Summary

Antonio raises Sebastian and Olivia's daughter while Sebastian is in prison.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes.

It all started a sunny afternoon in late June, when a young boy rushed up the hill to deliver a letter to Antonio. The writing on the letter looked like a bird, whose feet had been dipped in ink, had been allowed to walk across it, but he’d know it anywhere. The author was the man he considered his closest friend; despite not seeing him in years his visage was still a concrete memory.

“Oh, Sebastian, you never did work on your hand writing I see.”

Antonio struggled to bite back a smile and focus on the letter. The letter spun a woeful tale. Sebastian’s wife, Olivia, had been slain. Sebastian heard the whispers and felt the glares of not only the townspeople, but his sister, Viola, as well. He knew they would charge him soon, so he begged Antonio for a favor. He had a daughter named Lyra, who Viola could not bear to look at since her mother’s death. To insure her safety he requested that Antonio return to Illyria and watch his child when he was jailed. Antonio left that night.

Lyra was a soft spoken and graceful child. She had eyes the color of sunbeams shining through a glass of whiskey, just like her father. Sebastian had convinced his sister to hold off his arrest until Antonio arrived, but as soon as Antonio’s foot touched the sand of the beach he was taken into custody. Luckily Lyra was a rational girl, as well, when he told her that he was Antonio she replied simply, “Oh good, Father said you’d come to care for me.” And he did.

Years past and Antonio watched as Lyra grew. He took her to the beach and held her in the water,
pulling her safely above the crashing waves at the very last moment. She’d shriek and giggle. He told her stories of princesses, fairies, and magic, and he sang to her when terror prowled her room at night. She saw Antonio as a wizard, who could banish all monsters to whence they came. Nothing could stop Antonio in her eyes.

She became very curious as the tally of years she’d lived grew. She wanted to know everything about everything, from butterflies to the definitions of words. She always had a question on her tongue and a smile on her cheeks as she asked it.

“How old are you?” She asked one day while they sat under a tree watching a nest of baby birds.

“28”

“Are you my father’s friend?”

“Yes.”

“His best friend?”

“I hope so; he’s my best friend.”

“Why do you take care of me?”

“Your father has been falsely accused of a crime. I’m just keeping you safe for when he comes home to you.” Antonio was the only one on the whole island, it seemed, who believed in Sebastian’s innocence.

He was happy to answer any questions Lyra had; she’d become a daughter to him. He did raise her after all. Most of her questions were easy to answer, but when Lyra was twelve she asked the big one.

“Do you and my father love each other?” She asked innocently.

“Why do you ask?” Antonio swallowed air.

“Oliver’s parents love each other.” Oliver was her cousin, Orsino and Viola’s son.

“That’s a very complicated question, Lyra. Ask me when you’re older.” She’d pouted but complied.

When Lyra was fourteen the truth came out, and it was not flattering to anyone involved. Apparently a drunken Orsino had confessed to having Olivia assassinated. His motive being that she and Viola had gotten too close to each other and he’d gotten jealous, which sounded ridiculous until it was revealed that Olivia had been cheating on Sebastian with both Orsino and Viola. Orsino took Sebastian’s place in jail and Sebastian came home to his daughter. He’d missed eight years of her life.

“Thank you.” Sebastian said to Antonio a year after he’d been released.
“It was the le-” Antonio started to say before Sebastian cut him off.

“No it was far from the least you could do. You raised my daughter as your own, after you pulled me out of the watery jaws of death and I ran off with a woman I met on the street!” Sebastian exclaimed.

A soft chaste kiss placed on Antonio’s lips under the moonlight answered Lyra’s big question, just three years late. Yes.

“She has your eyes. I’ve always loved your eyes.”

End Notes

I wrote this for school. I got a B. And, when handing it back, my teacher sighed, smiling, and said ”Why did I expect anything else?”. I had already written an essay on hoe Nick and Gatsby are not straight. (B-)

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