



The Invasion of Tork

Claire Davis , Al Stewart

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Adam is cool, intelligent and drop-dead gorgeous - all the guys tell him so! When he is forced to start voluntary work at the local homeless shelter, all he worries about is keeping the clients well away from him and finishing the placement as soon as possible. Until he meets Tork.

Tork is clever and funny. He makes origami models and reads Dickens. Tork has green hair and makes Adam's heart race with longing. But Tork is homeless and not at all impressed with Adam's attitude.

Can Adam see past his fear and arrogance? Can Tork give Adam a chance?

Can two such different men turn the world upside down and find out what really matters? Read to find out their story.

Content Warning: the story includes reference to and description of self-harming.

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A story from Boughs of Evergreen: A Holiday Anthology

The Invasion of Tork Details

Date : Published December 1st 2014 by Beaten Track (first published November 21st 2014)

ISBN :

Author : Claire Davis , Al Stewart

Format : ebook 48 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Short Stories, Holiday

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From Reader Review The Invasion of Tork for online ebook

Ele says

4.5 stars

So...I was in a good mood yesterday and wanted something short to read and hey...there is a Stewart-Davis book I haven't read! Nice and light YA shortie it seems...Everything is good and Ele is a happy girl.

Thirty minutes later...

This is not going according to plan...

Because Tork's reality and the fact that this is not just fiction, but real life for so many homeless kids, punched me in the gut. **Tork is brilliant and a good, good boy. He has rules that help him survive life in the streets.**

"Rule: no lying down.

Rule: no touching.

Rule: do not bring attention to yourself."

but it's the same rules that hurt him

"Rule: Pain is pure and as solid as the sky and the earth. It will never let me down or abandon me."

Now Adam...well Adam acts like a fucking prick. You can tell it comes from insecurity, especially as far as Tork is concerned but still...what an asshole.

BUT, there is this change happening in him. As a reader you can see it but the moment he realises he went from *"How can I not be good enough for him?"* to *"How could I ever be good enough for someone like Tork?"* ...*sigh* he really got to me, that asshole.

I wanted to learn more for Tork. We only get to see glimpses of how he ended up homeless or the awful things that have happened to him. Maybe I'm wrong but I believe that this was exactly the authors' purpose. To show Tork's terrible present and how he fights with everything that's left in him, not how he got to this point, the change in Adam and eventually, hope. Because there is hope and the ending is all kinds of hopeful.

Still...I wanted to know more to feel 100% satisfied. Dunno...maybe a sequel could take care of that *hint hint hint hint hint....*

So, although this did NOT go according to plan because....

it was a winner and I truly loved it. Recommended!

~Review cross posted on Gay Book Reviews.~

Exina says

Amazing! Review later...

wesley says

I don't expect much out of shorts because usually, they don't offer enough room to contemplate about the story or the characters. But this is one of those exemptions.

The Invasion of Tork is a thought-provoking book -- full of melancholy but well-timed and intelligently written.

Like a sage with profound knowledge, this book shares with you a part of life most of us have not and hopefully will not experience. Nevertheless, this perfectly makes you understand what it's like to live everyday of your life fighting for survival.

The shower is the ultimate best experience of my life. I keep waiting for the water to run out, but there seems to be no control on how long you get. This touches me more than all the rest of the kindness, and I lean on the wall and cry. All that time on my own I did not realise how lonely I was. It has taken no more than a shower with no time limits to make me feel the pain.

Although I didn't like Adam's character one bit, Tork's overshadows everything else. At times, hearing Tork's thoughts was terrifying but there is also a spellbinding rhythm to the way he delivers -- savant-like and resonating with kind wisdom -- that you can't help but be enamored by his unique personality.

If I die today, my little proud paper works of art will sit here until they collapse. This makes me feel more permanent, like having roots. When I head home, I pretend that my paper models are waiting for me like a family.

First Claire Davis and Al Stewart collab that I truly and thoroughly enjoyed. **5 heartwarming stars!**

Sheziss says

It was nothing like I expected.

An unexpected pair, this one. A kind boy whose copying mechanisms have failed with a big headed and

frivolous flirt? I was curious as how the authors would deal with this situation, but surprisingly, Tork also has a wicked streak, whereas Adam is a softie inside. Things are not what they look like at first.

The plot is adorable, the dancing around each other, the coming to terms with themselves, and the subtle changing so as to be deserving of what they both need. It's a heart-wrenching story most of the time, but that doesn't mean it's heavy on the heart. Just the opposite, it's cute and made me smile. Adam made me smile with his egocentric attitude, which fails the moment he meets Tork. And Tork has issues, real issues, but he doesn't bend to Adam at all.

Adam wants to prove him who is boss, to put Tork on his knees. However, he's not exactly successful. Even more, Tork knows how to turn the tables and leave him speechless. Knocked out and frustrated with himself (and with Tork). It was hilarious.

One of those books you should never forget to read. Simply stunning, the language, the characters, the FEELZ. It creates a light of its own.

(view spoiler)

You can read it for free [here](#) or [here](#).

Jewel says

I really enjoyed this story! Tork just broke my heart with his rules and self harm. And Adam...it took him a while to learn how to be a human being. But the journey was something they both needed and it was worth it. I'm glad book 2 is out now :)

Truuss says

Woww wowwww..... Over to #2

Elsbeth says

Wow.. Just wow!!

Such a powerfull story about hope!!

Tork, sweet Tork has been living the streets for a year. Living by his own made rules to survive. He was so sweet, I just wanted to jump in and cuddle him.

Adam, a volunteer at the homeless shelter meets Tork. He's arrogant and rude to him and thinks as himself so much more than Tork. Tork is homeless, yes, but he's also very smart is very amused by the arrogance of Adam.

Tork keeps coming to the shelter for food packages and through their interaction, Tork is able to think of himself as someone who is worthy of a second chance.

“It is mad and unbelievable and how can I allow myself to be so vulnerable and fragile again?
But this mistletoe... this means that someone has looked at me and seen past the smell and
shame of poverty until they found me.”

Can't wait to read the sequel The Invasion of Adam

Kristan says

Dear Al Stewart and Claire Davis:

You made me cry.

I don't have the stars or the words to do this review justice. If I could give it twenty stars I would, because five?

That's just not enough.

This story was real, heart wrenching, brilliant, endearing, sweet, tough, and beautiful. The same can be said of Tork, our main character who captured my heart from the first paragraph and wouldn't let it go.

Exotic, beautiful, green-haired Tork has been living on the streets for over a year. He has a set of rules he lives by but often wonders if he'll be able to go on much longer. He wants a meal, safety, to be seen, and to be able to leave an impression on this world after he's gone. From his actions, to his kindness, everything that is Tork made me love him more and more.

Adam, the cocky, self-centered rich kid is the complete opposite. He hides behind is arrogance. He's the greatest thing to grace this earth; just ask him. But Tork sees through all of it, and slowly that rude arrogance evaporates. Now it's not a question of Tork not being good enough for him, but how he could ever be good enough for Tork.

This book needs to be experienced. Because that summary you just read? That didn't do it any justice.

I loved this book. It's so much feeling, and emotion and compassion rolled up into this beautiful, real, gritty story. To me, it was perfect.

I want to read it again and again.

I want to cherish it and put it on a pedestal.

I want to chain Claire and Al to their computers and force them to write more books. Now.

My sincerest thank you to the authors for their time, effort (and sanity) in creating such a brilliant story for such a worthy cause. And Amy: Your cover is beautiful.

? Todd says

Wow, I thought I knew the definition of **slow-burn**, but I guess I was mistaken, because this story just took that concept to new heights.

It also had an air of the **enemies to lovers** trope as well, but that was mostly from **Adam's perspective**. Since **Tork was homeless**, Adam considered him as part of "*the great unwashed*" and barely even human when the story first began.

But Tork's take on the **arrogant and abrasive** Adam, even from the start, was quite different. Tork never took Adam's **asshat behavior and callous words** to heart, because he immediately saw straight through the act. And instead of being offended, he was **highly-amused**.

Tork:

Adam:

I'm actually a bit floored that Adam's overly-healthy opinion of himself and constant lack of empathy for others didn't cause me to instantly hate him. Normally I would. Full stop.

But, instead, I just **felt sorry for Adam** and kept thinking:

" Oh, you beautiful, beautiful boy, just wait until the real world (and Tork) sink their sharp hooks in you. You have so much to learn and you won't even see it coming. "

And he didn't.

I absolutely loved seeing how Adam's slowly-growing feelings for Tork **changed him for the better**, as he became a much more caring and feeling human being. He's fairly unrecognizable from the person he was by the end of the story, which was **a beautiful transformation** to witness.

But Tork had been hurt badly before, so he lived by a set of **very rigid rules** to keep himself both physically and mentally safe.

Rule: no lying down.

Rule: no deep sleeping.

Rule: don't bring attention to myself.

Rule: no touching.

Rule: Pain is pure and as solid as the sky and the earth. It will never let me down or abandon me.

But the last rule nearly shredded my heart, because when Tork broke his very rigid rules, he inflicted **self-harm as a punishment**, which was truly sad.

Plus, the scene where Tork places Adam's gift next to his origami figures in the cold, dank garage where Tork holed up, alongside his only other earthly possessions. God, that was so very touching.

Toward the end of the book and Tork's feelings for Adam grew deeper in his heart and Tork, fortunately, began to **take back control of his life**, mainly because Adam made him **remember what it was like to actually 'want'. And to hope.**

And that's how this **truly amazing and unique short story** ended, with hope. Not only hope for a future, together, but also hope for Tork to rebuild **the life that he'd not lost, only misplaced for a time.**

So this one rates **a solid 4.5 stars** for me and I really **can't recommend it enough.**

Note: The book is **currently free on Amazon**, as of 2015-12-03.

Josy says

~ 4.5 stars ~

A very emotional story that deals with the heavy topic of homelessness and all that comes with it when someone finds themselves in this situation and can't find their way out on their own. Still, this story ends on a hopeful note. Not only for a new chance at life but also for a love between two young men so utterly

different.

Tork broke my heart and I just wanted him to be happy and safe. But at the same time, I was also proud of him.

I'm not sure if it's me or the wonderful writing but I loved Adam from the beginning even when he was an arrogant prick without any empathy. I actually felt kind of sorry for him and couldn't wait for him to see what was right in front of him.

No matter if a short story or a full-length novel, these authors never fail to capture my attention from beginning to end. I love their writing and their capability to pull me in completely. I just wish there would have been a trigger warning for the topic of self-harm in the blurb. For some, this is a very sensitive issue and we need to prepare ourselves before reading about it.

edit: the publisher reacted immediately and put a content warning in the blurb. Thank you for that!!!

~☆~Dœni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

This one's a tearjerker and a hopebuilder. I've come to expect no less from Claire and Al's stories, which always evoke all the feels.

Tork is a beautiful young man with green hair who's crazy smart and kind and polite. And also homeless, constrained by survival rules of his own creation.

Being in Tork's head was scary and exhilarating and sad, so fucking sad. I wanted to know much more about him, including how he ended up on the streets in the first place.

It's not that hard to fill in the blanks (nearly half of all homeless kids in the States are LGBT, and the statistics are probably similar in England), but Tork is an enigma. Some of his thought patterns pointed to mental illness, but that issue was not raised.

Adam is much less endearing. MUCH. He's arrogant, shallow, and conceited, and I wanted Tork to like someone else. I'm not sure Adam did enough, and he never won me over.

But the story did. **Beautiful writing. Hopeful ending.**

Kaje Harper says

These two authors excel at giving us men who are a bit atypical, guys whose thoughts and emotions run outside the usual rails. In this book we meet Tork, a young man who has been living on the street for a while. He's sleeping in hidden places like under a stairwell, scrounging in dumpsters, and barely surviving. He has a set of rules he uses to give shape to his days, and he's brilliant, but he's haunted by his past and mistakes, and on the edge of giving up.

And then Adam, who is a wonderfully obnoxious young man as the story opens. In college, living on his parents' money and spending much of his time partying and drinking and screwing around with guys he really doesn't care anything about. In order to meet his parents' expectations of getting into university, he's been told he needs a volunteer service on his resume, so he goes to a charity kitchen and food shelf. Adam figures it'll be an easy job and he won't have to really interact with the bums off the street. Then he sees Tork, with his green hair, his remote elegance under the poverty, his disdain for Adam's posturing, and his secret brilliance that lets him fold an origami star, fix a bike, or finish off a crossword in the time it takes Adam to fetch a food package.

Adam is intrigued against his will, and in a way, his dismay at being outmatched by someone with nothing reveals the emptiness he hides under the loud friends and the money. Adam wants to get to know Tork better, but it's hard to know a person in five minutes of handing over charity. Especially one who reacts to being touched by swiftly leaving.

There is a lot of emotion in subtle moments here, and a lot of character revealed in word choices and actions. This story of how two dissimilar young men find a way to connect was well worth the read.

Noah says

This is the story of Tork. A homeless young man who has been down on his luck. He struggles with his past, he is lost and sad, but he still has some fight left in him.

One very ordinary and gloomy December day he ends up at the local homeless shelter and meets no other but the one and only Adam.

And then... HOPE happens. :)

"Listen to the mustn'ts, child.
Listen to the don'ts.
Listen to the shouldn'ts, the impossibles, the won'ts.
Listen to the never haves, then listen close to me...
Anything can happen, child. Anything can be."
? Shel Silverstein

Note: "The Invasion of Tork" is a part of the "Boughs of Evergreen" two-volume collection of short stories. The proceeds from the sales of the anthology will be donated to The Trevor Project, an organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ youth.
<http://www.thetrevorproject.org/>

Nick Pageant says

Not at all what I expected, but I'm not complaining. Beautiful writing.

Alona says

Oh book, you are beautiful!

To read about someone like Tork is heartbreaking.

To read about someone like Tork written LIKE THAT? It's a killer!!

The feelings of sadness and loneliness are so strong that it can almost choke you.

It's a short book, but it does, in less than 50 pages, what many can't with a lot more words.

Book #2 is a must read when you finish this one, so make sure you have it and you're in for a treat of beauty, sadness and a wonderful HEA.

Thank you Nick for a lovely gift and a great BR.
