

## The Tale of Love and Dark Magic

By A. C. Zito

Once upon a time there was a boy who had a dog for his companion. She was the smartest, brightest dog in all the land. She was a golden doodle by standards but much more in his eyes. One day the boy asked:

“Dog, if that is your real name, tell me what you really are, or I won’t be your companion any longer.” The dog looked the boy up and down and then replied:

“Boy, if that is your real name, I am here to ask you the same exact question. Speak twice in case I don’t hear you correctly the first time and don’t say it again afterward for none should hear what will come next.” So the boy spoke loud and clear.

“You’ve sought me out, unicorn, and now you know that I’m a wizard.”

“Yes,” was all the unicorn had to say.

“Well, don’t you know I’m in hiding as this here boy? And you can stay in hiding as this here dog as long as you don’t tell any of the other villagers what we are. Agreed?” And the unicorn agreed.

Now the story goes this same way and not any other. But this was how the wizard tells it. But one day the dog fell in love with another dog named Vicarious. It was an unordinary strange and beautiful dog that the unicorn thought that it was none other than another unicorn as well. Sadly, the unicorn was mistaken, but she fell in love with it anyway, and they went along on their merry way being in love and this and that and what of it. One day the unicorn had to ask, sad enough to say:

“Dog, are you a unicorn like I am and are you living in this village because you have a companion that is a wizard like I am.” But like I said before, the unicorn was sadly mistaken. But here went the dog lying, saying:

“Well, sure I’m a unicorn and sure I’m here because of a wizard.” And now the dog knew of this here secret and went around telling everyone that a wizard was among us and was hidden in this here village and soon the wizard heard of the rumor and knew right away that something was amiss.

“Unicorn,” the wizard said to the unicorn, “I’ve been revealed by dark magic. We have to flee immediately.” So the unicorn, sad as she was, fled with the wizard, upon realizing that the dog wasn’t a unicorn like she was, and, to this day, that is why love is sometimes mistaken for dark magic and dark magic for love for all the star-crossed lovers and all the telltale hearts of the misfortunates from this side of Sherwood Forest all the way to the other side of the Lonely Tree Mountains. And so it is and so it’ll be.

The End