

Vacation

The sun was setting along the coast of Lisbon, Portugal. The sky was painted blood red and dark orange. Thick purple clouds dropped in spots across the sky. You could hear the faint sounds of birds whistling above and the calm waters splashing along the shore. It was a balmy 75 degrees and beautiful weather for walking along the beach.

A French couple in their late 20's were one of many couples walking in the sand, holding hands and admiring the view.

"Mmm, could this be any more perfect?" the woman asked in a sultry voice. A breeze blew through her long, blonde hair and made waves on her white linen dress, like ripples on a pond.

"It can't get any more perfect," he said gently and clasped her hand and planted a soft kiss on her cheek.

To their left were hotels and sidewalk cafes where tourists hung out and relaxed after a day at the beach. You could hear their talk and laughter over the faint sound of jazz, and an occasional car horn honking from the streets.

They had just spent a week in Barcelona and were planning on a week in Lisbon.

"What do you want to do tonight?"

"Hmm," she pondered for a moment, then looked out at the ocean, then back at her husband and smiled. "How about this?" and she stopped walking and faced him. "Let's go back to the hotel, work up an appetite, if you know what I mean, go out to dinner, grab a few drinks, and just enjoy the scenery."

She then wrapped her arms around him and kissed him on the lips.

"Mm, hmm. Sounds like a good night to me and I surely will enjoy it," he said kissing her again.

"You know what? You can add this country to our list of places we had sex in Europe."

"That's right. England, Spain, Greece, Italy, Germany, Belgium. And after tonight we will add Portugal to the list. After that, how many more countries do we need?"

Suddenly, they heard a very loud boom and fell to the ground. And then another.

While their faces were pressed against the sand, they heard the shrill screams of innocents. Dozens of car alarms, triggered by the blast, moaned passively in the background.

They remained still for a moment. “Are you okay?” he asked.

“Yes. What the hell happened?” she asked and began to wipe the sand from her dress. He lent her his hand and the both stood and they glared at the charred ruins of two hotels and three outdoor cafes.

“I don’t know but it would be best to stay away.”