

It Has Begun

by

White Knight

The rain bucketed down and lightning and thunder lit up the sky, It was a dreadful and dreary night and lone stallion trudged through the mud, he was drenched from head to hoof, shaking against the rain's cold sting, he looked around and saw nothing but open plains with a few fallen trees scattered around, but something else was alive, something gorgeous, something pure, something ghostly, he turned around and bumped into a tall palomino mare who's coat was half covered in mud, she smiled and pranced around him a few times which made mud spray up on his face and chest. The mare laughed and shoved him into the mud

- "lighten up" she said to him. The stallion got to his hooves and shook the mud from his coat as he did she introduced herself

"I'm Mali, who are you?"

"Painting Freedom" he snorted

Mali smiled "wet?"

"No... You think" said Freedom sarcastically

"No need to be rude"

He rolled his eyes and continued on, she followed. When the rain stopped he turned to her, she was jumping around and playing in the mud and puddles like she was a yearling, he was breath taken, at her grace and walked up to her and slipped over, they both cracked up laughing

They travelled for months together till they found a shy and skittish mare, they talked to her and tried to coax her out of her shrub hiding place but they couldn't, the strangest part was they began to play around in the mud till the frightened mare joined them

"What's your name?" asked Mali

"Yin" the mare replied

"I'm Mali and this is Freedom, want to travel with us?"

The Yin agreed and now their little duo was a trio and a friendly one at that.

After a few years Mali was heavy with Freedom's first foal, it was early winter and the snow was thick so they sought refuge in a large cave just big enough for the three of them, it was cosy and warm and the perfect place for foaling

Yin and Freedom left Mali in the cave to go out and search for herbs and food for Mali, while out Freedom noticed Yin didn't look at him

"Yin... what's wrong?" he asked

She looked up at him "How can you not notice"

"Notice what" he asked confused

Yin sighed "I knew you wouldn't... "

"wouldn't what?" asked Freedom still confused

"Know that I liked you" said Yin raising her voice

Freedom didn't know what to say, they got the herbs and food in silence and neither of them looked at one another, Freedom had thousands of thoughts flooding through his mind and poor Yin felt sick to the stomach and really stupid. That same day they found a pure black stallion who was at the bottom of a steep hill and wanted nothing to do with them, the stallion clearly use to be a tribal horse so Yin came down to speak with him, Freedom stayed on the hill not wanting to start a fight

"What do you want?" snapped the stallion

"I wanted to know why you're out here all alone?" asked Yin

"Because I can be"

"Well why don't you travel with me and my friends" she said motioning towards Freedom at the top of the hill

"Friends, there is only one horse there"

"Oh" said Yin "Our other friend is in foal, we stashed her in a cave nearby"

The black stallion seemed hesitant but after months of being alone some company would be nice

"The names Conemo" he said as they went up the hill side by side, "Yin, and this is Freedom", Freedom inclined his head as the three headed back to the cave, to their shock Mali was in labour, Yin pushed both Freedom and Emo out of the cave while Mali gave birth. Freedom paced anxiously outside, back and forth, back and forth, Emo watched him.

Hours passed and nothing till Yin came out with good news

"Well" asked Freedom Impatiently

"It's a girl" she replied with a smile

"woo hoo" said Freedom leaping into the air, he danced for a second then struck a pose, Yin and Emo laughed as they all walked into the cave. Freedom nuzzled Mali who was barely awake, he lay beside them to keep them warm

The next morning Freedom and Yin went out again and Emo stood guard, it was still an awkward silence between them but at least they looked at each other. When they arrived back at the cave, Emo was out cold, the two rushed in to find a huge bear, there was blood smeared all over the cave walls and a lifeless Mali lying in front of the bear, the bear turned and reared and went after them, they led it outside where Yin fought it off, the bear slunk back into the woods, Emo woke and found Yin who had small scratches but was alright, they went back into the cave, Freedom stood over Mali gently caressing her face, Yin walked over and stood by him, when she did Freedom buried his face in her neck and cried

An hour or two later Freedom was fast asleep by Mali's side

- "What are we going to do?" asked Emo

- "Truthfully... I don't know" Yin replied

They stood there for a while till they heard the faint growling sounds of the bear, they woke Freedom and left Mali there in the cave, but what they didn't know was that Mali was still alive but only barely. They sought refuge in a secondary cave where Freedom went to the back and slumped in the corner, Yin and Emo left him there and stood outside the cave

- "I know this is the wrong time to ask but... who was that mare?" asked Emo

Yin looked up at him

- "She... she was Freedom's mate and whole world" she replied softly

- "Oh...

- "

They took turns resting till the sun rose and they were both awake, to their horror the bear loomed over them, teeth bared, Emo looked over at Yin who had anger and hate burning in her crystal blue eyes, she slammed her entire weight into the bear which made it angry, Emo tried to help but Yin refused and she took off with the bear in hot pursuit, Emo paced back and forth in front of the cave for a few minutes till he heard a roar and a squeal echo across the valley.

Emo followed Yins trail till it just stopped, he scanned the area and found nothing, he searched Yins the top of the snow and was horrified when he found Yin's scent again which led under the snow. Emo dug frantically till he found her pearly coat, he grabbed her with his teeth and heaved her out of the snow, he looked at her worriedly for a second then pressed his ear to her chest, fear flooded through him because she wasn't breathing, he thumped her in the chest, once, still nothing, twice, still nothing, one last thump and Yin burst Back to life, she coughed hard a couple of times before a small smile appeared on her lips, she had deep gashes in her neck and right back leg, Emo hauled her onto his back and took her back to the cave where Freedom anxiously waited

They tended to Yin's wounds as best they could but they needed help, Yin told them the only way they could help her was to take her to the humans, Freedom was sketchy and did not want to go but his heart and courage forced him to help his friend.

Freedom lay in the snow and allowed Emo to help Yin onto his back, with Emo's help they began their epic trek

As they travelled Yin lost a lot of blood which covered Freedom's white markings making them go red, Emo offered to carry her but Freedom wanted to do it himself. While they travelled Yin's blood left a trail which a group of wolves tracked, they never bothered the horses at all. The day Yin lost consciousness made them worry, they tripled their speed and in portion of a week or so they eventually got the pearly mare to the Lakota's who were shocked to see their once gorgeous mare with such horrifying wounds

Freedom was exhausted but happy to be in a safe place, though he still mourned for the loss of his once great family.

Yin had lost a lot of blood, a human stepped from the tent and almost bumped into the two stallions, she nodded at them and left, Emo was the first one to step inside, Yin was bandaged up and lying on a thick handmade rug.

- "Yin?" said Emo

Yin lifted her head weakly and smiled

- "Hey guys..."

- "

Freedom stepped in beside Yin

- "I'm glad you're ok"

As the days passed Yin became stronger and was eventually able to leave the tent, with Emo's help she was able to get up the hill to the apple tree and lay down in the cool shade beneath its branches

In one swift graceful movement Emo bowed to Yin

- "would the Lady like an apple?" he asked

Yin giggled and played along

- "Yes please Sir"

Emo spun around and kicked the tree as hard as he could, several apples fell from the tree and Emo picked one up and gave it to her

- "Much obliged" said Yin with a smile, Freedom grazed silently nearby with a strange look on his face, he was just staring at them, Yin noticed

- "Freedom, what's up?"

- "Like you don't know" he replied

- "No I... don't"

Freedom snorted and lifted his head

- "It's your fault she's dead, it's your fault I lost my first born and it's your fault I have nothing left"

Yin was shocked and stood up no matter how many objections Emo had

- "My fault, how is it my fault?"

Freedom turned and galloped off, Yin followed along with Emo, they didn't get far till Yin's wounds started to bleed again, Emo helped her back to the village but Freedom was gone, Yin spent the afternoon in the medicine tent with Emo outside on guard but when she fell asleep Emo snuck off and gathered the most gorgeous flowers he could find, he placed them in front of the sleeping Yin and went back outside....

Freedom is still Missing.