're also child-free in part because of our species dysphoria,

we have a tendency toward polycules and other group-focused romantic entanglements because of our plurality and species' orientations toward polyamory, and we seem to have a preference towards self-identified "monsterfuckers" when not dating other alterhumans.

We know that saying we're strictly "child-free," especially as a plural system in a body which was assigned female at birth in the southern US, is a controversial statement to make. But the thing is, we just genuinely feel no drive to produce or raise human children; some of us would be interested in theoretically raising children if they were of our own species (a sentiment which does not seem to be all that uncommon in the alterhuman and nonhuman communities), but others within the system have zero parental inclinations whatsoever, even towards their own. One of the dragons loves the idea of eggs and hatchlings, for example, but comparatively the basilisk has zero (0) drive to reproduce whatsoever.

The idea of ever being pregnant is also something that we find terrifying and disgusting, for several reasons.

A majority of our system is male, and none of the systemmates who are hermaphroditic or female are part of any species which experiences pregnancy and live-birth; the idea of going through such, especially in body mismatch, is not something that ever has or will ever appeal to us.

Of the systemmates who *are* mammalian, even when you look outside of the sex-mismatch they have because they're male, there's still the species-mismatch to consider: pregnancy just doesn't work the same way for them as it does for humans. Members of their species are pregnant for significantly shorter periods of time, they have the ability to abort or reabsorb a litter, and their young come out much more self-sufficient than a human child does, needing only a few months to become grown and experienced enough to survive on its own.

And note, it's not as though we haven't at least given child-rearing a try within our lifetime, either: we raised our six younger brothers and sisters as something of a third parent for a little over eleven years while we were still a minor ourselves, and we both disliked the set of responsibilities it entailed and found the entire process

somewhat traumatizing as a child then ourselves. All in all, we've been permanently put off human children for ourselves and can't be romantically involved with people who want them.

We're also polyamorous, largely because we're plural—on one hand, we lean towards communication-based group dynamics as it's what we're so familiar and experienced with ourselves. We have a level of intimate trust with each other, so we're used to being vulnerable and emotional with more than one person at a time. On the other hand, the idea of only ever being able to feel a specific kind of emotion towards one person at a time also just isn't realistic when you have other people in your head calling your out on your bullshit, *and* when there's multiple people in a single body who can all feel different ways about different people. Logistics and pettiness (but in a good way) have to be taken into account.

Our species also all tend toward multi-partner family groups: both the basilisk and the dragons in our system generally have biological preferences for one to three mates, with the canine having no upper limit. In a way, our baselines are already predisposed towards multiple partners by default, even before you consider everything else.

We're also bisexual. One part because all our respective species are bisexual, and one part because we also don't understand the idea the people can only be in love or have romantic feelings for someone after thoroughly checking over either the contents of their pants, and/or having an intense run down of all their gender-related feelings. Two people could have experiences that are functionally identical but choose to view them through two different lenses, each using a different label to define themselves and...one disqualifies them from someone's dating pool, and one doesn't. It's a hard concept to wrap our head around.

But, given we're literally an aberration of reptiles and one chthonic canine stuck in a single body that in no way matches what we're like as people, it'd also be hypocritical at best for us to judge anyone else's 'date-ability' on purely physical characteristics. So maybe that's where the mismatch comes from.

Touching on that, that isn't to say we don't have a "type" when we date, even if it's entirely unintentional. We date people who, unsurprisingly, find us attractive: nonhumanity included. Sometimes people take that in unconventional ways (like finding more our knowledge about our nonhumanity and the alterhuman/nonhuman communities attractive, or finding attributes we directly connect to our nonhumanity attractive, rather than swooning outright over our nonhumanity), but it generally translates into us dating a lot of self-identified "monsterfuckers." It's both unbelievably flattering and extremely reaffirming to have partners who engage with our nonhumanity in such appreciative and multi-dimensional ways, where they not only acknowledge it in the platonic dimensions of a relationship, but also the romantic.

It's something we've realized we can't have a relationship without: our partners have to accept all of us for what we are, and they can't ignore how any part of us exists and plays into our everyday lives. They can't ignore the fact that we're queer and transgender; they can't ignore the fact that we're a plural system of five different people; and they can't ignore our nonhumanity.

We know that some alterhumans find humans unappealing to date, enough to label themselves with terms that oriented entirely towards alterhuman attraction only, but we've never found much problem with it. While there's something special dating another alterhuman and getting to hear about their experiences and perspectives, there's also something wonderful about dating humans and hearing about their experiences and perspectives, too.

We sometimes wonder how much misanthropy potentially plays into attractions which explicitly exclude non-alterhuman individuals...but that's also not necessarily our call to make as individuals who don't use those labels or models of attraction, even if we find it something worth considering. In the same way our identities play into our sexuality in unique ways, so too does that apply to individuals who identify as medusan, terato, and similar.

Ultimately, it should come as no surprise that our nonhumanity and, by extension, plurality affect the way our relationships form as they do. I'd honestly say these aspects of ourselves filters into every portion of our lives, affecting everything from our gender identities, to the fact that we're on the ace spectrum, to our interests

and hobbies, to the places we prefer to live, to the things we enjoy to eat, to even our jobs and intended career paths. In the same way other people's humanity affects how they see and interact with the world, so too does our alter- and nonhumanity. It's all part of the spice of life.