

F-Quest

Book I

Written By Aaron Lucas and Daniel Harris

Chapter I

Awakened, I look up, a hard thing to do when your neck hurts as bad as this. Since the pain is too much for me to handle I put my head back down in the damp grass. Yes, I remember this green foliage that covers the ugly dirt with pleasant green. Seems as though it is the only thing that is familiar to me.

Something has just happened to me, but what? I don't know. As I put my hand to my muzzle I feel something warm and wet. It's blood, just as I had feared. The throbbing pain in my head almost makes me fall into a coma. Why would anyone do this to me? I just lay there, staring at the blades of grass.

I guess I should now figure out where I am. I know I am outdoors, I know it is very cold, I know it is late afternoon. I know much has just happened, but what? How did I get here? Enough questions, I must see if I can get up and move around and see if I can find my way back from where ever I came from.

I get up on my hands and knees, quivering almost out of control. Blood dripping off of me. My clothes have been torn and are now useless as a garment of any kind. I hold on to them in comfort. I get up on my knees, tail laying flat on the ground as if a useless limb. My arms are too weak and I just lay them at my sides. The only thing I move at the moment is my head as I gaze up into the sky. It is all a grim violet, the clouds moving so fast.

My head bows to my chest as I gasp for breath, hurts so much. The lungs feel like they are burning from the inside. I must try and remember what has happened. I try over and over but there is no evidence in my mind of what I have ever been. What does all this mean? I don't remember even who I am. A tear roles down my cheek.

Suddenly I feel dizzy once again, now it is a familiar feeling. It is too strong of a feeling. Just before I fall face first back into the damp grass I feel as if someone is there with me. Has someone come to save me? Too late, I fall into blackness.

When I come to this time, things seem much better. I smell a rich delicious odor and I am nice and warm. My eyes hurt as I try and let the light pour into my pupils. Everything is blurry at first, then I began to see my surroundings.

I lay on a cot with a blanket covering me. All of my wounds have been bandaged and taken care of. Looking around the room, I see a figure busy with something in the shadows. Obviously I was not afraid, whoever this was saved my life. I lay in comfort, what a con-

trast compared to the pain I had just survived. It was like black in contrast with white.

This was a nice dwelling, warm, calm, and welcome. Things neatly arranged around this circular room with another room that connected by a hall. There were all kinds of 'home-made' ornamentation that hung on the walls. All of these ornaments were unique and displayed a great amount of time and detail. Telling by the dirt floor, I knew that this was not a town-dweller. The high ceiling also looked as if it was made of thatch and mud.

I guess the figure noticed me looking around so he came over to see how I was doing. As he came into the light I finally saw who my hero was, a great stallion of gray and brown with great strength and wisdom. His eyes were deep and warm.

"How are you feeling?" The horse said in a deep wise voice. It was a comforting voice that was full of love and concern.

"I am feeling much better than I was before you came." I replied. My voice sounded weak and pathetic compared to his.

"Felines always seem to be able to sustain many more injuries than other mammals. I am surprised you survived what ever it was that did this to you. Do you know?"

"No, I do not remember anything. I do not even remember who I am." I say with despair in my voice.

"Amnesia, you have indeed gone through a traumatic experience. I have given you all the medicine I could find that could help you. For now you need to rest, for it is still late at night. In the morning we will see if we can put any more of this puzzle together." The wise steed said as he gently rubbed his hand across my head. I laid back and soon fell back to sleep.

The next morning the sunlight shined through the window next to the cot I was lying out. As the warmth came in through the window the heat eased my body. I still did not remember much. Only that I got the tar kicked out of me somehow and I ended up here. Thoughts pour into my mind as I wonder about who I am. I figure I am about eight-teen or twenty years old. How much is a year? I notice that the confusion is strong when I try and think of things that I know I knew at one time. I hope the horse does not mind me asking a bunch of questions.

"I have never seen anyone sleep that well before." Said the horse as he came over to me. "Before you say anything, here, have some warm tea." He gave me some wonderful hot tea that made my whole insides feel warm and comfortable. "I really do not know how much you do know and what you do not so let me just start from the beginning. I am Mervin, the knower of most things. I was in the meadow

yesterday gathering herbs for the things I make here. All of a sudden I heard a sound I had never heard before. Then when the sound came nearer and nearer I started to get worried. Like you I blanked out for a period of about ten minutes, only a moment. Then I got up and saw you laying near by." He said, pausing as if to think. "Do you know what and who you are?"

"No, sir. I know that they call my type a feline." I said the best that I could.

"You are a panther. The gray coat type. You are a very fast, agile, and skilled hunter. Many of your type sought long ago a meaning to life, and other mysteries of the universe. I used to think of such as being the most intelligent and wise. Now however, your type has been causing the most trouble, especially for us herbivores."

"But, sir, certainly I could not be responsible for any wrong doing. I would never hurt anyone." I said meekly.

"This is very fortunate that you do not remember your past, for you could have very well been. You have thick muscles and have a very strong body." He said as I lifted my arm to find that he was telling the truth.

"How can I find out what my past was?" I asked.

"Later we will go into town. But now I should tell you of the situation going on in this land. Until about five years ago everyone in this town lived in absolute peace, nothing much of the bad happened. Then all of a sudden those sounds that I described began happening and some of us began acting very bizarre. Some going and doing evil things..."

Anyway, the wise horse went to say that strange creators and such would appear and disappear. Sometimes rocks and grass would waver and ripple strangely. All the while I was wondering what my name was.... Then he said that the continent was still quite new and many areas were still unexplored. Maybe I was from one of the towns or cities that have yet been discovered from this town.

"Five other towns are near-by the farthest away being about 240 miles to the north east. I have lived here in Shirebrook for 60 years. The first ten I remember as a strange blur and have flashbacks. But they are to strange and alien, I do not understand them." He went on, "Well, we need to get a name for you in the meantime. What would you like to call yourself?"

"I really have not thought about it much. Let me think...how about Silvercast." I said proudly.

"That is a very powerful name. I like it."

Chapter 2

"I will be right back. I am going to find you something suitable to wear. What you had on was hardly worthy of being called clothing," Mervin said as he ducked out to another room.

I guess it was the thick blanket on me because I did not realize I had no clothes. I lowered my head, feeling somewhat embarrassed for some unusual reason. Coming back into the room, Mervin laughed when he saw my expression.

"I don't know if I have anything that could fit you. I'm a tad larger than you," he said going through a large chest on the floor. "Well, well, well. I have something right that I wore when I was in my 30's. Does it suit you?"

It was a pair of blue overalls and a solid white shirt. Was simple combination of clothing, but non-the-less adequate likable. I agreed to wear it.

Having got dressed I approached Mervin.

"It looks good on you. Let's go to town and see if we can find you some other attire and breakfast." he said.

"I am very grateful for your generosity. I only wish that I could pay you back somehow." I replied.

"Keep me company. It gets lonely living by your self for so long, naturally. Enough chat, let's go."

As I was exiting the house, my eyes were inflamed with the sun's bright shining rays. The sun had just recently risen above the horizon. The lighting in the house was dark so the brightness was heightened. When my vision began to clear, I saw something. It was odd shaped. It looked like a small house with wheels under it. I peered inside and their where seats in side with the cotton stuffing fluffing out. Then I came to the conclusion that this "thing" was an old beat-up vehicle of some sort.

In a polite manner I complimented "That, um, thing looks quite nice."

Mervin replied "What, that old piece of junk? That truck has been used so much, even I'm impressed that it hasn't died yet on me."

A truck! Now I remembered just a little more.

"Come on," Mervin said "Let's hurry while there is still daylight. It's a long drive to the nearest town."

Out of curiosity I asked, "What town might that be?"

"Kalm. It's situated by the Drahl Ocean."

Kalm. Sounded familiar. Maybe when we get there, I'll begin to remember things.

After I had climbed into the truck, I let myself fall into the seat. Much to my dismay, the entire seat caved in sending me into a horde of cotton. It was actually a little comfortable, but I could hardly see out the cracked window. I looked to my right to see Mervin shaking his head as he climbed into his seat. His expression was not unpleasant though. It was an expression as if I had reminded him of someone that brought a smile to his face. The kind of smile he made as he saw me fall into the passenger side stuck in my mind. As if someone or something came to his mind when he saw me. Maybe it was a relative, or a friend. Quickly I turned my head to the left to peer out as the noisy truck start to rev up the engine and began to move with a jolt. Now we were on our way to Kalm.

Chapter 3

As Mervin was driving the truck I once again found myself falling back to sleep. I knew that Mervin lived a long way from town, but it almost seemed like an eternity to get to the nearest town, Kalm. To fight sleep I tried talking to Mervin.

“What’s Kalm like?” I asked.

“The name says it all.” He replied.

“Do you have any relatives?” I continued.

Then, after a lengthy pause, he answered slowly, “No.” His face was quickly overcome with a sullen look.

I was worried that maybe I asked the wrong question, now I regretted it. But Mervin read my mind.

“Don’t distress your self over that question. You’re simply curious. If I was recovering from amnesia I would certainly ask as many questions as you, especially about a mysterious person that was caring for me.”

“Well, I’m glad that I have not upset you.” I was feeling somewhat relieved.

Then he continued, “I had a young son once. A young fox kit. I found him by the beaches of Kalm. He was just lying there all alone. Wrapped in a velveteen blanket. Fast asleep with no one in sight. The population of Kalm is only around 75 and most of the people lived near the beach. It surprised me that nobody saw or heard him. Since I was still living alone at the age of 43, I decided to adopt him. I took my plea before the council and was immediately granted custody over my new kit. Walther is the name I gave him. He ended up living with me for six years. You reminded me of him when you dozed off in the seat. He did the same thing when I would take him for drives in the country. Around his seventh birthday, though, I suddenly lost him—“ He paused awhile and began to choke and stutter on his words as he continued, “I.....lost him at the brutal hands of a l---large feline.” He gasped the last word. Feline.

Just hearing my species name related to the murder of a young child made my heart ache.

“That cat was laughing as he....” He slowed the vehicle to a halt. After stopping he just sat there with a blank stare. “.... devoured my own son. I could see my son’s ravaged body mutilated inside what was left of his shredded clothes. The blood was dripping off that feline’s face, but I could clearly see his pleased expression. My anger was massive and I charged after that monster, but quickly lost. Felines are a mighty race, much more agile than a large ol’ thing like me. As I was

lying there on the ground he turned me over. Now I was facing my son's murderer. He then crouched beside my head. If I had enough strength, I would have cracked his skull, he was so close. He knew I couldn't do anything and took advantage of that by telling me something that has haunted my life to this day. He said with a cold look in his eyes,

'When I saw your kit, playing in the field, he looked so handsome. I ran up to say hi. He was very nice in greeting me. I guess he changed his mind when I beat him for the fun of it. He told me I was mean and warned me that his "Papa" was a stallion and that he would get me. When he was too weak from my pounding to run or yell for help I ate him. My stomach was empty cause' I haven't eaten in days, and oh, he tasted delicious. What do you think, huh?! Too bad you...Papa, couldn't be here to protect your son.'

With those final words he punched me across the face and walked off chuckling with the most evil sound in his voice. After a while, I gathered enough strength to stand. I looked at my child, picked up his soulless body, and buried him behind my house. Swearing that I would find that cat." Mervin slowly turned his head toward me. "When I saw you for the first time I was hesitant. I had wondered if you were the murderer lying there on the ground before me. In a raging fit, I picked up a rock ready to smash you. But fortunately, I realized that the murderer wasn't a panther, he was a lynx. The murderer's face flashed in my mind long enough to distinguish the differences. So I dropped the rock and took you to my house."

I just stared at him. Horrified by his story. He began to cry inconsolably. Feeling sick inside, I tried to give him what sympathy I had. "I will never replace your son nor would I ever try, but you have been a great father to me."

Mervin just stared at me. I didn't know if I had just offended him or what. He whispered, "Thank you." Mervin then faced the dirt road and continued to drive.

I was definitely awake now. I kept thinking about how my life could have ended so quickly. I then saw it as part of my destiny to repay Mervin for his kindness by tracking down this lynx. I don't know what I was in the past, but if I did wrong I hope that by finding this lynx makes up for it.

Chapter 4*

--Flashback--

I was standing in fog. Fog so thick you could cut it with a knife. I couldn't see what I was standing on could be a mountain, plateau, or flat plain. The only thing I did see was a figure in the heavy fog. My memory showed me approaching the mysterious person. It was Sloan. With both eyes staring into mine and bearing a iron forged sword.

"Why can't you leave me alone? All I want is to live a normal life." he said.

"So did your victims" I retorted.

"My daughter is withering away in starvation! I had to steal! I'm sure a few missing bracelets won't scar the Braztons for life".

"Never the less, theft is theft and it is illegal. You can come with me and spend a few years in jail or lose your life."

"What about my daughter?"

"She aided you in hiding the jewels so she will be in jail as well."

"A jail is no place for children. Please, let me find a place for her to stay." Sloan begged.

Without warning, I was shown drawing my sword and quickly jabbing it into Sloan's left eye. Sloan wallowed on the dirt in agonizing pain. He was not ready for such a random attack. I paid no attention to his sword that he dropped close by.

"Now, you will come with me, no more talk." I said heartlessly.

"Go to Hell..." Sloan weakly murmured.

"I don't deserve that, but criminals do."

After I said that, I raised my sword high into the air ready to behead Sloan. Unexpectedly he made a sudden dash towards his sword. I laughed thinking his effort futile, but he proved me wrong fast. While I was laughing he grabbed his sword, stood up, and swiped his sword across my chest.

--Present--

I snapped out of my flashback in time to see Sloan kick me in the head. His agility surprised me once again.

"I cannot imagine how vile someone could be, much less an entire species." Sloan said in a disgusted tone.

I saw Sloan reach in his coat pocket and draw out a dagger. He glared at me with vengeance in his eye. I tried regaining strength to

either yell for help or fight back. Fortunately I didn't have to, Mervin slammed into Sloan with incredible speed knocking him to the ground. Mervin then ran to me and extended his hand.

"Are you alright?" he queried.

"Not really." I honestly answered. How could I be? Now I felt disgusted with myself. I hurt inside and out.

Sloan, seeing Mervin distracted, tried to run. Mervin must have had excellent hearing because he raised his head from looking at me and rapidly ran towards Sloan, tackling him.

"Your presence will no longer be tolerated!" Mervin said furiously.

Still in pain, I weakly fell to the ground and blacked out.

--Flashback--

I was on a hill overseeing a vast, rich field of grass and lilacs. A gorgeous panther was standing next to me smiling at me. I was smiling back. She put her arms around my neck and began nuzzling my neck.

"I wish you wouldn't have to leave." She said with a pleasant voice.

"I know," I calmly replied. "But when I return, I will look into getting repositioned. This mission shouldn't last long. It's only one criminal."

"Promise me something, my love..." she said.

"Anything." I replied.

"Don't kill Sloan. His child needs him."

"You know how I feel about criminals. They disgust me."

"I know that my love, but what will happen to his girl?"

"She aided him in his theft. That makes her just as guilty according to the law."

"She wouldn't survive in jail. You know that, she can't go."

"While I'm gone, try to appeal to the council on her freedom due to her age. You're a very convincing lady Gwen."

"If we were fortunate enough to have a child, think about sending her off to jail, just think about it. But anyways, you always think of something."

And after saying that, she kissed me. I felt uncomfortable with those last words from Gwen.

--Present--

I was still in pain. I could tell I was laying on a bed, a soft one at that, but my vision was blurry. I couldn't see well. All I could do

was make out fuzzy shapes. The only living thing I could see was a person of short stature. When my seeing cleared up, I recognized the person. It was my young friend that always smiled, Deacon.

*Original chapter 4 for this book may have been lost. This would explain the difference in flow from the last chapter.

Chapter 6

“Hiya Silver. Feel’n okay?” Asked Deacon with a concerned look his slender, young weasel face.

“Oh, I guess.” I replied trying to act tough.

“You sure seem to be getting in a lot of trouble Silver. I don’t mean to say that rudely, but....”

“That’s all right. Silver, huh? That is a good nickname for me, I guess.” I said smiling curiously.

“Yeah. Silvercast is a long name, so I just felt a need to shorten it.”

“Do you think I could call you Dee then? It’s shorter.” I said sarcastically.

“Oh, come on! Deacon isn’t that hard to say!” Replied Deacon in a loud tone with a sly smirk on his face.

After yelling that, a male wolf priest wearing glasses walked in and looked at Deacon sighing.

“Deacon, are you scolding are guest?” Said the priest in a teasing, sly manner.

“I’m sorry Father,” Deacon apologized. “I was just playing around with Silvercast.”

“And that is perfectly all right, but I am sure he can hear you fine, no need to yell. Especially in a place like this.” Said the priest.

“Don’t worry about that sir, no harm done.” I said in a way to get Deacon out of trouble.

“Well since all is forgiven, you ought to get back to class Deacon. I’ll be in shortly.” Instructed the priest.

“Yes sir,” said Deacon. “Goodbye Silver.”

Deacon then ran off to a nearby room. The wolf then turned to me and extended his right arm as to greet me.

“Hello there,” He said. “I am Father Vincent Grey.”

“I’m Silvercast, Silver for short.” I said extending my hand and accepting his.

We shook and he helped me get up off the cot. The days since I had first ‘awaken’ I have seemed to have many of these fainting spells. Vincent then opened another door and motioned me to follow.

He led me into the sanctuary. It was a wide room made from stone, lit with many candles by pews, two at each side. At the front of the sanctuary was an ancient wooden podium with a shredded book lying on it. An organist practiced a lumbering, yet mystical melody on the off-key pipes.

“You seem to know Deacon well, he sure is interested in you.” Vincent commented.

“Yes, he saved my life from an angry mob.” I answered.

“Deacon is a wonderful boy. He is a brilliant student, always smiles, caring, energetic, and very talkative. He would talk to anyone he sees.” Said Vincent proudly.

“Is he your son?” I asked, just trying to make conversation as I felt it slipping.

“No,” Vincent responded. “It was a cold night. It had just begun to snow and I found him on the church doorstep at the age of three. So I took him in. He has lived in my mission for three years.”

Hearing this made me think of Walther, Mervin’s son. Then that made me wonder where Mervin was. I asked Vincent and he told me that he was waiting outside. I immediately ran to the front door of the church. When I opened the door, I once again found the sun burning my pupils again. However, I could see Mervin just fine.

“Silvercast!” Mervin yelled rejoicing. “I was worried.”

Then, suddenly, Mervin hugged me tight with reassurance. I thought my lungs were going to pop soon if he didn’t loosen his grasp.

“I’m...glad to...see ...you to....but ...I can’t breathe.” I said playfully.

“Oh, sorry...” replied Mervin.

He let go and it felt as if a load of bricks had fallen off my chest. I bent my knees trying to catch my breath. I looked up and smiled at Mervin.

“I really like your hellos, but I don’t know if I could survive another one.” I said jokingly.

“Yeah I’ll be a little more careful next time.” Replied Mervin.

Suddenly, something caught Mervin’s eye. He turned his head to the left and he lowered his jaw in horror. I stood up and looked and I too was taken by surprise.

I saw a disgusting creature covered in black string-shaped slime. The only noticeable under the slime was its red eyes. No mouth, lips, nose, nor ears could be seen. This beast stood on a hill balanced on its six, spider like legs, looking straight at us.

Out of nowhere a heard a gurgling, deep voice says: “Pathetic creatures. All will feel my pain, my fear, hatred, and hideousness.”

It had to have been the beast talking. Then, this ‘being’ started to slowly walk in our direction. It began to pick up speed after 8 seconds had passed.

“It is one of the creators!” Mervin shouted in panic.

“Its demonic!” I said in horror.

“We must run! Go! Warn the villagers! I will help Father Vincent get the children to safety.” Mervin informed.

We then departed. I ran into the village and shouted at the top of my lungs. People scattered. Screaming in fear. Trampling on anyone

that got in his or her way. Fortunately, everyone went to safety. Except for me. I ran back to the church to check on Mervin and the others. I couldn't leave Mervin, especially Mervin.

I saw the creator advance towards the church. I began to yell insanely, "Mervin! It's coming!" Instead I got the creators attention. He looked at me for a second and then lunged at me. I turned toward the fields and ran, away from the town. Wearing those overalls hindered my running ability greatly. The creator reached at me with one of his legs, which instantly doubled as a hand. He grabbed my right arm; it felt as if my arm fur was beginning to melt. I moaned in pain, powerless against this monster.

I didn't know what to do. I was going to die. At least everyone else was safe. I could die with that satisfaction. The monster then stopped dead in his tracks. He began to growl. His red, glowing eyes looked at me. This was it. Death.

Chapter 6

Without warning the creator dropped me. I hit the ground on my side. My right arm still burned. I looked up at the enormous creature. He just stood there. He then began to slowly sink to the ground as if he was dead. It's string like body began to evaporate and a steamy corpse of a lynx could be seen.

Mervin and Vincent came running to me after seeing the creature collapse and fade away. They too were astonished by what they were seeing.

"The creator just turned into a lynx? What does this mean?" asked Vincent.

"I think the lynx turned into a creator, then when it died it turned back into it's former self." Mervin stated.

"Or these 'creators' are actually people with mystic abilities. Just a thought." implied Vincent again.

"Well, whatever the truth is...that is him." said Mervin with hatred and extreme emotion in his eyes.

Vincent and I looked at Mervin then at the dead lynx. I remembered what Mervin had told me about a certain lynx he knew.

"You mean that's the lynx that..." I said halfway.

"...Murdered my son? Yes," answered Mervin. "I am personally glad this has happened to him."

I stared at Mervin in shock. I had never heard him talk like this before. I can understand why, however, but it was still surprised to hear this from Mervin.

"Let me see your wound." said Vincent hastily.

I showed him my arm. It was a violet color mixed with my blood. It still felt like it was going to melt off any minute.

"Can you walk Silver?" asked Vincent.

"Sure." I replied.

I stood up still clinging my arm. Vincent and Mervin helped lead me back to the town. We reached a two-story building made out of wood. It was the hospital. Inside all the windows were shut and bolted from because of my warning. There were six beds lined up against the wall where the windows were. I was led to the third one. From upstairs, a charcoal colored squirrel came down.

"What seems to be all the trouble?" he questioned.

"This feline has been attacked by a creator. His right arm has been injured." Mervin answered back.

I could clearly see the squirrel's fur stand on its end. He looked at me as if I had a hazardous disease. This was not helping my own fears of what had burned me.

“He was hurt by a creator and you bring him here? OUT! Now, before he contaminates the entire building!” yelled the squirrel in a panic.

“Dr. Almasy, please, try and help him,” begged Mervin. “Nobody knows for certain that an injury by a creator can cause a plague.”

“Your right. No one has been attacked by a creator and lived, so we don’t know what might happen. But let’s not take any chances. Take him to the field and I will arrive shortly. Now get out!” Ordered Dr. Almasy.

No sooner had we reached the hospital we were already leaving. Outside, villagers had gathered around the hospital to see what was going on. I could hear whispers like “I heard Silvercast killed the creator. He’s a hero!” or “I think he was attacked by the creator. He’s probably going to die.”

I didn’t know how to feel. The pain in my arm began to get worse. Was it my imagination or was it really as bad as it seemed. Now I could barely take the pain. I started whimpering like a sick child. I saw Deacon leave the church and approach us.

“Silver, please hold on.” Deacon said. I could tell he was about to cry.

I looked at him and forced a smile. I didn’t help the mood at all. Mervin and Vincent laid me down on the grass. Even something like grass felt so good to lie on. I closed my eyes and gazed into the darkness. I kept telling myself I was going to live, I was going to be alright. Every joint in my body started to grow numb, but my arm never ceased in its pain. I could hear Dr. Almasy talking. He had finally made it.

“Silvercast, I’m going to give you some ether.” he said. “It will put you to sleep while I try to help you and after a while you will wake up. When you feel it over your muzzle, I want you to breathe in and out. Get ready.”

And with that I felt something clasp over my muzzle and I did as I was told. I wondered if the doctor was really putting me to sleep so that he could help me or if he was going to put me out of my misery. I didn’t have a choice whether to resist or not; I was already getting tired. I had to trust this doctor.