



Freedom's Souvenir

Pia Veleno

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Official Description: *A lifetime in the closet is a hard habit to break, but so is a lifetime out of it.*

When Nick Boden's newly divorced sister, Maggie, invites him to take the place of her ex on a week-long Caribbean cruise, Nick doesn't expect much beside sunshine and quality time with his sister.

His meddling sister.

Tad Eglington booked the solo trip expecting a week of quiet relaxation. So when the dinner hostess sits him with a bubbly woman and her single, gay, and very sexy brother, Tad's vacation started looking even better than expected.

The crystal blue ocean doesn't hold a candle to the hard abs and cocky smile of Nick Boden, but Tad has spent his entire adult life building up the walls of his closet, while Nick has never put anything but clothes in his.

The ship is called Freedom, but will its message be heard on the open ocean.

Original Prompt:

Dear Author,

Last summer, I went on a cruise, and one day while I was out roaming the ship, I saw this guy sitting and reading and he just looked so peaceful and content that I needed to take a photo. But when I got home, I saw the guy in the background who looks like he is spying on him... I wonder if they have a story to tell.

Photo Description: A man relaxes in a lounge chair in nothing but swim trunks and shades. One arm reaches over his head, showing off strong abs. One knee bent, a book is propped on his thigh. In the distance, behind a support beam and tinted glass partition, a figure appears to be discreetly watching our reader.

This story was written as a part of the M/M Romance Group's "**Hot Summer Days**" event. Group members were asked to write a story prompt inspired by a photo of their choice. Authors of the group selected a photo and prompt that spoke to them and wrote a short story.

Download the story, read it here or find it in Don't Read in the Closet, Volume 4.

Genre: contemporary

Tags: gay m/m, closet, vacation, meddling sister, lawyer, artist

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Freedom's Souvenir Details

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Author : Pia Veleno

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From Reader Review Freedom's Souvenir for online ebook

Kara Skinner (Lover's Quarrel Reviews) says

his story was really good for the most part. I liked both Nick and Tad a lot, as well as Nick's sister, Maggie, even though she has a much smaller role in the story.

However, there was a lot of sex.

Don't get me wrong, I love well-written sex scenes. And these were very well-written. But there were three very lengthy scenes in this short story, one right after another. I got bored quickly.

There is definitely insta-love here, as well. After one night together, both Nick and Tad are determined to make this relationship work, even if it means changing their lifestyles. One. Night.

However, this insta-love isn't as bad as many I've read. It's more like insta-lust, which is acceptable. And both Tad and Nick acknowledge that what they're feeling is crazy. And I guess a little bit of insta-love is better than dragging out a book that has no real plot. (Of course, a real, well-written plot that gives the characters time to fall in love is ideal, but this is a short story).

So while the insta-love is there, it's not as heinous as other stories. If you are looking for a quick, fun read, then I highly recommend this story.

Kelly H. (Maybedog) says

This should probably be a 4 but I love the sister so much, and great female characters are so rare in this genre, I made it a 5. The rest is adorable, too.

Britta ★ Nachteule ★ says

Read as part of the free Don't Read in the Closet: Volume Four anthology. Story #28

Stephanie says

This was a pretty good short story, I just would have liked a little more.

Pia Veleno says

Now available in multiple free formats on Smashwords.com and AllRomanceeBooks.com

Warning: May contain hot sex in a tropical location, a desperate search for lube, and a meddling sister who may or may not leave her panties hanging on the door in warning.

SueM says

Okay, you've won me with this story Pia - it was just right! A lovely sexy man who loves his sister to the extent of going on a cruise with her, even when it's not his thing; and a smart, confidant man who knows what he wants - even if it means breaking open a closet door that had made his professional life easier. I loved that second thoughts - after the initial shock and anger had faded a little - brought both of them to realize that compromise would be far better than throwing away the possibility of a loving future together. Beautiful! And to top it all off, your recreation the OP photo was spot on! Thanks for writing this Pia!

Rachel Emily says

I loved this! Fun, sexy, funny, and very enjoyable characters. I really liked Maggie, she was awesome.

Jess says

I really really enjoyed this HSD freebie. My only wish is that we saw a little bit more angst when Tad decided to come outta the closet. He seemed to make his decision very easily.

Hot setting, Hot Characters, Hot Sex - A great Hot Summers Day read :)

Wendy Ann says

Perfect story for that picture! Tad and Nick were great characters. I thought it was hysterical how they struggled to produce condoms and lube at the same time:) I'm glad Nick was worth Tad taking a chance at coming out of the closet. They have a great beginning, but they also need a happy ending! And, you shouldn't avoid writing girls any more - you did Maggie proud. I'd be happy to have a sister like Maggie, but I'm sure I'd want to die of embarrassment too! Great job, Pia - thank you!!!

Sarah says

This was good. The writing was good, but there were a few typos. I liked the story but I think this one would have been better as a longer novel.

Cindi says

This was a great read.

Nick has been dragged on a cruise with his sister after she caught her ex with someone else. Tad decided to take a cruise alone just to get away from everything for a few days. When they meet (thanks to Nick's meddling sister) there is instant attraction and one thing leads to another. Nick is out and proud. Tad is in the closet.

The story is pretty short so there is not a lot of background information in regards to any of the characters so you don't get to see what made them the way they are. But the story is entertaining either way. Both Nick and Tad are likable and the story flows smoothly regardless of the length.

My only complaint is that I wish there could have been a quick epilogue telling the reader what happens after the cruise... not just with the relationship but with Tad coming out.

Good story.

L-D says

[Tad went from being in the closet to ready to come out in the span of a day (hide spoiler)]

Serena says

Don't Read in the Closet: Volume Four

My Rating System:

* couldn't finish, ** wouldn't recommend, *** would recommend, **** would read again, ***** have read again

Bubbles Huntly Honest & Direct Opinions says

Oh dear lord I thought waiting for the baggage was boring enough, at least it had a point with him seeing other mc.

But now waiting on bus. Waiting in line for cruise. Wondering around the ship and describing everything. This is beyond boring and so far there is no point in site.

Eh instant love. They've known each other a day and he's going to completely change his life? Then it ends after that day so no idea how well that turned out.

I don't feel like I got to know either character. And the only connection entered them was lust.

Still a cute story I guess if you make it past the extremely slow and pointlessly detailed beginning.

Raevyn says

Cute story, but as always the length of the short story was too short. I want to know what happens next.
