

Chapter 1: Fresh Beginnings ~ At a Glance

August is often known for its warm, summer nights. Small bugs whizz and whirr, with fireflies adorning the richly-filled ambience. Creatures of the day settle down into their dens and caverns, trees and bushes, and ponds and rivers. Contrarily, critters of the night begin their wake, the pitter patter of their feet, the flapping of their wings, and the movement of their fins contribute to the orchestral song of the wild.

In the center of Sulow's dense forest lies the town of Sulow Grove, known for its concentration of life from across the globe. On this particular evening, its streets were filled with vendor carts and Willows of all sizes, exploring the annual fair in celebration of new residents. The warmly colored leaves absorbed the dangling oil lights, illuminating the scenery with hues of reds and yellows.

On this particular evening, two Willows emerged from their faraway abode, the atmosphere enticing one as the other begrudgingly followed. With them followed two faithful companions, guiding their journey amongst the winding dirt and cobble roads. Willow, the shorter, more excited of the two, pointed towards all the sights his little eye could spot, as his Snoware, Tiger, kept his snout low to the ground to check for any danger. Although Spoon, her posture stoic but watchful, wasn't thrilled, she listened to each word, and glanced at what he gazed at. Her flamake, Scarf, rested upon Spoon's shoulders, as the moon's glow invited him to rest.

Sulow Grove's "Welcome!" banner drew near, as it softly rippled and swayed in the nightly breeze. The sounds of young Willows running and screaming with joy began to overcome the nightly orchestra, as their parents kept a watchful eye. Older Willows huddled in small quips, munching on soft apples and sweetened acorn squash as they discussed festivals of old. Vendors called out the various goods they sold, adorning stands with souvenirs and tasty treats.

If Spoon could roll her eyes, she would. There were too many Willows, too many sounds, too many sights... too much *noise*. She began to mumble and grumble under her breath, her doubts bubbling up as Spoon continued to look around her. In the midst of the moment, her gaze landed on Willow, as everything in her mind stopped. His eyes looked like stars, as he took in every sight: the sounds, the smell, the *feel* of it all. He looked so... happy.

Maybe... she could put aside her grievances, just for one occasion.

Willow looked up to her as she gave him a gentle nod, his excitement bursting out as he squealed. Tiger looked up to Scarf, the two realizing it was going to be a long, long night.

He immediately ran to the welcome stall, Tiger doing the best he could to keep up. Upon being handed his V.I.W. pass, Willow placed it on Tiger, clapping his hands. Spoon couldn't help but softly chuckle to herself, joining him. Scarf gladly took her pass, wearing it as if he were king of the world.

The moment they were set up for the various activities, Willow once more dashed to another vendor. He picked up two caramel apples, and some goodies for their companions. Spoon urged them to sit at once on the wooden tables, in fear Willow would run around and eat, causing him to likely choke...

As Spoon bit into her apple, she looked around again as the night in front of her, alongside Willow. The shrieks and shrills were their own orchestra, and this night? The night was theirs.

Willow's smile was big, caramel stuck in his teeth. Despite that, he leaned in to softly kiss Spoon's cheek, much to her surprise.

Yeah... this night was theirs.