

As Soon Draws Nearer

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Just in time for Valentine's Day...a story about Valentine's Day! ^^ This is a little story that my friend Sami and I wrote for the school newspaper. It's really not what you think...

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1 - As Soon Draws Nearer

The fourteenth of February, 270 A.D.

As I sit here in my jail cell, I have much time to sit and reflect. Reflect about life. Reflect about death. Reflect about the sacrifice I am about to put forth to defend my faith against the pagans who condemn me. I suppose it started not but a few months ago.

Emperor Claudius had needed more men for his armies to fight his illegitimate wars, and issued a law that no young men were to be married. I thought it absurd. Go against God's law to fight your wars?! Deny the young sweethearts the experience of being wedded in love?! Completely immoral!

But I suppose that things had gotten particularly bad around the time of the Lupercalia festival. No doubt it would be exactly like every other one that I can recall into my memory. The Romans would gather in the streets, looking on in sick delight, hooting and hollering as their priests slaughter goats and dogs to appease their silly, little false gods.

The boys will go around slapping the women and the crops with bloodied goat-hide strips - one of many strange fertility rituals that I never quite understood - for yet another year. Then the young women of Rome would go and place their names in a large urn for some lucky bachelor to pick and keep her as some sort of prize. Irrational carnage, indeed.

Unfortunately, or, luckily, you might say, depending on how you look at it, I wasn't in attendance to witness much of this year's little celebration. A Christian priest never partakes in the mindless celebrations to the heathen pagan gods of the Romans to begin with; however, my means of completely avoiding the entire ruckus wasn't necessarily easy either, I suppose.

This year I'm spending the remaining part of the festival of Lupercalia alone... imprisoned & awaiting my martyrdom. I'm locked away here like some starved lion waiting to be released into the gladiatorial arena. And for what? Helping a few young couples in love experience the joy of wedded bliss? If that is truly a crime, then I follow my beliefs to death, and regret not a thing.

I can't tell you how long I've been trapped in this little dungeon, secluded from the outside world. All time has seemed to morph together into some unrecognizable entity, one that is beyond all human comprehension. However, I do know today, it shall all end. I wrote a letter to the woman I love not too long ago. I hope it finds its path into her hands; I signed it, "Love, your Valentine."

As I sit here and contemplate my last few hours in reflection I think of her, and await the sword that brings me my death. I firmly stand by my decision. I die for it.

~The End~