

Panda Pals

Bam boom! Lightning in the forests of China struck. Crews worked fast to ship two pandas, Grover and Willy, who just met but became pen pals. Willy lived in the forests of China and Grover was going to the Calgary Zoo. But the shipping company made a mistake and flew both of them to the Calgary Zoo. At first, both Grover and Willy felt awkward being with another panda, but they eventually got along to be pretty good friends. Then they had a few panda fights but nobody got hurt! They arrived in Calgary very soon and in good shape. When they had found out that they were not supposed to be together, Grover and Willy decided to be panda pals. They said good bye and promised to write to each other once every month for as long as they lived.

Grover stayed at the Calgary Zoo while Willy got shipped back to the forests of China. For some time, Grover got very curious and started to become a bit troublesome. He broke things, stained things and did much more in his pen (which we all know it is the Panda Passage). But Willy and Grover both kept their promises and sent letters to each other. If you don't know how Grover or Willy got to a mail box or do something like that, they had to be smart, sneaky, and willing or whatever you call it, but they did it somehow.

Grover did something most pandas don't do! One day, an odd-looking man came walking and dropped a hundred Chinese one-dollar stamps, a hundred Canada international stamps, two hundred envelopes,

a box and two hundred pieces of paper into Grover's panda pen by accident. You can now probably see what Grover did so I'm going to skip telling some of the story. Now you're thinking about how Grover got the package to a post center. Well, Grover is still very curious so he went to Panda Express (which Grover thought it was a mail carrier company but in real life it is a Chinese food place) at night and asked nicely to have his letter mailed for him. And three days later, he got a letter from Willy and he was so happy.

One day before Willy replied to Grover, a messenger who worked in the Chinese forests delivered Willy a package. Willy ripped open the package and he was surprised and very happy when he found out that it was from Grover. Inside the package, there were a hundred envelopes, a hundred Chinese one-dollar stamps and one hundred pieces of paper. Willy still needed something to write with. Willy found his old pen in one of his packing bags, which was what he needed and so he quickly wrote to Grover. Willy caught the messenger just in time to have him send the letter to Grover at the Calgary Zoo.

Grover loved his enclosure at the Calgary Zoo. He also loved the food but didn't like how people treated him. Grover ripped a piece of paper in half, used an old pencil that he found on the delivery truck, and wrote, "TREAT PANDAS LIKE THEY ARE YOUR FRIENDS." Grover found a piece of tape and taped it to a log and started to protest. He ignored all the funny faces, pointing fingers and rude things being

said about him. Then the zoo keepers came out telling people not to be rude to any animal in the zoo, otherwise, they might be taken to the court for being cruel to animals. One zookeeper came up to Grover and comforted him and gave him a quiet sleeping area indoor, far away from the loud spectators.

Grover was sad that the crowd was not respectful to him even though he was well taken care of by the zookeepers. Grover would have loved to be popular but he felt uncomfortable with the spectators because he was new to the zoo habitat. So Grover thought about his pen pal, Willy, and he wrote,

“Dear Willy,

Nobody really likes me at the zoo except for the zookeepers. I like everything here except for the annoying crowd that I dislike.

P.S. Please reply.

P.P.S. Can we trade living areas?

Yours truly,

Grover”

When Willy received Grover’s letter, he felt sorry for Grover and replied,

“I’m sorry this happens to you, but it happens to me and other animals too. The squirrels keep throwing nuts at us. Someday I wish to see you again. Have fun in the zoo.

Yours truly,

Willy”

Grover knew that he and Willy were both sad about how they were being treated by other living things.

The zookeepers saw Grover protesting and felt sorry for him. The zookeepers decided to reward Grover with something Grover wanted for keeping his cool at the zoo. Grover decided that he wanted to go with Willy around the world to have fun. This way, both Grover and Willy could take a break from their habitats: Willy in the forests of China and Grover in the Calgary Zoo. Grover behaved very well in his panda pan and so the Calgary Zoo granted Grover his wish.

First off, Grover and Willy went to Australia and saw koalas. Next, they went to Africa and saw lions, zebras, hippos, and giraffes. After that, they went to the United States where they found horses, pigs, sheep, and alligators. Then, they went to Mexico and saw jaguars while they had a taste of tacos with avocados. Next, they went back to China where Willy showed Grover his home in the upper part of the mountains. Willy built his home with rocks, bamboo leaves, sticks, nails, hammers and a fifty-ton rock. Willy ate bamboo, dried leaves and some branches from broken trees, but best of all, he liked the tasty and nutritious panda candies that Grover brought with him from the zookeepers. Finally, they went back to the Calgary Zoo, but this time Willy came along and stayed with Grover.

In the Panda Passage, Willy and Grover played with their food, tickled each other, and played games such as jack-up-the-panda (with a real jack) and sent balloons flying all over the zoo. Willy and Grover had so much fun together that they accidentally fell out of their sleeping hammocks. One time, Willy and Grover started experimenting how to make baskets out of bamboo stalks that were too thin to eat. Most pandas love being in the water, so there is no surprise Willy and Grover hopped right into the water and learned how to swim with the penguins in the Penguin Plunge exhibit.

Even though Willy enjoyed being with Grover at the Calgary Zoo, Willy had to return to China. Upon his return, Willy and Grover still kept writing letters to each other. A month later, Willy was riding a toy train down the mountain while he was eating an ice cone topped with a panda candy he brought back from Calgary. Willy went, “Choo-Choo!” and had so much fun he accidentally crashed into a stalk of bamboo, “Oops!” but Willy just chewed up the bamboo. Willy continued to steer down a ginormous mountain highway. He did a pretty good job steering to even dodge a flat tire that was rolling down the hill. The day passed by quickly when Willy had lots of fun even though he was by himself.

When Willy came home to his cave and opened his fifty-ton rock door, he noticed that there were fewer pandas around his home. Willy wondered why it looked like there were fewer pandas roaming around his home. Willy decided to walk through the forest to investigate. Then,

surprisingly he saw someone poaching a panda! So without thinking, Willy charged at the poacher and took the hunter's tools out of his hand. Crash, bang, crunch, boom! It was a hard panda fight with a human being. The poacher left and was too terrified to ever poach again.

While Willy was fighting, the other pandas freed the captured pandas from the nets that the poacher used. All the pandas quickly rushed back home. On their way home, they also signaled other pandas to hide in a safe place. But one of the pandas stayed behind the rest and went to help fight the human poacher with Willy. These two pandas showed great teamwork in their fight against the poacher. No pandas got hurt and so they celebrated afterwards. After their long celebration, Willy wrote a letter to Grover and told him,

“Today I found a poacher poaching pandas near my home. I got scared but I attacked him. None of us got hurt, but I want to move to the Calgary Zoo with you.

P.S. Please show this to the zookeepers.

Yours truly,

Willy”

Willy then sent the letter with the same messenger from before.

Grover got the letter the next day and he knew he had to show it to the zookeepers right away. Shortly after Grover showed the zookeepers Willy's message, the Calgary Zoo immediately arrange to ship Willy and his belongings to the Calgary Zoo. Willy joined Grover in the

Panda Passage, just in time for an especially and terrifically happy, enjoyable, fun panda Christmas. Ever since then, Willy and Grover lived happily together and became very popular pandas. The Calgary Zoo visitors respectfully watched Willy and Grover have fun together, so Grover just threw away his note because the zoo spectators already treated Willy and Grover as their special friends forever.