

Romy By Any Other Name
Draft

By Wolf

Part 1

Molto Allegro Appassionato

Song lists, indexes, and other extra materials

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<http://www.RoseORourc.com>

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FOR LINDSAY

May you pass your trials and find happiness.

Summary: A timeless character-driven drama that explores the dark side of fame in modern-day Hollywood through the eyes of one of its celebrated beauties, child star Rose O'Rourc, and a nobody, Peter Fox.

Addiction and death. The fate of many stars. Haunted by his experiences with alcohol and the ghost of Hamlet, Peter gives up everything to save Rose, and himself, from this horrible end with the only sword he knows how to wield, his love, in a desperate attempt to replace alcohol and nicotine in her life through what he calls dopamine substitution therapy.

The story of Rose O'Rourc: A symphony of word and music in three movements.

Part 1: Parlarmi

[1. Addiction - Fiction. 2. Music Tours - Fiction. 3. Movies - Fiction. 4. Berlin (Germany) - Fiction.]

Romy By Any Other Name

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June 8 2010: ♪ 1. Drunken Angel ♪

A grating metal sound pierced the early morning calm. The heavy gate of the Los Angeles Century Jail for Women opened. Two tall, brawny uniformed officers wearing sunglasses flanked petite Rose O'Rourc.

The young woman wore faded blue jeans, a grey T-shirt, no makeup, and had her long, fair hair tied in a pony tail. She hugged her large Louis Vuitton handbag for comfort, while keeping her big sunglasses fixed on the ground.

Three weeks instead of three months. Constant overcrowding cut short most inmates' sentences. Still, she showed no joy, no sign of exuberance. The guards had given her no special treatment, other than keeping her away from the general population, and may have even treated her harsher, perhaps, because of her celebrity. A celebratory outburst of happiness may jinx her departure. After all, the warden did not normally release prisoners at six in the morning, hours before the facility opened. Maybe twenty more steps. Her heart pounded. Would an administrator jump out of hiding from behind the heavy concrete wall, yell "boo," laugh devilishly, and send her back to her lonely cell?

The mismatched line-up silently walked to a black SUV standing outside. Blood pulsing through her head made thumping sounds in her ears. Ten more steps. Rose barely noticed the warming California sun, her only companion in the last three weeks, for one hour each day.

Three more steps. Alice O'Rourc stood waiting with open arms, in a plain summer dress. The two sisters hugged and kissed. Only then did reality sink in. No cruel prank by the guards dangling a false promise in front of Rose. The warm embrace of her best friend since childhood left no doubt. She was going home!

"This feels so good, you know, after isolation...surrounded

by those dreary walls...no one to hold me," she whispered. Tears streamed down her cheeks. She quickly wiped them away.

Before she entered the passenger side, Rose turned to the guards, smiled, and waved good bye. They remained stone-faced – but waved back.

♪

Paparazzi noisily besieged the SUV standing in front of "Bella Rosa," Rose's home.

She tried to shield her face with her arms and handbag, but the cameras came from all directions, eliciting her first words since entering the car. "Yuck, weren't the pictures in the horrible orange jump suit enough? They need to see me like this, too?"

"I'm sorry. They weren't here when I left. Someone in Lynwood must have tipped them off." Alice inched the car forward in fits and starts, waiting for the metal gate to open a breach in the adobe wall surrounding the compound.

Goading shouts came out from the crowd.

"Show us that pretty smile, Rose, come on."

"How was jail?"

"Did you make any friends?"

The SUV pulled in and stopped in front of the main door. Two middle-aged women, Rosemary O'Rourc and Patricia Papas, formed the "Welcome Home" committee.

Hiding behind the two, Happy, Alice's white poodle, barked at the arrivals. Rose crouched and held out her hand. "What, I'm gone for three weeks and you don't recognize me anymore? Must be the smell of prison." The little dog cautiously trotted forward to sniff her hand and receive a petting.

After more long exchanges of compassion with their mother, the sisters made their way into the house.

"I'm never, ever going back to jail. Nevah!" Rose drifted into her office and threw her handbag and sunglasses on the

big conference table.

Alice followed close behind. Her meek voice underscored the three-year age difference to the dominant breadwinner of the family. "You want to talk about it?"

"No, sis! It was horrible."

A sexy brunette in casual clothes rose from the leather office chair behind the black desk topped with plate glass. Brenda Lancer embraced her former colleague from the Walt Disney Company.

Her hands stroked across Brenda's back. "So good to see you after the forced aloneness, surrounded by all those psychos in... well, you know."

"What are BFFs for, right? Luckily, I'm in town."

When Rose let go, Brenda handed her one of three cocktails waiting on the desk. "Forget the past. Let's celebrate your return, girl."

She offered Alice a tumbler, who waved it off.

Rose slumped into her comfortable chair and buried her head in her hand. A whiff of ammonia cleaner coming from the plate glass irritated her further. She sniffed the drink to please her senses. *Finally reunited, my dear feel-good friend! Felt like rehab without you.*

Brenda found her place on the desk and looked at the trophy wall behind it. A shelf full of MTV Movie, Teen Choice, BAFTA, and SAG Awards formed the centerpiece, flanked by gold and platinum records and oversized pictures of Rose on the cover of magazines and movie posters. "So, you're doing that thriller?"

Rose bent forward and set her glass down. "Don't know. Let me call my agent."

Deprived of any means of communication for three weeks, she had lost touch with the world. She hit a speed dial button on the speaker phone. Jim Schwartz answered on the second ring with a bellowing voice.

"Helloooo, Rose!"

"Jim! Wow, on first try. Give me the good news."

"Sorry, Rose, AE broke off talks. Too much uncertainty."

"What d'ya mean?" Rose played with the paperclips on her desk.

"Word's that you're toxic. Drunk all the time, late for shoots, unprepared. Crews say you have this diva attitude, impossible to work with."

Those creeps! Everybody parties on set. So I was late a few times. I brought donuts.

Rose slammed her fists into the soft armrests and screamed at the phone. "Lies, Jim. You know me!"

"Doesn't matter. You are a court-certified drunk—on probation—without a driver's license. No one can get production insurance on you."

Rose's face turned to stone. She listened in stunned silence.

He let reality sink in for a moment. "The majors won't touch you. The mini-majors won't touch you. Even the independents are backing off."

"Like, hello, Rob put away more Glenfiddich on that shoot than I did. And threw temper tantrums like the best diva, you know. But he's a *man*, of course. Totally unfair." Her arms flew through the air.

Brenda studied the opposite wall behind the conference table with photographs of Marilyn Monroe, Liz Taylor and other female stars, hanging over a big, black leather sofa.

She pointed to Marilyn's picture and spoke with a hushed voice. "Don't worry, Ro. Temporary setback. Marilyn was drunk on set and nobody cared."

The noise of people chatting came out of the phone.

"Didn't Marilyn overdose at 30?" Alice whispered.

"Thirty-six." Rose closed her eyes and rubbed her temple. "She made it to 36. Besides, barbiturates, not booze. I don't do that shit."

Jim interrupted the side conversation. "Flip through the morning news. You're *everywhere*. Now they're showing the wrecked Mercedes. Not helping at all. You need this stuff to disappear."

She grabbed the remote from her desk, turned on the flatscreen next to the door, and channel surfed. A video of her and Brenda drinking and laughing at their friend Helen Batton's wild 29th birthday party appeared. Footage of Rose's black Mercedes hugging a tree next to a Malibu road followed. The news reel of police cuffing her and pushing her into a squad car preceded her mug shot.

The sound from the phone overlaid the TV noise. "Keep a low profile for a while. Hell, get out of town. Somewhere they don't show your court dates on live TV. Let this blow over and we'll try again."

"Like, thanks, Jim. Bye." Rose hung up. After rummaging through the center drawer, she lighted a cigarette, relaxed and stared through the spotless plate glass at the black granite floor.

I still have friends. Some that understand work and party. I'll find something on my own. Jim's a flake anyway.

Brenda leaned over and gently caressed her friend's hair. "I know the *perfect* place for you to chill: Berlin."

Rose looked at her with wide eyes. "Germany? I don't speak German. Don't know anybody there."

"Trust me. Berlin is *in* now. Cosmopolitan feeling, great new party scene. The Berlinale film festival's red hot. I saw Renée Zellweger, Leonardo DiCaprio, and Pierce Brosnan there."

Brenda sat up straight and waved furiously. The drink in her other hand sloshed dangerously close to the rim. "Lots of celebs in town, and they don't speak German. Kids there flock to my concerts and sing along. They all know English. Noooo problem."

"Maybe you're right. Change of scenery. Like, forget the crap here. I'll weasel out of court-ordered rehab somehow."

"Great! When you're back, finish your third album. I can help. Maybe do a duet. The music industry is, like, easy. You know, sex, drugs, Rock'n'Roll. Doesn't Jimmy Buffet go on stage drunk? Didn't hurt Amy Winehouse or Whitney

Houston. They went platinum again after all their troubles."

Alice joined the conversation in her usual subdued way. "I heard Whitney's tour's terrible. Cancelled shows—"

Brenda pointed her glass at the baby of the group. "How often have you gotten drunk, little one? What do you know about life?"

Rose toasted Monroe's picture and downed her drink. A tear ran down her cheek.

Dear Marilyn, nobody understood you either. Tell me I won't end up like you.