

Just a flicker

A modded Stardew Fanfiction

Von Calyses

Kapitel 3: Exploring Pelican Town

Sam looked around her new hometown, if you could refer to Pelican Town that way. It looked more like a rustic small village to her. The roads were paved with cobblestone and barely straight. A few houses were sitting on the verges of these roads leading to the town center. She moved down the road towards a big building hosting the town's doctors office and a small general store called Pierre's. In front of the building a now weathered bulletin board had been installed, sporting requests for help from the town's citizens and a calendar of events. Sam was about to walk into Pierre's as she bumped into a girl prying the door wide open and running out of there. A sword cluttered to the ground.

"Sorry, sorry, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to..."

"Abigail! Come back this instance."

"Oh shit, my dad. I have to go, bye."

She quickly picked up the weapon and vanished around a corner. As soon as she had come, she was gone. A middle aged man with glasses stepped out of the door and looked left and right. When he noticed Sam still on the ground, rubbing her forehead, he extended a hand to help her up:

"I think I know the answer, but have you seen a violet haired girl with a sword, who just ran out of here?"

Sam nodded.

"Thought so. Name's Pierre and that whirlwind was my daughter Abigail. I'll make sure she'll apologize as soon, as she's back."

"Oh, it's no problem. She already did... kind of."

"No, that's no behavior for a young lady. She has to learn to be a proper adult and not some dream driven child." he sighed.

Sam didn't know what was going on and decided, she didn't want to know right now. So she tried to change the subject:

"Erm... hi I'm Samantha, Sam for short and I'm new here. I'd hoped you might help me with some things right now."

"Excuse me, where are my manners... Welcome to Pelican Town then. How can I help?"

"First of all, would you point me in the direction of the library?"

"Library? You mean the museum? It's kind of merged, but goes by Museum of Pelican Town"

"Then yes. The museum. Gunther Richardson's the curator? Then that would be right."

"Never known his last name, but Gunther is right. You follow the road down here and

walk over the bridge. Turn right right after crossing the river and look for the large two story building on the left. Is there anything else you need help with?"

"Actually yes. Two things. First of all I need some supplies. I think you can help with this." She smiled.

Pierre smiled back. A potential customer was always a reason to be happy.

"And the third thing?" he asked

"I'm looking for a man. As tall as me, long auburn hair, green eyes. Do you know someone like this by any chance?"

Pierre ran one hand through his light brown a little peppered hair and looked at Sam curiously.

"That would be Elliott. He's kind of weird, so why are you looking for him?"

"I met him on the train yesterday. He accidentally left something there and I'd like to return it to him... What do you mean by weird?"

"You'll see, just don't talk to him too much. If you like, I can give it to him the next time he's shopping for groceries."

Sam frowned.

"No need for that. I want to take a look around the valley anyway. Eventually, I'll see him." she replied.

Pierre slightly raised an eyebrow, but if he had any objections, he didn't say so. So Sam ignored the slightly adversarial mannerism he suddenly displayed, but didn't ask any further. She hadn't missed the fact, he hadn't told her where she must go.

"Fair enough." he said after a pause and continued with another topic: "So do you like to come in and do some shopping?"

As Sam was stuffing her purchase into her backpack, the bell rang and the door to the general store opened. Pierre greeted the man who had just entered and called him Lewis. Sam turned around. The man looked older than Pierre. Sam estimated him somewhere around seventy years old. He was sporting a big wavy moustache and a flat cap. His face was wrinkly, mostly around his eyes.

"Ah, a new face." he said. "Let me introduce myself. I'm Lewis. I'm the mayor of Pelican Town for over 20 years now and still running. What brings you to our humble village?"

"I'm Samantha, I'll work at the museum from tomorrow on out. Nice to meet you." Sam replied.

"Ah, so you must be Ms. Vaughn, the new assistant Gunther asked for. I've approved of that position."

"Yes, that would be me. I'm looking forward to the job and the opportunities it brings with it."

"How comes someone so hot likes to work with dusty, old books and stuff?" a voice came from between the aisles.

"Sterling, shut up!" Pierre bellowed over the counter in the general direction the voice came from.

"Just stating the truth."

Pierre rolled his eyes.

"Sorry for that. First my daughter, now him... The youth these days..."

Lewis agreed.

Sam snickered. She was flustered by the remark, no doubt but she decided to take it with humor. And to see those middle aged and old men refer to people barely

younger than her as youth was quite funny, especially since they spoke to her in a more formal way.

We'll see, as soon as I dye my hair again... she thought. She had decided to stay with her natural color for now, testing the water first and she wasn't looking forward to the dyeing itself. It would take her almost a whole day.

"Please, excuse me. I've got to bring my groceries back home and be on my way right after. There's so much more of Pelican Town and it's surroundings I haven't seen yet."

"I can show you around if you'd like." Lewis replied. "I've to make my round either way."

Sam wasn't so keen about walking around town with the mayor, but she was new and she didn't want to antagonize one of the persons who literally could decide about her future.

"Sure. I'm staying at the boarding house for now. So let me bring back my things quickly and I will be right back."

"We can start our tour from there. I need to visit Joel anyway."

The day had been exhausting. The old mayor was in much better shape than Sam had expected and to see all of Pelican Town was quite a hike. From the Boarding house they had made their way up into the mountains and visit Robin's carpentry, since it was the nearest destination. Sam remembered the large house nestled in the mountainside from the day before since the train station was just a few hundred meters away.

From there they made their way downhill. The most interesting part of the remaining tour had been the old, abandoned and run down community center. Sam was intrigued by the thought how much she could learn about the valley and it's inhabitants just alone by investigating the building and listening to the stories the older people in town could tell her about it. Mayor Lewis didn't seem to keen about letting anyone sniff around there, though.

The old building clearly was a thorn in his side. So she had to get on his good side to coerce him to let her enter. The alternative was committing a break and entering... Nah, probably not a good idea.

As they had past the community center and made their way back to the town square again they'd continued their path to the southwest next. He showed her a ranch, a small farm and a vineyard sitting on the edge of a wild forest, while clearly stirring away from the crooked tower looming over a part of denser vegetation. On their way back they brushed a well worn footpath to the beach and entered back into the town near a small and weathered graveyard. Lewis had left her, as soon as they had made it back to his house, but had pointed her in the right direction toward the museum. And that's where Sam was right now. Standing in front of the door she hesitated. What if's wandering through her head.

After a bit of pondering she entered. Tomorrow she had to be here either way, so there was nothing that spoke against introducing herself today.

The door opened into a large room with a counter directly opposite to the door and a great opening to her right. Sam looked around the room. Directly to the right was a large open space with a few small tables and simple cushions around them on the floor. Near the counter, on the far side of the open space, there were shelves after shelves filled with books. Next to her on the nearer side of the open space were

tables and chairs for research and working with the books. A closed door across the room to the right labeled exhibition let to the museum part of the museum. The air smelled a little bit dusty and of old paper. Sam immediately felt at home.

Behind the counter there was a man sitting dressed all in blue and wearing a hat indoors. He twirled his goatee around a finger while reading something. He looked up for a brief moment while Sam closed the door behind her.

"Welcome to the Stardew Valley Museum.", he said.

Sam walked over to the counter.

"Hi, I'm Samantha Vaughn. I will work here from tomorrow on. May I speak to the curator?"

"That would be me.", the man answered. "Gunther, nice to meet you."

Elliott stayed in bed the whole morning. He had slept miserably and wasn't in the mood to get up. The book - his most valuable collection of scrapes, inspirations and of fractions of chapters - was gone. He had tried to reach out to the rail company as soon as he found out about it missing. Nobody was answering the phone that late in the evening. He had tried again right after waking up. This time he got someone on the phone and was told, the cleaning crew had been on the train as soon as it had reached it's final destination. They had brought everything passengers had left to the lost and found inside of Grampleton Station. He had tried there. His notebook hadn't been among those things, so the chances to ever getting it back were slim to none.

Someone must have taken it or worse thrown it in the garbage. Could it has been Haley? That would probably be the worst of all. He began to imagine what she could do with it. What she could do to him. And all out of spite for a broken smartphone. He rolled around till he was facing the ceiling, sticking his hands behind his head.

Or the new girl, he mused. That would be slightly better, at least she had shown some interest in his writing, but he didn't know her. He didn't even know her name much less her whereabouts. Surely he could go out and ask for her, but there were two problems with that. First of all he had to go out and he'd already decided to keep to himself today and second even if he'd change his mind and tried to find her it surely would add to his reputation. He could almost hear them whispering. Now the weird author guy was running around, stalking a stranger he just met...

"Woe is me", he uttered theatrically, pressing the back of one hand against his forehead. Then he laughed bitterly. He was pathetic. Really pathetic. His editor was right, the new girl was right, even his parents had been right.

He might as well should give up on his dream and come back to reality. Do something useful with his life. Do what his family wants from him...

That thought lingered.

"No, I must not give up", he proclaimed aloud for himself. "I must not let them win." He yawned. The realization, that he was too proud to sink deeper into self pity, to proud to do what the nay-sayers want from him made him feel slightly better. He rolled to his side and yawned again.

"Sweet, sweet stubbornness. Maybe not everything dad gave me is so bad..." he closed his eyes and drifted into a light sleep.

Later that day he had made a decision. He was sitting at his desk and staring down on an empty sheet of paper and a headache began to form. He put away the fountain pen he had held unused in his hand so far and stood up. His cabin contained a small

living and sleeping area with kitchen counter and an adjacent bathroom. A few short steps brought him from the desk to the old up-right piano right in the middle of one of the long walls, that had come with the place. He began to play a few notes. A bit recreational time would do him some good.

The loss of his notebook hit him hard. Not only for his notes. Most of them were fleeting thoughts, caught with a few swift scribbles within a page or two at most. It was a pity to lose them. Some of the ideas were quite interesting, but the book itself had been a gift and it was important to him. On the other hand it might be a sign, he thought. A sign to start a new chapter in his endeavor.

His mind began to wander as he was playing a soft, flowing tune. The music helped him to free his thoughts.

Soon he was enraptured in his playing. Maybe he really needed to change his approach. Now was the time.

Tomorrow would be a new day. To dwell in his loss anymore than necessary was foolish. He would go out and search for inspiration. There had been a time he almost had called the valley home. It was before the rural community had shunned him as an outsider and oddball. Now he had almost forgotten the feeling of being a part of the community. Willy was on an elongated fishing trip so he hadn't anybody to talk while he was at the pier and Leah was visiting her family and wasn't expected to be back until the end of next week. It would have been nice to wander around cinder sap with her, but he couldn't just wish her back, so he had to go alone.

He stopped playing. The faint sound of waves rolling onto the shore was barely hearable, but it had a soothing effect on him. He loved it. It was one of the reasons why he had moved to this specific place.

Elliott walked over to a drawer next to the door leading outside. He shuffled through the content of the top drawer until he found an unused notebook he kept there and a ballpoint pen that was still functioning. He put both in a small messenger bag dangling from a knob on the door.

"I might need it tomorrow," he said to the room in general. Then he walked back to the piano and resumed playing.