



Shaun Tan's: The Arrival

I

Breathing heavily, Peter sighed in despair. His loving wife Nancy and he stood side by side, their amazing daughter Grace perched sensibly before them. He promptly hid the image amongst his other belongings. Peter swiftly fastened the case and exhaled. Nancy positioned her hand on top of his, her cold damp hands were oddly reassuring to Peter.

“I will come back for you with sufficient money that will keep us comfortable for eons. You do not deserve these appalling conditions that you are in. I promised you more when I met you and that’s what you and Grace will get. I love you both.”

Peter and Nancy embraced for a while but soon decided that they should get Grace prepared to leave.

The windy conditions on the journey were hard to ignore disturbing their calm, sincere silence. When they arrived at the train station, smoke filled the air, a pungent smell of ash and tar destroyed any remnant of respect that the station once had.

“Goodbye Daddy” cried Grace, as Peter stepped from the platform and the train departed.

II

In the distance a cloud of anguish could be seen, lurching through the once pure sky. Inside Peter’s cabin the walls were fractured and spoiled. Peter decided that it would be best for him to see the upper deck so he sauntered up the unhygienic, spiral stairway towards the eventful higher surface of the vessel.

When Peter arrived at Zenopia, the first thing that he saw was the impressive figurines of individuals pending over the city. He was instantly directed toward passport control. The air around the metropolis smelt much richer than home and he was certain that he would get on here. Suddenly the identification lodge elevated high into the heavens, Peter could see the steaming structures and striking statuettes that occupied the city.

An eventful highway crowded with folk and infested by creatures of all forms could be seen when Peter landed there were cats, armadillos, nautilus shells and remarkably hefty eggs. Peter heard familiar tunes being played on an accordion. This reminded him of home. A bellowing ring from an overhanging timepiece notified Peter of his tardiness. In his haste, Peter’s hat left him for the soil. Instantly, an unacquainted hand extended to assist him from the ground. Peter could not comprehend the man’s language so he presented him a depiction of a single bed.

Once Peter made it to the B&B, he almost immediately realised that this room would be filled with surprises. In the distance, a rattling could be heard, although the sound seemed to be friendly.

“Ozmo” was all Peter heard. He spied something darting up a folding ladder to the attic. When Peter climbed up the ladder, awaiting him was a slight, plump creature with a barbed tail.

“I’ll take it that you’re friendly” supposed Peter, as he rushed Ozmo off the couch. Peter stood calmly, staring out of the window.

“Ahh, Zenopia” Peter said as he appreciated the city.

III

A cloud of white powder unexpectedly came into view.

Peter was woken by his new friend Ozmo. He then prepared for a long day.

The shower was shockingly cold on Peter's skin. However, once dressed, Peter decided to count his spare change.

"Ok, I have: 5, 2 and a 1 = 8Z (eight Zen)." Shadows of monumental Sky-Ships soared above Peter, alarming him and the other citizens on the sky port.

"Let's get on this one Ozmo!" Peter declared. The towering Sky-Ship led Peter to a small market town where he and Ozmo searched for whatever food this town had to offer. Eventually, Ozmo started to lick a set of drawers, one of which Peter opened to find what looked like a strawberry with a tail.

"It's a strawnip" pronounced a gentleman from afar.

"That's a shrimpatrot, that one's a trumpogine, that's a grotobega, there shelyosters, that's a strawk and this is a cucumbrett." The man said all too fast.

"Why, that's a lot to say in a little amount of time" whispered Peter. The gentleman gave him all of them in a carefully woven basket.

"Were gonna' take ya' to Mamma' K's." declared a young child appearing from behind the man. He and the boy took Peter to a boat, and almost immediately, they began to drift away. Eventually, they arrived at 'Mamma' K's'. She seemed like a nice lady, and let them all into her delightful home. The young boy told him about the kinds of instruments that 'Mamma' K' had.

"So, there's a hoze'chord, a trumpalipt, a piccatube and a banjo'a'rang."

"...Interesting" Peter responded.

IV

"Ahh, come on Ozmo, were going to need more food than this" said Peter, while gesturing to the 'Shelyosters'.

"Ozmo" was his response.

"Let's go out and find some more." And with that, Peter and Ozmo set out on their expedition to find more food. They went to Chef's, Engineers, Newsagents, Poster-Printers and Fortune Tellers, But still no luck.

V

"Ozmo, Ozmo" Peter heard as he got up out of bed...

"What is it buddy?" he asked. As he got up to see a letter, addressed to him, on his lap. He opened it to reveal that it was from Grace and Nancy back home. 'We love you and hope that you're having a fantastic time in Zenopia. We have been coping well and have gathered the money to come and see you. We will be with you soon. Xx.'

"Ozmo, there coming! Nancy and Grace are coming right now!"

Peter ran to them, all the way from his cabin. He didn't care.

"Daddy!" Grace cried.

"I'm here Grace, and I'm never going to leave you again."

