



MONSTER STORY: WERERAT

Oh, my love.
How I suffered for you.
Brash and broad-
shouldered, how could
you not catch my eye.

Always busy, always chopping wood or carrying those heavy hay bales in the inn where you worked – so strong, so determined. How could you ever notice me, a malnourished unwashed street urchin peeking into the inn yard, being shooed away whenever someone noticed me. No matter. I knew that one day I would have your heart.

The sorcerer who came telling fortune promised he had something for me, something that would change the way I looked forever. The terrible things I did to deserve that favor, best not to remember, my love. I recall putting on the amulet, feeling its strange energy. The sorcerer was right, I changed. How glorious I looked in these days. Gone were my crooked gait, the rash on my face, the tangles of mud in my hair. I was a queen. And that's how you saw me. I remember you even stopped in the middle of whatever tavern brawl you were preoccupied with.

My charms worked yet little did I know about their dark price. As we kissed passionately in the light of the moon beyond the inn, the terrible curse afflicting the amulet came into its treacherous power twisting me into this foul rat-like form. The look on your face will haunt the rest of my miserable days. Shock, horror, disgust. You pushed me away, my love, called me such terrible things after what I did to myself for you.

I ran, as fast as I could, knowing only death awaited me in the village in this form. The caverns would be my salvation – deep and dark they are, I could wait it out there. There are creatures that haunt these depths, true, but one learns a thing or two about staying unnoticed living in the streets. I tried to come back to the village, yes I did, but every night the curse came back, more consuming each time. Stones were thrown, curses uttered. There was no place for me now but down there in the darkness.

Years and years surviving on scraps and cadavers. Years being consumed by the accursed red glow of the amulet. My human shape comes back now and again, very rarely – a cruel reminder of all that I lost. All because of you, my love.

But fate is cruel to all equally. You are here with me now, in my halls – lost, wounded. Whatever you were seeking here, you are in for a surprise of the most unpleasant kind. Your big fists and your temper won't save you from my claws. You will pay for what you have done. It seems I would have your heart after all, my love – just not in the way I thought I would.