Do Not Go Gently

by Megpie71

Summary

Two broken men meet up in a bar.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

At first glance, he looked like one of the Rastafarians who sometimes visit: all dreadlocks and swaying, and huge pupils in his eyes. It took the second glance for me to recognise him as a gringo, his skin was tanned so dark. He was also as drunk as only a confirmed drinker can get. I may be young, but I've seen a few of them. I've been tempted to become one myself, never so much as I have now.

Maybe if I drank enough, the memories would stop.

The stranger drifts up to the bar, and drops himself down on the stool next to me.

"Been playin' wi' th' Aztec gold too, mate?" he queries, the slurring in his accent making it hard for me to understand. I look at him in curiosity. He points to the wreck of my left hand, where the bullet from Moco's gun has shattered my skill, destroyed my profession. "Did y' have t' give blood sacrifice t' th' heathen gods?"

The query makes no sense to me. Bad enough he is so drunk, so rum-slurred he cannot speak clearly. Worse, he is obviously delirious. But did he need to mention the loss, the sacrifice I have already made?

"No."

My reply is intended to cut off questioning, silence this buffoon. Instead, he looks at me with something approaching surprise in his dark eyes (and I see now his pupils aren't dilated, but his irises are a brown dark enough to be mistaken for black) and cocks his head to one side, rather like a bird. His curiosity is obvious.
I look away, look back down at the bar. Grip the tequila I have purchased harder. I can feel him looking at me, feel his gaze on me. I take a gulp of the alcohol, feel it burn its way down my gullet. Burn me like the fires of my own guilt, for not being able to get there in time, for not being able to save her. A shudder sweeps through me, and I gasp.

Then I feel the hand on my forearm, on my wrist. I look at it. The stranger's hand, with some kind of strange covering over it. I'd almost call it a glove, except a glove would have a lot more body to it. This is just a tatter, rags.

"Y' might want t' go easy on that stuff, mate. Could use it to strip paint."

"What do you care?" I ask, glaring at the stranger. He meets my gaze, smiling a wry grin at me. I see the glimmer of gold behind the grin.

"Y' remin' me of a friend o' mine. Nice enough lad, but din't 'ave the stomach fer drinkin'."

"You still haven't answered why you should care. Or why I should listen." I turn back to my drink, intent on getting to blessed unconsciousness as fast as possible. My dreams are haunted by her, by visions of my own death, by the twisting of memory, anger, guilt and pain. At least when I'm drunk, the dreams don't come. The stranger's grip on my hand is still there, still strong. I look at him once more, frowning.

"Y've lost somethin' dear t' yerself, mate," he tells me, looking straight into my eyes. "But th' best solution t' loss isn't in tryin' t' drown it in drink."

"What would you know of such things?" I snarl. "What would you know of having lost something you've loved dearly, having lost your very soul and life because some bastard decided to take it from you."

For some strange reason, my anger and my fury makes him laugh. It isn't a happy laugh, indeed it is almost a sob, but it is a laugh nonetheless.

"I know more'n y'd think o' such things, lad," he says. Then he begins to tell me the tale - almost a legend. A tale of a pirate captain who through pride and foolishness lost his ship, a ship as dear to him as his soul. Of a curse, and a price that needed to be paid. Of a ten year search, and a revenge long-delayed.

"Now, lad, that capt'n, 'e suffered, and 'e searched, an' 'e tried t' get the idea of 'is ship out o' his mind. But 'e couldn't. So when 'e got 'er back, 'e swore 'e'd die on 'is ship, or not at all. But 'is ship, well, she got torched in a dockyard fire, an' it near tore 'is heart out t' lose 'er again.

"But worse came. Wi'out th' ship, 'e couldn't die. 'E's trapped 'ere, on this earth, an' wi'out 'is ship, 'e can't sail neither. So 'e's stuck on dry land. Condemned throughout eternity t' wander, an' never t' die."

"A pretty tale," I sneer, "but what has it to do with me?"

"Well, lad," the stranger says, looking at me with those enormous dark eyes of his, "you remind me o' that pirate cap'n. All pride an' loss an' wounded 'eart. That cap'n, 'e were the one as set the fire as spread t' th' docks - drunk as a monkey 'e were, an' a damn fool beside. Trust me, lad: if ye're wantin' t' ease yer soul, there's better ways t' do it than by drinkin' yerself to a stupor."

"So what do you suggest?" All of a sudden, I am curious to know.

"Well, it depends on what y' want. So, what is it y' want?"
"Revenge." The word startles me, coming out of nowhere. But even as I speak it, I know it for the truth. "Revenge on the cartels, for her death. For my hand."

The man's eyebrows raise, but aside from this, he doesn't seem surprised. "Well, if y' want yer revenge, why not use them guns y' got there?" he asks.

I look at the case beside me. The case full of guns. I look at him. "How did you know what was in the case?"

He grins at me, climbing down from his bar stool. "Mate, 'm Captain Jack Sparrow." With which enigmatic comment, he walks into the shadows at the back of the room, and vanishes. Leaving me with a mostly-full bottle of tequila, an idea for a future of sorts, and a crawling feeling down my spine.

Sparrow was the name of the pirate captain in the stranger's tale.

End Notes

Vatine asked for this one, so here it is. From my memories of the films in question, Jack Sparrow has the palm of his right hand covered, while El was shot in the left.

The title comes from a song by Weddings Parties Anything, from their album "Difficult Loves" (it also comes from a poem by Dylan Thomas, which is probably where WPA got it from as well).

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!