

[title]

By Pan and Zara

Pan is outside a small town dressed in a black cloak with a large gash cut into his stride and he is limping to the town

Zara was walking out of town on her horse, she was supposed to go to the woods to find herbs but noticed Pan, she gasped. she got off her horse and went to him quickly "Sir, are you alright?" she asked worriedly.

Pan looked up at her meekly and said y -*cringe in pain*- yes I'll b-be ffFine. and makes to keep moving to town not trusting the young female that rode up

Zara shook her head "that gash looks awful sir..at least let me get you to the doctor in town" she said quietly keeping with him, her horse following.

Pan:F-fine if you must but don't trouble yourself over me

Zara nodded "this is no trouble" she reassured him and helped him up onto her horse, she took a cloth from the saddle bag and tied it around his side, making sure no more blood could seep out. "how'd this happen..?" she asked and started to lead the horse back to town.

Pan um I fell....down a ravine....and hit some sticks on the way down he said obviously lying but hoped she could not tell

she frowned "that sounds awful...well we'll get you fixed up" she said not catching on, she had a lack of ability to tell the difference between truth and lies. it was about a 20 minute hike back into the safety of the town, but they made it, she helped him off the horse outside the doctors little home.

Pan winced as she helped him off and thanked her before moving to open the door where he collapsed falling unconscious from blood loss being on the horse like he had been had put pressure on his belly so the blood had stayed trapped but now with it free to roam it was not enough

she flinched and hurriedly helped him up, asking for the help of a gentleman to help bring him in for her, she quickly got the doctor, the old rat had his nurses help situate Pan in a cot and fresh bandages while he got the proper tools to seal up the wound and restore his strength.

Pan woke up several hours later on a soft bed instead of the hard ground and his side did not hurt so much he wondered why as he fought to open his eyes

Zara was sitting on a chair beside him reading her book on farming herbs. she looked over to him and smiled. "Hey...do you need water...the doctor said you might be woozy" she offered in a quiet tone.

Pan finally got his eyes open and then Panicked seeing the girl and tried to get up immediately regretting it as he almost passed out again after he had recovered he said y-yea water would be great

Zara's ears fell at his reaction, she went to the counter and dipped a small ceramic cup into a bucket of fresh water, handing him the cup "sip slowly ok..." she said and curled her tail up around her legs. "I didn't mean to scare you..."

Pan watched her suspiciously sniffing the water before he took a slow sip making sure to taste it before swallowing "where am I um..."

she looked to him "O-oh...we're in hartvel, at the doctors office...my name is Zara sir" she said smiling a little.

Pan thought a sec hartvel.. where is that he wondered t himself then he took another sip and said well Zara I guess I should tell you my name is Pantalaimon Pan for short

Zara smiled "It's nice to meet you Pan..." she said softly. then thought. "are...you in danger or something? you've been awfully jumpy" she said quietly and closed her book.

Pan smiled nervously no what makes you think I'm in danger and form a young girl like yourself preposterous he said making a fool of himself

Zara frowned "I-I'm not just a young girl...I'm 18 actually...and I'm smart" she said defensively. "The doctor said you were cut, and not by sticks or logs, there was no splinters"

Pan shifted uncomfortably but did not answer thinking to himself whether he could fake her out or not

she sighed "well...once you get out of here you're more than welcome to stop by if you need anything, my house is the last one heading out of the town with the small fenced in plot of field" she said softly, "My horse is always hitched out front so you'll see him there too" she said and stood.

Pan watched her looking for deceit and Mal intent but found none so he said thank you I will

Zara nodded and bowed, she turned to the doctor and paid the fee for his care and went to go do her job of picking herbs.

Pan sat waiting to get better

~ a day later ~

~the doctor said Pan could leave but to take it easy~

Pan left the doc's small clinic and went looking for Zara not remembering where she said she lived

Zara was out to return her days shipment of herbs to the local shop keepers in exchange for her pay, she went to check on Pan to see how he was doing, but decided maybe he had left after the doctor said they released him. she went back home a little bummed out as she tied up her horse to the post outside her home.

Pan walked around town looking and saw a horse out he hoped it was Zara's he waked up to the horse petting it before he tried

Zara smiled as she walked out, getting ready to go for a ride, she blinked when she saw Pan there. "O-oh, hello Mr Pan, I thought you left town already"

Pan looked at her startled by her sudden appearance "oh ..um miss. Zara um I have come to both ask if there is any way I may pay you for my medical attention and to take you up on your offer see I need a place to sleep at least for tonight if its not too much trouble

Zara smiled a little "oh, it's no problem, your medicine didn't cost that much..." she said and thought "You are welcome to stay...though I apologize my home hasn't seen company in a while- it's a little messy" she said and let him inside. "Help yourself to food and drink, I'll be right back, I need to go to the shops to get more feed for Horus here" she said pointing at the horse. "you can come with me if you want to do that too though"

Pan stepping in looked her at the house and thought it was a bit messy but by far not the worst he had seen.

hearing the offer he thought about it sec and then said yes I think I'd like that

she smiled and waited for him "Wanna ride with me? or by yourself, I can walk, but you shouldn't strain yourself too much" she said softly, her ears flitted at the surrounding noises of the other locals bustling about the day.

Pan smiled lets ride together if at all I don't want to put you out too much more than I already have

Zara nodded and got off to let him on. "It's no problem, like I said...this isn't costing me much" she purred. "I don't get out a lot either...well, make friends ,that is. so it's nice to actually be around someone" she said and smiled as she patted the horses neck.

Pan smiled and got up on the horse haphazardly barely managing to stay aloft on it then he reached down and offered his hand to pull her up

Zara took his paw gently and used the stirrup to hoist herself up onto the saddle behind him. "You know how to ride a horse right?" she asked just to make sure.

Pan smiled" um... not really I have a few times but I was never very good at it"

Zara nodded and reached around him grabbing the reins, she had been riding since she was very young, "is there anyplace you would like to stop while we're in town?" she asked curiously as she kicked the horse into a trot.

Pan leaned back against Zara from the moment of the horse and to steady himself "um, what is here in this town he ask a bit deflated."

she smiled "typical town stuff, there's a bakery, and butcher shop, there's a couple simple boutiques and an exceptionally talented blacksmith in town- he can be tricky to get a hold of though since he's always between the mines and his forge" she explained.

Pan smiled well since you asked could we try to get a hold of this blacksmith his fur bristled as he was going to explain but stopped himself "i..." he changed the subject offhandedly what kind of feed does your horse get

she thought for a moment. "well...now that you mention it, I do need to get a couple things for him... I need more grass seed to sow for hay, and he likes a mixture of bran and oat," she said and looked up at the screech of a hawk. "I need to get some food for the house too...if you want, I can drop you off to check out the blacksmith's while I go run my errands?" she asked.

Pan smiled relieved she did not want to join him at the blacksmith's or question why he need to go there" I would like that very much. thank you Zara."

Zara's tail wagged a little. "okay, let's meet back at the town center after the second bell chime from now then," she said getting off the horse at the market stand. "you can take Horus- he's well trained and won't run off on ya" she said and made sure she had her coin satchel on her, she began to browse the veggies, she planned on making nicer meals while she had Pan over.

Pan looked at the horse uncertainty then took him at a fast slightly out of control trot over to what looked like the blacksmith's with a large cast iron forge billowing smoke and sparks out its large brick chimney.

Pan got of Horus and tied his reins to the post out front and went in to find the blacksmith Pan only found a note reading in black jagged later scratched on hurriedly saying DO NOT DISTURB, he heard yelling and objects being thrown from inside

Zara filled up her basket and went to pay for her items. A tall burley and white bearded shear-pei stormed out, slamming the wooden door behind him- the hinges already looking like they suffered through a lot of hard slams. he puffed out his chest looking down at Pan "Wahttyu want runt?" he growled, taking a swig of rum.

Pan shrunk back a bit more than a little taken aback by this hagged drunk in front of him "...un a-are you the b-blacksmith I was t-told about?" Pan said it a bit skeptically

He wiped the dribble of liquor from his jowls and sat down at his workbench “Yup...that I am- though someone like you wouldn’t be able to lift a weapon of mine, it’s too bad we blacksmiths can’t make better women either” he snorted. “what do you need runt?”

Pan smiled pleasantly trying to stuff the insults threatens to spew from him like projectile vomit, “um well I need a dagger made something light and strong that will keep its edge in any weather so it need to made with steel”

Tank spun around after putting his smock on and rolled up his sleeves. “What do you mean blasted whelp I know what to use! I'm the blacksmith after all ain't i- what do you do- deliver newspapers for pups to wet on?” he growled

Pan took a long deep breath “pardon me , um what was your name? and can you make my request or not Pan said the last be with a defiant tone.

the older male took another snort of the rum and looked to Pan begrudgingly. “the name’s tank...and yeah I can make yet stinkin weapon, a dagger here costs 500 gold kid- don’t like it, I'm sure someone a couple towns over can sell ya a flimsy piece of shit for less” he said and sat down.

Pan gaped “**500 gold! for a dagger?**” with a frustrated and shocked look on his face

Tank wiped his paws on his smock “you can bet that hairy ass of yours- do you realize the cost of ore these days, if I'm not gettin’ it fresh out the mines myself it’s a nightmare in price, not to mention my weapons are the highest grade you’re gonna find around these parts- the great lords themselves buy my weapons for their warriors to guard them with that’s how good they are” he said and puffed out his chest again.

Pan smiled sheepishly and got back on Horus riding him to town square more than a few minutes early where he got off the horse and let him drink in the fountain while Pan washed his face in the same water gathering discussed looks from the more civilized females about, but Pan took no notice of them and sat his front soaked waiting for Zara with an all around displeased look on his face

Zara came back with a full basket of fresh foods and noticed how upset he looked. “Hey, everything ok there?” she asked offering a carrot to the horse, who took it gratefully from her paw. she looked over at Pan as she strapped the goods into the saddlebags.

Pan composed himself quickly saying in a bit too gruff voice for his liking” everything is just peachy” then in a much softer more normal voice he said” did you get all your shopping done?”

she nodded softly and smiled, telling he had a rough time in town. “Let’s...go back to my place, I'll get a nice meal on the stove and you can rest your wound and what not” she said getting on her horse, leaving space behind her for the husky mix.

Pan put on a smile and got up a bit unsure of where to put his hands as he sat there a bit awkwardly searching.

Zara smiled as she glanced back at him. "Around my waist or the sides of the saddle" she said softly and double checked the girth and stirrups to make sure they hadn't gotten loose, then tightened the reins back to their normal length.

Pan gingerly wrapped his arms around her waist resting his hand there softly. nervously he thought to himself why am I nervous as Zara started them at a trot home

she smiled and glanced back at him occasionally to make sure he was still ok with his wound still being pretty fresh. "What's your favorite food?" she asked softly "I can probably make it as long as it's not too complex" she replied and turned them into a side road with no houses so they could go faster.

Pan laid his cheek against her back as she started the horse faster "um I'm not too picky, can you make pizza?"

Zara thought, never having heard of the dish "pizza...? how do you make that?" she asked softly.

Pan smiled "just make what you want to night I'll show you when I can maybe Zara"

she nodded softly, thinking about what to make with the materials she had. "How about...just some simple steak and potatoes?" she asked, having made it many times before. "I-if you don't like it... I can make other things" she said nervously, her ears falling a little, before turning down a slight hill, her home not too far away.

Pan let his paws fall in her lap testing to see if she minded and to let his sore muscles rest "that sounds great Zara" he said with a chuckle

Zara smiled a little, her tail wagging "Okay, that's what I'll make then," she said and pulled the horse around to a small wooden post just outside her home like last time and got off, quickly tying him to the post and filling the small iron dish hooked around the post with oats before offering Pan help out of his saddle.