

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



HMMPH

HE SLEEPS
WELL ENOUGH





AH... ARE YOU SET ON ASSUMING ALL MY VICES, THEN?



HMM?
WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?



AHHH, YOU DON'T LOOK HAPPY. EVEN AFTER THAT WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE



CAN'T SLEEP AND IT COULDN'T--

IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN THAT GOOD FOR YOU

I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING YET--



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 **CHOKE** 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!



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

EVERY CRY
AND WHIMPER
HE MADE
WAS MUSIC



I USED MY FRIEND'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