

upon that starry shore
a short story from *Roses for Avalon*



SUCH STRANGE STARS

AND HOW STRANGE AM I
THEN, TO LIE RESTLESS
BENEATH SUCH STARS



HE SLEEPS
WELL ENOUGH







YOU WERE ROUGH

AND YOU WERE MEAN

I THINK YOU
KNEW WHAT YOU
WERE DOING...

I'M
SORRY--


...AND I
LOVED EVERY
SECOND OF
IT

...HRM

I SUPPOSE
YOU ARE A
WHORE

WELL, I'M
SURE I WON'T
BE THE LAST ONE
TO COMPLIMENT
YOUR LOVEMAKING,
FRIEND

WHY ARE YOU
SO ANGRY AT
ME?



YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, I NEED TO KNOW OUT OF SELF-PRESERVATION

YOU'RE BIG ENOUGH TO CRUSH ME, THESE DAYS

AH...

YOU ALWAYS SMILE AT WHATEVER I SAY TO YOU

I WANT YOU TO TAKE ME SERIOUSLY

LISTEN, THEN

WHEN WE FIRST MET, IN MAMBRINO, THERE WAS A BOY, WITH GOLDEN CURLS

DO YOU REMEMBER?



WELL, AH, THAT WAS SOME TIME AGO...

CRISTIANO, I THINK HE WAS CALLED?



...I'M GLAD YOU REMEMBER HIS NAME, AT LEAST

"I LOVED THAT BOY CRISTIANO...
FOR YEARS. HE LOVED ME TOO"

"HE DID NOT RETURN MY CARNAL
FEELINGS, HOWEVER. HE REMINDED
ME OFTEN THAT WE HAD MADE A
HOLY COVENANT, THAT WE WOULD
BE TOGETHER IN SPIRIT, AND NOT
IN BODY, AS WAS MANDATED"

FOR CRISTIANO,
I WOULD HAVE HAPPILY
ENDURED A LIFE OF
CELIBATE MARRIAGE,
JUST TO BE WITH
HIM, IN WHATEVER
MANNER I COULD

...DO YOU
UNDERSTAND
WHAT YOU
DID, NOW?

DO YOU SEE
WHAT IT **MEANT**,
WHEN YOU
KISSED HIM--

--WHEN
HE LET YOU--

WHEN MY
BEAUTIFUL, GODLY,
PERFECT HUSBAND--

--WHEN HE LET YOU
VIOLATE HIS PURITY, TAKING
WHAT I WANTED TO TAKE...

...AND WITH THE
SAME STROKE SHOWING
THAT HIS PIOUS REFUSAL
OF ME WAS MERELY...
PREFERENCE



I HATED
YOU FOR THAT,
HATED HIM,
HATED HOW I
WANTED THE
SAME FROM
YOU

EVEN WHEN I
FUCKED YOU, I WANTED
YOU TO STRUGGLE SO
I COULD HURT YOU

EVEN WHEN
I TOOK IT FROM
YOU, WHEN I GOT
WHAT HE GOT,
I DON'T FEEL

I'M
SORRY,
I GUESS
AFTER ALL
THIS TIME,
I JUST
HATED
MYSELF

I HAD
NO REASON
TO HATE
YOU

I'M NOT
ANGRY AT YOU, RED,
NOT ANYMORE

THE WAY WE...
IT IS THE EMBERS
OF MY STUPID,
SELFISH RAGE

I'M
SORRY

ROSHIM...

AT YOUR CRUELEST,
YOU ARE KINDER
THAN MOST MEN WHO
HAVE PLUNDERED ME

AND BESIDES,
YOU'RE WRONG!

YOU NEVER
TOOK WHAT
CRISTIANO
HAD!



YOU NEVER
KISSED ME,
NOT ONCE!

YOU **CHOK** ME...

...**SLAP** ME...

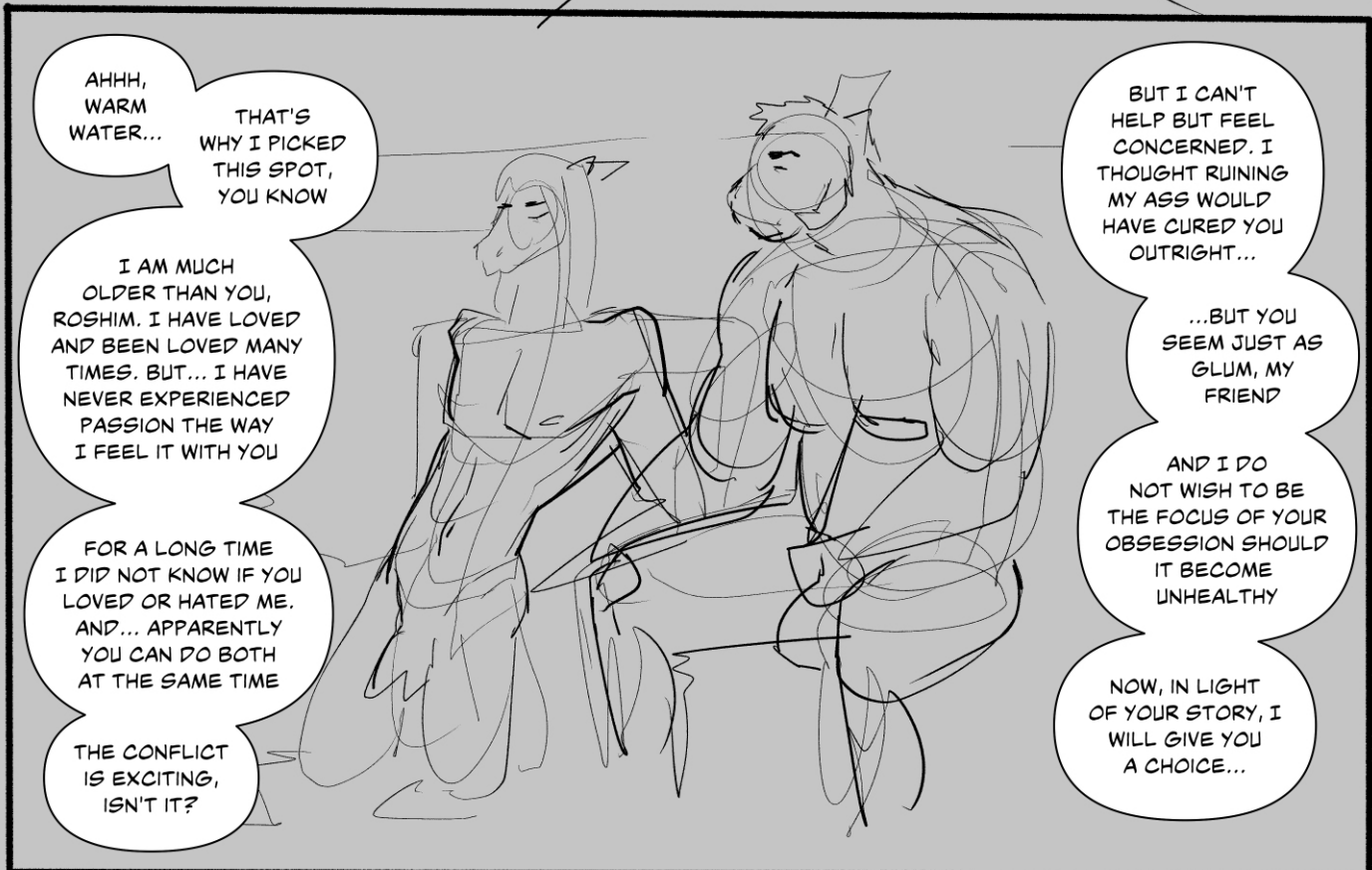
...**PULL MY HAIR**...

...**MOUNT** ME LIKE
A BEAST...

...**TELL** ME I
BELONG TO YOU,
AS YOU **SEED**
ME...

...**BUT YOU**
NEVER **KISS** ME,
NEVER

...AH
I THINK...
YOU'RE
RIGHT



AHHH,
WARM
WATER...

THAT'S
WHY I PICKED
THIS SPOT,
YOU KNOW

I AM MUCH
OLDER THAN YOU,
ROSHIM. I HAVE LOVED
AND BEEN LOVED MANY
TIMES. BUT... I HAVE
NEVER EXPERIENCED
PASSION THE WAY
I FEEL IT WITH YOU

FOR A LONG TIME
I DID NOT KNOW IF YOU
LOVED OR HATED ME.
AND... APPARENTLY
YOU CAN DO BOTH
AT THE SAME TIME

THE CONFLICT
IS EXCITING,
ISN'T IT?

BUT I CAN'T
HELP BUT FEEL
CONCERNED. I
THOUGHT RUINING
MY ASS WOULD
HAVE CURED YOU
OUTRIGHT...

...BUT YOU
SEEM JUST AS
GLUM, MY
FRIEND

AND I DO
NOT WISH TO BE
THE FOCUS OF YOUR
OBSESSION SHOULD
IT BECOME
UNHEALTHY

NOW, IN LIGHT
OF YOUR STORY, I
WILL GIVE YOU
A CHOICE...

...EITHER
CLING TO THIS
PAST GRIEF OF
YOURS AND
DRIVE ME
AWAY...

...OR
KISS ME,
AND SHOW
ME YOUR LOVE
MEANS MORE
THAN YOUR
HATRED



I KNOW
WHICH I'D
PREFER



OH, SWEET
ROSHIM, IF YOU
COULD SEE
YOUR FACE!

I--
WAIT!



WELL, WELL,
PART OF YOU
SEEMS TO ENJOY
THE IDEA!

TWITCH

AVALON...

I AM A WEAK MAN

I WAS CRUSHED BY CRISTIANO. AND NOW I HAVE YOU, AND I CANNOT IMAGINE MY LIFE APART FROM YOU. YOU DESTROYED MY LIFE AND YOU SAVED IT

AGAIN, I SAY, I AM A WEAK MAN

IF WE GO DOWN THIS PATH TOGETHER, I NEED YOU TO COMMIT YOURSELF TO ME, UTTERLY

IN RETURN I'LL GIVE YOU MY LIFE, WITHOUT RESERVATION

I LOVE YOU MORE THAN ANYTHING I HAVE EVER LOVED

MARRY ME. LIVE WITH ME. TEACH ME TO BE A BETTER MAN

STAY WITH ME, BELOVED

WHEN WE ARE TOGETHER, I AM STRONG



OH, MY DEAR SAINT, OF COURSE I WILL STAY...

...THOUGH IF I MAY BE SO BOLD, YOU LACK EXPERIENCE...



...WHICH I CAN FORGIVE...

...IF YOU ARE WILLING TO PRACTICE DILIGENTLY WITH ME...



...MY HUSBAND

THAT STARRY NIGHT WE KISSED
UNTIL I KNEW HIS TONGUE AS
WELL AS MY OWN

WORDLESSLY HE IMPALED
HIMSELF ON ME, HIS WARM
VELVET STILL WET FROM
HOURS AGO

SPLAT

EVERY CRY AND WHIMPER
HE MADE WAS MUSIC

I USED MY HUSBAND'S
ASS UNTIL HE COULD
NO LONGER WALK, AND
AT LAST, WE WERE
BOTH SATISFIED

I FELT AS IF A GREAT MOMENT
WAS PASSING, AND THE WORLD
HAD CHANGED. THE WARM WATER,
THE STARS, THE SHORE...

I COULDN'T NAME IT. BUT
MY BELOVED FRIEND WAS
GROWING HEAVY AGAINST
ME, HIS SOFT VOICE
INSISTANT, EYES DULL

NO MATTER

THE WORLD
CAN WAIT

END