



Strawlock And The Traveler

Fairy Tales & Related Fandoms · Not Rated · 1732 words

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Strawlock And The Traveler

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Strawlock is an average girl, with nothing rather remarkable about her, as opposed to her six magical siblings. She is ignored and left to her devices, her true talents unnoticed, and is content with it.

Until the day she meets a boy sitting by a river, playing a flute. After that, her life changes forever.

First chapter was written by me, the second is a rewrite by ChatGPT. Hope you enjoy 😊

Chapter 1: Original

Now with cover art by ChatGPT!

Once upon a time, there lived a spinner and his wife. Though poor and struggling, they were jovial and happy, producing seven children.

The firstborn was a lad with brown skin and green hair, tall and broad and good at growing any crop.

The secondborn was a lad with golden skin and white hair, thin and wiry and good with birds of all kinds.

The thirdborn was a lad with silver skin and grey hair, uneven and sharp and skilled with metal work.

The fourthborn was a lass with red skin and black hair, graceful and lively and skilled in dance.

The fifthborn was a lass with purple skin and blue hair, short and stick-like and talented with the written word.

The sixth was unable to be seen with a voice that could be like any other's.

The seventh was a girl with tanned skin like her mother and hair like straw from her father. She was an average height and an average build, with an average sort of beauty and an average skill in many things.

As her siblings brought home great fortune with their unusual gifts, the average girl was not expected to do much at all, being left to her own devices. Strawlock, as her name was said, seemed so completely average that no-one in her village payed her much mind.

But Strawlock had unusual talent with her sword, was better than any with her horse, and unmatched even by the King's scholars with the speed of her wit. Few noticed and fewer cared, and Strawlock was perfectly happy for the way things were to continue until the sun itself burned away.

As all girls must, Strawlock came of an age where suitors would begin to take interest. Her suitors were an average sort, a baker's son or a blacksmith's son, a shepard or a farmer. She was interested in none of them, and her parents pushed her towards marriage only for a short time, until she was left once more to her own devices.

That was when she met the boy by the woods, sitting at a river's edge and playing his flute. His hair and traveling cloak were as dark as his skin was pale, his feet bare, his young eyes already marked with laughter's lines.

He noticed her and introduced himself as the Traveler. Strawlock gave her name and invited herself to sit at his side. As his flute played, the river twisted itself about to shows figures acting out grand plays. Each day that Strawlock came to sit by the boy he had a different story to play, brought to being with clear music and rushing water.

She saw princes courting damsels, and knights fighting dragons, and sorcerers cursing kings, and all the other sorts of stories often told -- but none were as they should be. Sometimes a prince was courting another, a dragon flew off to slay an evil knight, a sorcerer was really a fool and a king an ogre. In the waters she saw places she had never imagined, heard tales never before told, spied creatures and peoples that would never truly walk the world.

One day, she stopped the Traveler from playing, for Strawlock had a story of her own to tell. She told him of a princess who was truly a rabbit, and a knight who was really a frog, and a palace of reeds, and a kingdom of dolls. He laughed throughout the ridiculous tale, and the sound was sweeter to her ears than even his flute had been.

For many seasons the two met and traded tales, some false, some true, and some in between. He showed her his true face -- pitch black with eyes of flames, curved horns and pointed fingers, limbs too long and teeth too pointed -- and she kissed the mouth that still held the laughter that still marked his eyes.

He was a monster who laughed and she was a maiden with a sword, and all was beautiful in their special world between them, the world of new love and promise.

And when a King's army invaded, she was the only one unafraid, for she could hear the sounds of a Shadow falling into step behind her -- the sound no other could hear grew louder and louder as she ran through the battle. None could match her sword, nor could many stand against lover's claws, and the two made quick work.

From that day forth, no one knew her as average. Sat upon her horse, she was known as the Traveling Girl, a warrior who passed from town to town. Strawlock the Brave, who consorted with monsters and knew the ways of the world. Her children were many, each average and plain in their looks.

Until night fell, when horns would grow and eyes would set aflame, and the Traveler would teach them the ways of night and shadow, spinning stories out of clear music and rushing water.

Chapter 2: ChatGPT Rewrite

Strawlock and the Traveler

(A fairytale)

Once upon a time, there lived a humble spinner and his merry-hearted wife. Though they were poor and often struggling, their laughter filled the house, and they were blessed with seven children.

The firstborn was a tall, broad lad, with brown skin and green hair. He could grow any crop, no matter the soil or season.

The second was wiry and thin, with golden skin and white hair. Birds of every kind perched on his shoulders and answered his call.

The third was sharp-eyed and uneven in gait, with silver skin and grey hair. He could bend metal to his will as though it were dough.

The fourth was a graceful lass with red skin and black hair, whose dances could stir the coldest heart to joy.

The fifth was a quiet girl with purple skin and blue hair, slight of form and mighty with the written word.

The sixth could not be seen at all, with a voice that could become any other's.

And the seventh — ah, the seventh was a girl named Strawlock.

Strawlock had tanned skin like her mother's, and hair like the pale straw her father spun. She was of average height, with an average face and an ordinary sort of beauty. She was decent at many things, and great at none — or so it seemed.

While her siblings brought fame and fortune to the family with their dazzling talents, Strawlock was left to her own devices. Nobody expected much of her, and she preferred it that way.

Yet in secret, she wielded her sword with the ease of a master, rode her horse as if the two were one, and outwitted even the King's own scholars in games of logic and wit. But few noticed, and fewer still cared — and so she lived quietly, perfectly content for the world to go on without her notice.

As all girls must, Strawlock came of an age when suitors began to call. A baker's son. A blacksmith's son. A shepherd, a farmer. All were kind, all were fine, and none stirred her heart. Her parents nudged her toward marriage only briefly before returning to their spinning, and she to her solitude.

One day, wandering beyond the village, she came upon a boy sitting beside the woods, playing a flute by the river's edge. His traveling cloak and hair were black as night, his skin pale as moonlight, and laughter lined his youthful eyes.

He called himself the Traveler.

Strawlock gave her name and sat beside him without invitation. As his flute played, the river stirred and twisted, casting up shapes of water and light. Stories danced before her eyes — of princes and dragons, witches and kings. But none were quite as they should be.

Sometimes a prince courted another. Sometimes the dragon saved the maiden. Sometimes the king was an ogre, the sorcerer a fool. She saw lands no map had ever marked, and creatures no bard had dared describe.

Day after day, she returned. The Traveler played, and the river told tales. Then, one day, Strawlock stopped him with a smile.

"I have a story too," she said.

And she told it — of a rabbit princess and a frog knight, of a palace made of reeds and a kingdom ruled by dolls. He laughed through the tale, and his laughter was sweeter to her than any music he had ever played.

They met through the seasons, trading stories — some wild, some true, some somewhere between. One day, the Traveler showed her his true face: pitch-black skin, eyes of fire, curved horns, long limbs, sharp fingers, too many teeth. But the laughter still danced in his eyes.

Strawlock kissed his monstrous mouth.

She was a girl with a sword, and he was a monster who laughed — and the world between them was theirs alone, a place made of new love and ancient magic.

Then came the King's army, invading without warning. The village cried out — but Strawlock did not fear. For in the shadow at her back, she heard a sound only she could hear: the soft fall of clawed feet keeping pace.

Through the battlefield she ran, her sword gleaming. None could best her, and fewer still could withstand the monster who followed. Side by side they fought, maiden and beast, until the soldiers scattered like leaves in wind.

From that day forth, no one called her average again.

Riding her horse beneath starlight, she was known across the land as Strawlock the Brave—The Traveling Girl, who consorted with monsters and walked the hidden roads between tales.

She bore many children, each one ordinary in appearance, with eyes like hers and hair like straw.

But when night fell, horns grew and eyes lit with flame. And the Traveler would sit by the river, flute in hand, spinning stories of shadow and wonder, teaching his children the music of magic and the rhythm of dreams.

And so their stories live on, in the whisper of water and the hush of night, waiting to be told again.

The End.

— end of "Strawlock And The Traveler" —