

# You Never See The Most Obvious Things

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*Something has been irritating Zoro. What irritates him more is that he can't figure out what it is. And as if he's not having enough trouble, Luffy is just making things worse. (ZoroxLuffy)*

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# 1 - Beware A Bored Captain

Gah! I know I really shouldn't start a new fic before I finish the ones I'm working on now, but... I just HAD to! I've been just itching do write a ZoroX Luffy fic for so long! I don't know why, but I just think they're the cutest couple ever! Plus, I can't ever get enough of it since there aren't a lot of fics about them. Well, at least not enough to keep me happy... Anyway, I don't have any clue what this is going to be about. It's sad that I always start my fics that way...

I don't own One Piece. I do own several One Piece DVDs though.

.Chapter One.....

“What have I ever done to you...?” Zoro asked Luffy angrily as he massaged the quickly swelling bump on the back of his head.

“Ah... sorry,” Luffy apologized with a grin.

Zoro just glared at his captain. It seemed like he was injured in some way at least once a day because of Luffy. This time it had been a `gomu-gomu-no-pistol' straight to the back of his head. He had been minding his own business, talking to Nami, when Luffy's fist came out of nowhere. Apparently, he had been trying to see how far he could stretch his arm to show Usopp.

“Somehow, I don't think you mean that...” Zoro said as he continued to glare.

Luffy put on a pouty face and blinked innocently at Zoro. “I didn't mean to...”

Just when Zoro was about to forgive him, Sanji announced that it was lunch time and Luffy was gone faster than he could blink.

“So much for a sincere apology...” Zoro grumbled as he got up and made his way toward the kitchen.

“Are you alright, Zoro?” Chopper asked once they were all seated at the table.

“Yeah, I'm fine.” He didn't feel like mentioning the headache he had. “He didn't even hit me that hard.”

“Hey.” Luffy said in-between bites as though he was offended.

Zoro just ignored him and began eating.

Lately Zoro had been irritated. He couldn't figure out what it was that was irritating him either. In fact, that just made it more irritating. He was restless. He couldn't concentrate on anything; not even training. Luffy only made things worse. How was he supposed to figure out what was bothering him if that idiot kept interrupting his thoughts? Every time he thought he might almost figure out what it is that's been nagging

him, Luffy did something stupid and made him lose it. Living on this ship was enough to make any person insane!

“Zoro, is something wrong?” Chopper asked. “...Zoro?”

“...What?” He hadn't even heard the question.

“Is something wrong?”

“No. Why?” He bit into a mouthful of meat.

“You seem like you're angry about something...” The reindeer seemed a little wary of discussing his mood.

“No, I'm not angry,” He smiled. He couldn't help but have a soft-spot for the ships doctor, though he'd never admit it.

“He's always like that, Chopper,” Nami said casually. “Haven't you noticed?”

“What's that supposed to mean?” Zoro asked with a scowl.

“See what I mean?” She said with a smirk, ignoring Zoro's death-glare.

“One day, I'm going to stab that woman...” He thought angrily. “Stab her in the face.”

He smiled to himself as he thought about stabbing Nami in the face... repeatedly.

“What's so funny?” Usopp asked the swordsman.

Zoro realized that he had begun to chuckle softly to himself, and quickly stopped. He chose to ignore Usopp and shoved some food into his mouth.

Usopp and Chopper eyed him warily as they continued their meals.

“How do you like it, Nami-san, Robin-chan?” Sanji asked the girls sweetly, ignoring everything that was going on.

Robin smiled at the cook. “It's good, thank you.”

“It's good. Thank you, Sanji-kun.”

Suddenly, Zoro noticed Luffy's hand creeping towards his plate. As his fingers were just hovering over his food, the green-haired swordsman brought his fork down on the thief's hand.

“Oooowww!” Luffy wailed. “What's wrong with you? Why'd you do that?”

“You were trying to steal my food!” He shouted defensively.

“What? I...” Luffy quickly thought up and excuse. “I wasn't stealing your food, Zoro! I thought I saw... a raccoon on your plate, and... it was trying to eat the meat! I scared it away!” He grinned triumphantly.

Zoro just stared at his captain. Did he really think anyone would believe something that stupid...?

“What? A raccoon?” Chopper exclaimed. “I didn't even see it!”

Everyone else at the table gaped at the reindeer.

“What is it?” the furry doctor asked innocently.

The meal continued the same way until every last morsel of food was devoured. Zoro left the others as soon as he had finished eating. *Maybe I'll be able to clear my mind and train for a while now that I'm full...* He thought to himself. Unfortunately, not five minutes later, he heard someone approaching from behind him.

“What do you want, Luffy?”

Luffy grinned. “You could tell it was me? I thought I could sneak up on you.”

“...”

“What are you doing?”

“I was about to train.”

“Aww, that's no fun! All you ever do is train! You're already big enough, Zoro! I'm bored... I thought you might know something fun I could do.”

“How would I know? Go play with chopper or something, I'm busy.”

“Come on, Zoro! You've been so mean lately!”

Even though he knew Luffy was right, he wasn't about to admit it to him. He had reasons to mean! Good reasons! If Luffy couldn't see that, it wasn't his problem.

“Just go away. Go see if someone else will entertain you!”

Seeing that he wasn't going to get his way, Luffy put on a pouty face. “Zoroooo!” As he whined his friend's name, the captain stomped his foot like a child.

“Rrrrr... fine! What do you want me to do, Luffy?” Zoro shouted as he finally lost his patience.

“Uhh... I don't know. That's what I came here to ask you.”

Letting out an exasperated sigh, Zoro leaned back and collapsed onto the deck. Dealing with Luffy was

just too mentally exhausting...

“What are you doing?”

“Sleeping.”

“If you're sleeping, why are you eyes open?” Luffy asked as he tilted his head to one side.

“I'm teaching myself to sleep that way,” He lied.

“Wow, really? I wanna try!” Luffy threw himself onto the deck beside Zoro.

Zoro was startled at first to see him plop down next to him. He couldn't keep the corners of his mouth from turning up a little. Even if Luffy was an annoying idiot, he was still undeniably cute. That was another thing Zoro would never admit to anyone. Ever since he had first met up with Luffy, it had always been Luffy's childlike charm that had been Zoro's favorite thing about him. Even when he made him so mad that he seriously considered killing him, Luffy would do something to remind him why he hadn't yet.

They had managed to stay still and quiet for a little over thirty seconds before Luffy cracked.

“This is boring!” He rolled over and looked at Zoro. “Let's do something else now!”

“You do something else.”

“But I wanna do something with you!” He whined.

“You don't even know what you want to do.”

“That's why you should think of something.”

“I did. We were just doing it.”

“I mean something fun...”

“Like what?”

Luffy sat up, cross-legged and looked thoughtful for a moment.

“We could... ah!” He suddenly raised his index finger, and then lowered it again. “No...”

“...”

“Oh, we could- no...”

“...”

“Wait, I know!” He grinned excitedly and placed his hands on his knees. “Let's play with the cannon!”

“There's nothing around to aim at but ocean.”

“Aww...” He leaned his face directly over Zoro's. “Well, now it's your turn to think of something.”

Zoro was startled to have Luffy's face so close to his. He just stared at him with his usual, goofy grin on his face, waiting for a response. Zoro could feel his face getting hot and he didn't know why. He couldn't explain it, but he was suddenly feeling really uncomfortable.

“I... I don't know,” was all he could force out after several seconds.

“You suck...” Luffy whined as he pulled his face away.

“If I suck, why do you keep bugging me?” Zoro asked after he regained his composure. “Like I said, go see what the others are doing. One of them will probably have something for you to do.”

“Aw, fine...” He got up and dusted off his pants. “But if they don't, I'm coming back.”

“Whatever.”

Zoro sat up and let out a deep sigh as his captain walked away. *What's wrong with me?* He thought as he shook his head, hoping to clear it. *Why did I get so wierded out when he did that?* He brought one of his knees up and rested an arm on it. It was unlike him to feel so uncomfortable around Luffy. He'd been that close to him before without getting flustered. He couldn't figure out what was different about today.

He let out another sigh and lay back down on the deck. Maybe he'd feel better after a nap...

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So, what do you think so far? I know I made Zoro angrier than usual, but I'll try and make him a little happier in the later chapters. I can't help it. He's easier to write angry. Plus, he's all confused and irritated right now. Poor Zoro. I hope I got his and Luffy's characters right. I always try my best to keep character personalities intact, but I don't always succeed...

Anyway, as always, I love to get comments and suggestions. I'm completely open to any good ideas any of you have. I'm finally starting to figure out where the story might be headed, and I have a few ideas, but it's always good to get more from readers. Anywho, I'll love you lots if you review!

## 2 - Still Irritated

Wow... It's been quite a while since I last updated any of my fanfics... I suppose you *could* beat the crap out of me for being a lazy bum, but if you were a good person, you'd know that two wrongs don't make a right... right? Anyway, please don't hurt me! I promise I'll be better! \*cough cough\* (...Maybe.)

Oh, and in response to one of the comments, I do sort of have a plot planned out. Well, okay I'm lying... But i do have a very general idea of where this is going. That's usually how I write my fics. They're formed from very general ideas and I make 'em up as I go along. It might take a few chapters, but I do promise this is going somewhere. ^^;

I don't own One Piece or any of it's characters. I'm sure you thought I did, but I'm sorry to say that all the magic belongs to Eiichiro Oda.

\*\*\*Chapter Two\*\*\*

*What is wrong with me??* Zoro thought to himself as he hid behind a stack of boxes in the storage room. *Why the hell am I avoiding Luffy? This is ridiculous!*

Zoro had spent the past two weeks ducking his captain. He couldn't explain why, but every time he was around the energetic young man he felt strangely uncomfortable. It bothered him to the point where he couldn't be in the same room with Luffy for more than a few minutes. Zoro had never had this problem before. He just wasn't the kind of guy who felt "uncomfortable" for any small reason. Uncomfortable is having a sword sticking out of your belly. Being uncomfortable because someone was standing too close was just a little too lame for Zoro to admit.

Just as he was about to leave his hiding place, Zoro heard the door open.

"Zorrrooo~!! Are you in here?" Luffy shouted at a seemingly empty room. "Sanji says lunch is ready!"

Luffy inspected the room, looking behind bags and boxes. Zoro quickly pretended to be asleep. He couldn't explain himself if Luffy found out he was hiding, but it wasn't too unusual for him to be sleeping in the dark storage area.

"Zoro! There you are!" Luffy grinned at his 'sleeping' nakama. "Oi, Zoro... Are you sleeping?"

"Yes. Get out of here."

"Why are you sleeping in here??" The captain grinned. "Are you trying to steal food?"

"No, I'm trying to sleep! At least it's quiet down here. If I sleep on deck, you'll just bug me."

Luffy frowned. "You sure have been in a bad mood lately..."

"Then why do you keep hanging around? Let me sleep, you pest!"

Zoo's tone stung Luffy for a moment. "Fine, sleep then!" He puffed up his cheeks and stomped away.

He felt guilty for yelling at Luffy, but he couldn't help it. The only thing he could do was be alone right now. After he sorted himself out everything would go back to normal and he and Luffy could be friends again, right? Of course, why wouldn't they be..?

Zoro stretched himself out on the floor. Since Luffy thought he was down here to sleep, he figured he might as well do just that. Just when he thought he might be able to will himself to sleep, his least favorite voice rang through his ears.

"Oi, Seaweed!!"

The green-haired young man sat straight up and glared at the source of the noise. "What the hell do you want, Love-Cook?!"

Sanji stood in the doorway of the room giving Zoro an equally unfriendly look. "I told Luffy to tell you lunch was done, Cabbage-head. Why aren't you up there eating it?"

"I don't want that shoot you try to feed us. I'd rather starve that eat your poisonous cooking." Of course he was lying. Just like everyone else on the ship, Zoro loved Sanji's cooking. But the lie did exactly what it was intended to do.

Sanji's foot was inches away from the swordsman's face in less that a second. "What did you say?!"

Zoro dodged by a hair and drew two of his swords. He wanted to let out some stress and the ship's cook was always a good outlet. "I said you can't cook!"

"As if an ugly cactus like you would know the difference between a boot and a ladle!"

"Huh? What's the difference then?"

Sanji threw another kick, but this time it connected. Zoro skid back a few feet into a stack of flour sacks. He quickly recovered and swung at the cook. He wasn't trying kill Sanji, of course, but let's just say he wouldn't lose any sleep if he left a few scars on the pretty Love-Cook.

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The rest of the crew were gathered on deck eating the meal Sanji had prepared. Sanji had ordered them not to touch the food until he came back, but once Luffy started inhaling their lunch, it had become obvious that it was every man for himself.

Of course Nami and Robin had been allowed to eat the entire time. They even had their own table set up beneath Nami's tangerine trees. Robin watched Luffy and Ussop fight over a piece of fish and smiled as a mysterious hand snatched it away from both of them and tossed it to Chopper.



"HEY!!" The two shouted in unison when they finally realized where it had gone.

"Stops being such pigs, you two!" Nami said angrily. "You could at least try and wait for Sanji-kun."

"That's easy for you to say, 'Nami-swan'," Ussop spat at her. "You don't have to wait!"

"Yeah!" Luffy shouted through a mouthful of food.

Suddenly several loud noises sounded from downstairs.

"What was that?" Chopper asked the others nervously.

"It was probably Zoro and Sanji fighting..." Nami sighed. "They're so idiotic. I swear they enjoy it."

She rose from her seat and made her way toward the stairs. "I guess I'll go break those nimrods up..."

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"I'll Kill you!"

"Go ahead and try!"

"Try not to cry too much, okay?"

Insults continued to be thrown back and forth as the two young men beat the shmalt out of each other. In the short amount of time they had been fighting, they had already managed to make several tears in eachothers (and even their own) clothing. Zoro even had a bruise on one of his cheeks.

Zoro half scowled half grinned as he avoided several would-be painful kicks. He hated to admit it, but it was fun to fight with Sanji. It was usually simple enough to annoy him, but it wasn't as simple to subdue the cook's anger afterwards. The blonde was a pretty good match even if he was the most annoying person he had ever met.

"Is something funny?" Sanji asked as he barely managed to jump out of the range of a sword.

Zoro quickly hid any hint of a smile from his face and swung his sword less than an inch from Sanji's ear. "No. Should I be laughing?"

And that was when something much scarier than a sword or kick came sailing through the room and smacked Zoro in the side of the head.

"What the hell?" The swordsman rubbed the side of his head.

Before Sanji had realized what had happened, a second something flew right into the back of his skull.

Zoro picked up one of Nami's shoes from the ground. Okay, so maybe the shoe itself wasn't scary but the person who threw it was.

Nami stomped into the room and snatched her shoes away from Zoro. "What's wrong with you two?!"

"Nami-san~!!" Sanji swooned, forgetting all about Zoro. "You're so beautiful when you're angry!"

She chucked the shoe she was holding at the cooks face. "Why can't you two ever get along? Would it kill you?"

"Yes." They answered together, glaring at each other.

Nami groaned and picked her shoes up off the ground. "Well, you two probably won't get any lunch now since you're so stupid..."

"Those assholes ate while I was gone?" Sanji ran upstairs, most likely so he could kick the food out of the others' bellies.

Nami sat down on a box and started to put her sandals back on.

Zoro decided to leave. After all, the last time he was alone with Nami, he somehow ended up owing her even more money than before.

"Zoro?"

"What?" He half-wincing.

Nami looked him in the eyes. "I don't know what's going on between you and Luffy, but you had better get your act together."

"What??" Zoro was shocked. Had he been that obvious?

Nami sighed. "You're such an idiot..." She finished with her sandals and stood up. "You know how Luffy is. If you keep acting the way you have been, you're going to hurt his feelings. He may not act like it most of the time, but he is our captain."

"Stop acting like I'm such a bad guy. You yell at him all the time. What's the difference? He's used to it."

"The difference is that you're his first-mate. A first-mate sticks by his captain's side. You might be too dense to see it, but Luffy really counts on that."

Zoro was speechless. He hadn't really thought about what it meant to be first-mate. He had always known his title, but he didn't really think it meant anything. Especially not to Luffy. Maybe he had been handling himself badly. After all, it wasn't Luffy's fault that he had been in a weird mood lately.

Nami left without saying anything else. She was surprised with herself for saying what she had. She had been meaning to scold Zoro for being such a baby, but she hadn't expected to really mean what she had said. *I'm going soft...* She thought to herself as she climbed the stairs.

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The clock struck three a.m. and Zoro was still awake in his hammock. He had went to bed without eating dinner. He just didn't have the stomach for food. He couldn't stop thinking about what Nami had said. He felt like he had done something horrible to Luffy. Deep down he knew his captain would forgive him. Hell, if he were to apologize with a cookie, he would probably forget the whole thing had ever happened. Or would he? Zoro had learned that there was a lot more to Luffy than what seemed to be there. Most people who knew Luffy would think he was a complete idiot. One woman even asked if he had "special problems." Zoro knew better than that, though. Luffy was a lot smarter than he would let you know. He was also sensitive deep down in that rubber brain of his. The thought of actually hurting the rubber-boy worried Zoro. He had been up all night long trying to decide how he would fix things.

This was a difficult situation Zoro had gotten himself into. He was a very proud man. 'Sorry' just wasn't something that he said very often. At least not if he could help it. Admitting he had done something wrong was almost like admitting he had lost a fight. He couldn't handle that. He knew he'd have to think of some other way to handle this. *Maybe... I could just pretend like nothing ever happened and we'll all forget about this whole thing.*

"Yeah right," He muttered to himself.

He rolled over in his hammock. He could see the silhouette of Luffy's sleeping form across the room. Like usual, he was snoring away. *His snoring is almost cute in an annoying sort of way...* He smiled unintentionally. When he realized what he was thinking, he quickly erased the smile from his face. *What am I thinking? Cute? I really need to go to sleep...*

And with that thought, he did.

\*\*\*Chapter End\*\*\*

Yay! I finally wrote a new chapter! I've been wanting to write for a while now, but I haven't had a computer. I just got one a few days ago with my roommate. I can already feel that empty void filling up.  
^\_\_^

Anyway, if you want me to write more, you should leave a comment. I feed off of attention. And with that I can fuel my brain and type up a new chapter. But until then, I must sleep, for I have to work tomorrow and it's going to be very unpleasant. Well... Goodnight!

### 3 - Meat

Chaptah three!! I'm on a roll, no? I'm happy now. I had to write that last chapter without a proper word-processor. Our new `puter didn't come with Word, but my boss gave me a copy of this processor called Lotus. Thank god for spell check... Anywho, enjoy!

One Piece and it's characters belong to Eiichiro Oda. If One Piece was mine, Zoro would naked a lot more often.

\*\*\*Chapter Three\*\*\*

``Dammit! Where could that idiot possibly be??"

It had been three days since Zoro decided to apologize to Luffy. It had taken all three days for him to slowly build up the courage to go through with it. Well, not that he *needed* to 'build up' any courage. Roronoa Zoro was no pussy! Or at least that was what he had been telling himself every time he passed up a chance to talk to his captain.

When they reached an island, Zoro decided it was the perfect opportunity. This way he and Luffy could go somewhere away from the other cremates. Somewhere out of their sight and hearing range. He didn't like the idea of the others knowing he could be a nice person. ((Angie: As if he was so cruel... ^^)) It's hard to keep up the tough guy act if people see you apologizing left and right.

Zoro scanned the surrounding area. At least it had been the perfect opportunity before Luffy took off into the busy port town before the swordsman had a chance to suggest they explored the town together. He had even planned how to get Luffy to follow him. He had been hoping to lure him with promises of food. He didn't have a lot of cash, but he knew he could take his captain to the cheapest hole in the ground restaurant in the Grand Line and he'd still be happy. Zoro had eaten a lot of questionable food in his life, but some of the things he'd seen Luffy eat even made him want to vomit.

``Luuuffy!!" He called, hoping the rubber boy would hear him.

Letting out a very disgruntled sigh, Zoro made his way through the busy streets. How could he possibly find Luffy with all these people everywhere? *Maybe I could just wave a giant sign with `Meat' written on it...* He thought irritably.

After combing the streets for over three hours, the green-haired young man was beginning to seriously consider the sign idea. He had checked every restaurant, bar, shop, food stand, and even every kitchen within a mile of where the Going Merry was docked. *One more... If he's not here, I'm going back to the ship.* As this thought passed through his mind, he entered a humble-looking restaurant. It looked as if it had been open since before he was born. The paint on the walls was faded and cracked in some places, giving the place a run-down feel. It was a small room with a door on the back wall which most likely lead to a kitchen. To the left of the door was a counter and a very pathetic assortment of drinks.

“Can I help you, sir?” Asked a middle-aged woman.

Zoro scanned the room before he replied. “Have you seen a boy with black hair and a straw hat? He's about this tall,” He motioned with his hand to indicate Luffy's height.

“Was he wearing a red shirt?” The woman asked.

Zoro's heartbeat quickened. “Yeah, has he been here??”

“Yeah, he just left,” She frowned and pointed to an upturned table surrounded by scraps of food, broken dishes, and a few bones. “I still have his mess to take care of.”

Zoro didn't even want to know how the boyish captain had managed the mess. Actually, he didn't even care.

“Do you know where he went?”

The woman furrowed her eyebrows and thought for a moment. “I think he might have said something about a ship before he left. I don't really know, since he wasn't really talking to me...”

“Was he by himself?”

“Yes. It was kind of weird, the way he kept talking to himself...”

The swordsman quickly thanked the woman and ran out the door.

“He must be going back to the Going Merry...” Zoro thought aloud as he sprinted down the street, knocking more than a few people out of his way.

He was determined to catch Luffy before he made it to the ship. It would be so much easier to talk to Luffy if he wasn't paranoid that someone was listening. He could think of a certain red-haired someone who'd just *love* to have some dirt to blackmail him with.

Zoro saw a familiar straw hat mixed into the crowd.

“Luffy!” Zoro called out. “Oi, Luffy!!”

The straw hat turned around and started looking around himself in confusion.

“Luffy, over here!”

The captain looked down at something in his hand.

“Wow, you can talk??”

Zoro caught up to the boy and smacked him in the back of his head. “Where the hell have you been??”

``Zoro!" Luffy beamed at hi friend. ``I was looking for you!"

Zoro just opened and closed his mouth a few times. He didn't know if he should laugh or scream at the top of his lungs; so he did both. It was more than a little disturbing.

``Uhh... Zoro?"

As much as Zoro would have liked to stop making that horrible noise, he just couldn't. He was frustrated, nervous, confused, and even amused all at once. The poor guy was having a very long day.

``Zoro...?" Luffy was looking a bit worried at this point. ``I got you something."

``Huh?" Startled out of his outburst, the swordsman looked at the parcel in Luffy's hands.

``Here!" He held it out with a grin.

``..." Zoro didn't know what to say, so he just took what was offered to him.

``Open it! Open it!!" The boy was practically bouncing with excitement.

Zoro was shocked and touched. After he had been such a jerk to him, Luffy had gotten him something. And for no real reason too. He glanced at Luffy before tearing open his gift. There really aren't any words in the English language that could accurately describe the look on Zoro's face when he opened his gift. It was a while before he said anything at all. He just stared at what he was holding.

``Luffy..."

``Yeah?" He was wearing an expectant grin.

``Is this... Meat?"

``Do you like it??" I was at this restaurant and they had really good meat, so I saved you some!!"

Zoro gave Luffy a funny look, then smiled and took a bite. It was cold, but it actually was pretty good.

``Thanks, Luffy."

Luffy grinned. ``It's good, huh?"

``Yeah, it's really good," He held it out to Luffy so he could take a bite.

``Yay!" He bit off half the hunk of steak.

They continued down the street toward the Going Merry. Together, they finished the steak in less than a minute. Zoro decided it was the best meat he had ever eaten in his life. It really was, too.

\*\*\*Chapter End\*\*\*

Aww... Didn't that make you happy? It made me happy. If I wanted, I could probably just end this here, but I don't think I will. Hopefully I'll type up another chapter soon. Sorry this one was a little short. If you love me, review!!

# 4 - Ask Dr.Chopper

Are you proud of me? I'm proud of me. I don't think the fans of my Naruto fic are very happy though, since I'm updating this one instead of those... ^.^ I'm sure you already know that One Piece isn't mine, so I won't bother mentioning that. Wait... Crap! ""Chapter Four"" There were a few fluffy clouds in an otherwise perfectly clear blue sky. As Zoro gazed upward, he let out a deep sigh and scanned the horizon. The weather was nice and he was in an even nicer mood. It was strange for him to be this happy after getting used to being as miserable as he had been the past few weeks. Actually, it was strange for him to be this happy at all. Not that he was complaining... They had set back to sea that morning. They were on their way to some treasure Nami had caught a rumor of, so they didn't waste much time off the ocean. Zoro didn't mind. After spending a day sailing through that city, he had decided that he hated it more than any place they had visited so far. "Hey, Zoro!" Luffy shouted, breaking the green-haired pirate from his daze. "Yeah, Zoro!" Luffy looked up at a painted picture of a shark. "Uh, yeah. That's great, Luffy." Luffy grinned and ran off to show Nami. Things between Zoro and his captain were finally normal again. Or, at least as close to normal as he could hope. A strange feeling was still nagging Zoro, but he just pushed it to the back of his mind. He was too happy to let his strange mind ruin things for him. He quietly watched Luffy run around, showing off the picture. Usopp followed close behind making certain to mention that he was the one who drew it. The past continued to do so until a sharp wind blew the painting right from Luffy's hand. "Noooo!! My picture!" Luffy immediately reached for the picture, but it was just beyond his grasp. He stretched his arm, trying to grab the sheet of paper, leaning against the railing. It made Zoro nervous to see Luffy lean that far over the water. Couldn't he be more careful? He could fall and drown himself! Just when the thought crossed his mind, Luffy lost his balance. "Whoa!" The swordsworn was quick to jump to his captain's aid. He had his arms around Luffy's waist before both of the boy's feet had left the deck. Unfortunately, this was the exact time Luffy snapped back, causing them both to fly backwards. Zoro tried to sit himself up, but he found the strain had rught on top of him. Luffy turned around on his first-mates lap, practically straddling him. "Thanks, Zoro! You could have mistaken the older boy for a lobster at that moment. Is Luffy? Was all he managed to stammer before he pushed the boy off and got to his feet. Zoro's heart was pounding in his chest and he felt a little sick to his stomach. What the hell was that? He backed up a few paces as Luffy got up and dusted himself off. "I saved it." Luffy grinned as he showed Zoro the painting once more. "Ah... Yeah, good...". Luffy gave his friend a concerned look. "Are you feeling okay? You look like you're gonna throw up...". "I'm fine." "Are you sure about that?" Usopp asked, appearing next to Zoro. "You look really red. Do you have a fever." Zoro just stared at Usopp. Did he see what happened? Please, God, tell me no one saw that... Maybe we should get Chopper... Luffy suggested to Usopp. "Yeah, he looks kinda weird just staring off into space like that. I hope it's not Mennelkie...". "What's that?" Luffy asked, worried about his friend. "It's a rare disease where the victims body slowly weakens until they can no longer move at all. One of the symptoms is staring off like that." Usopp shrugged his shoulders and sighed. "I'm afraid there's nothing we can do now...". "No!!" Luffy grabbed on to Zoro's shirt and shook him. "Zoro, I don't want you to turn into a mima... One of those things!" Zoro awoke from his stupor when he realized Luffy was shaking him. "Oh, what are you doing?" He asked angrily as he pulled away from his captain's strong grip. "Zoro! Please don't turn into a...". "Mennelkie!" Usopp offered. "Yeah, don't turn into one of those!" "What the hell are you two talking about?" Usopp said you have this weird disease that makes you turn into one of those things!" Luffy explained. "I don't want that to happen, Zoro!" Zoro glared at the now fleeing Usopp. "I don't have any stupid disease. Luffy." "Really?" Luffy beamed. "That's good! I was worried!" Zoro couldn't help but smile at Luffy. The boys concern was touching. Without thinking about it, he ruffled the boy's hair. Before he pulled his hand from Luffy's head, the younger boy grinned up at him. Zoro was disgusted with the butterflies that instantly exploded in his stomach. Gah! Why am I feeling like this? This is Luffy! Why should Luffy make me feel this way? Zoro removed his hand and quickly thought up and excuse to leave. He decided that he needed to do the one thing he generally tried his best to avoid: Think about his feelings. The thought caused an involuntary shudder down the young man's spine. "..." "..." The ceiling of the storage room really wasn't nearly as helpful as Zoro had thought it might have been. Staring at it for two hours really hadn't done a thing for him. The only progress he had made with his thoughts was that he now remembered the name of the man who created a certain sword technique he had been explaining to Chopper a few days before. Of course he would remember that now that it didn't matter any more... But more importantly, he still couldn't figure out why it was that he was feeling all... Funny around his captain. He had rolled all sorts of reasons around in his brain, but none of them seemed to fit. He thought maybe it could be that he was developing some sort of allergy to rubber, but that was just ridiculous. Then he considered the idea of having some rare disease like Usopp had said, but he just didn't feel sick. There was that odd sense of nausea, but it just wasn't quite the same as being sick... The closest he had ever been to feeling like that was years ago when Kuma was still alive... But he was certain it couldn't be that. "What's wrong with me?" He shouted at it alone. He tried picturing Luffy in his mind. Maybe it's something about the way he looks... He could just see his captain laughing and smiling like an idiot. He even imagined the worried look he had worn earlier that afternoon. When Zoro realized he was smiling he tried to shut the images out, but trying to do that only made them stronger. He let out a sigh and finally accepted what he had really known all along. I'm ill... love with Luffy. He cringed at his own thought. I can't believe I just used the "I" word... "..." Zoro's revelation only made things worse. That night at dinner, he was so determined not to look at Luffy, he ended up staring at him throughout the entire meal. Robin even caught him doing it, making a flurr pop out of Luffy's head and wares at that. After the uncomfortable meal, Zoro escaped to the storage room again. He was beginning to become a little too kind of the dark, cramped room, but it was one of the few places on the ship where he could be alone. He was looking forward to his turn on watch duty. That way he could get Zoro time without having to sit on a boat. But until then, the boat had to do what am I going to do...? He knew he couldn't avoid Luffy forever. And the thought of leaving Luffy and the rest of the crew wasn't an idea he had even a little bit. There were only two options left: He could either forget about his feelings, or split his guts to Luffy. Since this is Zoro were talking about, he naturally decided to forget. How he would do this, he didn't know. He was, however, determined to try. "..." "..." There were stars in the sky when Zoro finally left the storage room. He had decided that if he was going to do this, he'd definitely need help. He wasn't the kind of person who knew about these things. Emotions and feelings just weren't his thing. The problem was most of the crew felt the same way. Well, if you exclude Sanji anyway. When he did out of all the possible sources of advice, the swordsworn could only think of one member of the Strawhat Pirates he could bring himself to consult. The only one who he trusted enough not to laugh at him or tell him he was crazy. Oh, Chopper. "Zoro?" What is it? "The young reindeer was inside reading a book called 'Herbology On The Grand Line'. He had found it in a shop he visited while they were docked at the last island. I wanted to ask you something...". Zoro wasn't sure how to phrase his question. Chopper could see that Zoro was uncomfortable which in turn, made him feel uncomfortable. He had always had a habit of picking up on others' emotions. He had never seen Zoro show any signs of nervousness or embarrassment. To see him like this was a bit unsettling. But he had a feeling he knew why the young man had come to talk to him. "What is it, Zoro?" "Uh... Have this problem? Zoro pretended to be interested in something on one of the shelves in the room. "You have a problem? What kind of problem?" "I've been feeling strange lately...". "Strange how? Cramps? Headaches? Nausea?" "Well, if I guess I have been kind of nauseous lately, but I don't think...". "Have you been eating enough? I noticed you've been skipping meals." Zoro scratched the back of his head. "I really don't think that has anything to do with this." "Zoro, is this part of your exercising?" Chopper asked persistently. "What? I know you want to get stronger, but you skip meals, you hurt your body. I want you to make sure you always eat your fill or else you'll get sick." "Chopper, I'm not... The reindeer placed a hood on Zoro's arm consolingly. "I know it's easy to develop an eating disorder, but it won't make you stronger. In fact, your body will start to consume your muscles if you don't eat...". "What?" Zoro stared at the doctor. "You think I have an eating disorder?" Chopper could tell by the look on Zoro's face that he had been very wrong. "You mean you don't? Chopper put a hoof to his chest. "Oh, thank goodness! I was worried!" Why the hell would I have an eating disorder? I want to eat! Chopper frowned. "Well, it's true that you haven't been coming to a lot of meals lately...". Zoro exhaled. He felt bad for raising his voice at Chopper. "You're right. But the reason why is completely different from that." "When?" Zoro looked Chopper in his big, innocent eyes. What was he supposed to say? He himself didn't even know how to explain how he felt. "...". "I wanted to avoid someone...". Who are you avoiding? "Ning...". That's not important." Zoro steadied his gaze. This is stupid! Since when was I such a weenie? I came here to talk to Chopper, so I will! Chopper, I'm in... I really like a member of the crew and I need to know what to do about it! Chopper gasped at Zoro's sudden outburst. "Wh...". What? The swordsworn's cheeks darkened as he explained himself. "I don't know how it happened, but I sort of... Have feelings for one of the crew members. I just want to forget about those... Feelings and get on with my life, but I don't know how to do that." The doctor didn't believe what he was hearing. Zoro had a crush and he was coming to him for help? Who in their right mind could see a reindeer for help with their love life? "...". Why would I want to do that? I don't know! Zoro scowled. "You're the only one on the ship I could talk to. Can you imagine what any of the other's would do if I told them that? Chopper imagined and it wasn't pretty. "Well...". What do you want me to say? Zoro turned to leave. He couldn't do this. It was obviously a bad idea to consult an animal when it comes to love. He would remember that for future reference. "Wait! The furry grate held up his small hoof. "I'm sorry, don't leave. I want to help." No, you're right. I don't know why I told you. Just forget I was here... Chopper knew Zoro would leave if he didn't stop him. He hadn't meant to turn him away, it just took him a while to process the information he had just gained. The tiny reindeer suddenly ballooned up into his man-deer form and grabbed Zoro by the wrist. "I said wait!" Zoro stopped and turned back toward his friend, a light blush still playing on his cheeks. "What?" "I'm sorry, I want you to talk to me, Zoro." Chopper shrunk back to normal and looked up at his taller friend. "I really didn't mean that the way it sounded. I want to try and help you, since you've helped me." The tiny reindeer smiled sweetly, causing Zoro to instantly forgive his little friend. "Sorry...". Just. You're the only person I've mentioned this to. I only just found out myself. It's just... "Wierd." It's okay. There's nothing wrong with liking someone. It's natural for men to feel that way towards women... Zoro looked away when he realized Chopper had assumed the person he was in love with was one of the female crew members. He felt guilty. Not because Chopper was wrong, but because he felt like he was wrong for feeling the way he did... "Zoro?" Hearing his own name, Zoro's attention was directed back to his friend. "Wha...". Did I say something wrong again? You seem upset." "No, I'm fine. I'm just...". Chopper waited for the rest of the sentence, but it never came. He desperately wanted to know who it was that Zoro had feelings for. He knew it had to be either Nami or Robin. There was a possibility that it could be Vivi, but the fact that she hadn't traveled with them for a while, made Chopper think she wasn't a likely suspect. "Zoro...". "I mean...". "I would be all right if I asked who it was...". "I...". "I mean...". Chopper stammered. "I want you to say you don't want to say." Zoro considered for a moment whether or not he should tell Chopper. "I can trust him not to judge me because of it, right? I'm sure he wouldn't tell anyone." "Yes...". Zoro paused. "It's not Nami or Robin. I can tell you that much." He scowled at the thought of the two women. He knew a troublesome woman when he saw one, and they were each about as dangerous as an entire harem. Chopper gasped. "So it's Vivi?" "What? No, it's not Vivi either!" The doctor was silent for a moment. If it's not those three, then... Choppers eyes widened and he pointed at Zoro. "It's Sanji?" "What did you just say?" Zoro loomed over the furry doctor menacingly. "I'm going to pretend that you never said that, Chopper. I don't want you to ever suggest that I could have any other feeling besides hatred for that... Love Cook?" "Then who is it?" "It's... it's not Usopp, and it's not you...". Zoro paused for a moment and added "No offense." Chopper grinned. "None taken." "Since I'm not going to say it, you'll have to figure it out from that." Chopper strained his brain trying to figure it out. Could it be Carver? No, I don't think Zoro's into that sort of thing... Who else is there? Zoro raised an eyebrow. "Do you really have to think that hard? There's only one person left." "Well...". You don't mean...? Chopper couldn't even take in the information for a few seconds. "Luffy? That's just bizarre!" Zoro said defensively. "Do you think I feel like this because I want to?" Chopper frowned. "You make it sound like it's so horrible. Isn't it?" "Why? Maybe you and Luffy would make a nice couple...". The doctor said trying his best to sound reassuring. "Are you kidding me? Usopp! Together? Are you insane?!" (So many question marks!) Aah-!! "Why not?" That would be impossible! First: We're both guys. It would just be unnatural. Second: Luffy... Luffy. He's my best friend. He's my captain! Aside from that, he's... Too innocent. "But that doesn't matter. Maybe Luffy feels the same way. You shouldn't give up before you even try...". "What's wrong with you, Chopper? Since when did you become so...". "So what?" "I don't know...". Why are you being so supportive of this? Why shouldn't I be? I wish I was in love with someone. It must be nice to have someone you care about that much. I don't think it matters if he's a boy... "I'm Hedy! I never said I was in love with him." Zoro was getting flustered again. "But... it doesn't matter. I came to you because I wanted to forget the way I feel." "What do you mean forget? You can't forget stuff like that!" Zoro frowned. "Aren't there...". I don't know... Medicines and things that can do that." "When did you hear that?" Zoro just stayed silent. He wasn't going to say Usopp, because he knew that would just be too stupid. He should have known better... "Anyway, you shouldn't want to forget. You should tell Luffy how you feel!" Chopper smiled cutely. "Maybe he'll feel the same and then you'll both be happy! I wish I could be that idealistic...". Zoro sighed. "I'm gonna go to bed." For some reason, hearing the best case scenario only made him think of the worst one even more. His situation was beginning to depress him. "Are you sure you don't want to stay?" Chopper asked. "Or, if you still want to, you can talk to me tomorrow...". Zoro smiled weakly at Chopper who was trying his best to be helpful. He really appreciated how considerate the reindeer was. "Thanks." Maybe animals can be a good source for advice. Zoro left Chopper and made his way downstairs to where the men all slept. He couldn't tell if he felt better or worse than before. Only one thought was on his mind as he climbed into his hammock. This sucks... "Chapter Five" "Gah...". I'm so sleepy! I took me forever to write this chapter! I kept starting to work on it late at night, and then getting too tired to finish. I usually just go to chapter 4 all on once. Anyway, I used my best to make this a little longer than usual. I apologize to SanjiZoro fans, but I'm a strong believer in the hatred between them. Not that I don't believe there's love deep within the hate. I just don't think I love of that sort. Anyway, what I'm trying to say is: Don't yell at me. I love their fate. It's so cute! ~Reviews~ Lots-o-love! Pleased?



## 5 - Sexual Frustration

And here I am with a fresh chaptah. You want it? Huh? HUH?? Okay, here ya go!! ^\_^

I do not own One Piece. In fact, One Piece owns me.

~~~Chapter Five~~~

“Do you think the Merry can handle so much weight in one place like that..?” Usopp asked Nami quietly as he observed Zoro lifting a pair of impossibly heavy-looking weights.

Nami shrugged her shoulders and sighed. “Well, I guess we'll find out, huh?”

A bead of sweat dripped from Usopp's nose as he continued watching. *I hope Merry can take it...*

“257... 258...” Zoro mumbled the numbers to himself as he lifted the weights above his head. It had occurred to him that morning that it had been a while since he had trained. With all the conflicting emotions he had been experiencing, it had been simple to forget his usually daily exercises. *Dammit...* He cursed to himself. *Now I've even gotten behind on my training because of this!* Images of Mihawk flashed across his mind. *If I keep letting Luffy distract me like this, I'll never become the strongest. But...* “300.”

Zoro carefully let the weights drop to the ground. He just wasn't in the mood to keep it up today. All he ever felt like doing anymore was sleeping. You can only sleep so much before you realize that it really isn't that great in large doses. Sitting down on the deck, Zoro leaned against the railing and closed his eyes. Even if he wouldn't sleep, he could at least lie and day dream...

Not long after he closed his eyes, he felt something nudge his foot. “Zoro? Are you awake?”

Recognizing the voice, Zoro left his eyes closed, taking his time to respond. “If my eyes are closed, that means I'm sleeping.”

“So, you *are* awake!” Luffy exclaimed. “I knew you weren't sleeping.”

Suddenly, hands were on Zoro's face. Zoro's breath caught in his throat. The swordsman's eyelids were peeled open by a grinning Luffy. “You're not sleeping, so open your eyes.”

Zoro swatted Luffy's hands away and blinked a few times while regaining his composure. “What do you want?”

“I dunno...” Luffy hopped up onto the railing, hands between his feet, perched like a monkey. “I'm just bored.”

“...So am I”

``Really?" Luffy's eyes lit up. ``Then do you want to do something fun?"

Zoro raised an eyebrow. ``Like what?"

``Uhhh..."

Zoro scowled. ``Don't ask someone if they want to do something if you don't even know what you want to do!"

Luffy just laughed. ``Sorry..."

Zoro smiled. *Maybe things could work out. If I just ignore these feelings I can eventually forget. Then things can stay like this...*

Luffy blinked and cocked his head to one side. ``Zoro?"

The green-haired pirate playfully grabbed Luffy by the ankle and yanked. The rubber boy fell from his perch, flopping onto the wooden deck head first. Zoro busted up laughing at his friend.

``Ow! Why'd you do that??"

Zoro wiped a tear from his eye. ``Because I was bored."

Suddenly, a mischievous grin took over Luffy's features, and he placed his right hand in the air with one finger pointed up. He pulled on the finger with his other hand. Stretching the digit as far back as he could reach, he let it go, snapping Zoro in the face.

``Hey!!" Zoro brought his hand to a steadily reddening mark on his left cheek.

To this Luffy wailed with laughter. ``I got you back!"

``Oh yeah?" Zoro took one of his swords, still in sheath and smacked his captain upside the head with it as if it were a baseball bat. ``Ha!"

To this, Luffy responded with a quick punch to Zoro's face.

And it continued like that for several minutes as the crew gathered to watch .

``What are those idiots doing...?" Sanji asked, being the last one to appear above deck.

``They appear to be hitting each other and laughing," Robin answered with a smile.

``Are they fighting... Or playing?" Usopp asked no one in particular as he squinted his eyes and tilted his head hoping to better understand what was going on.

``Well, they look like they're having fun..." Chopper answered uncertainly.

``Dammit, my spleen!!''

``...I think...'' The reindeer added.

``What is it that makes men so stupid?'' Nami asked Robin and she sighed and massaged her temple.

``In this case, I'd say sexual frustration,'' Robin replied.

Sanji hovered over Nami. ``Would you like me to kick their asses, Nami-san, Robin-chan??''

``Don't bother,'' Nami answered as she turned to go inside. ``I'm sure they'll wear themselves out eventually.''

.....

It was quite a while before the two stopped beating the daylight out of each other. Three hours worth of quite-a-while, actually. Once they stopped fighting, they collapsed on deck, laughing. Bits of torn clothing and hair were everywhere. On top of the shredded clothes, they were each sporting their own cuts and bruises.

``So... Who won?'' Zoro asked his captain with a grin.

Luffy responded by stretching his arm and slapping Zoro across the face. Zoro grabbed his friend's limb and held on.

``Hey, give me back my arm!''

``No. I think I'll keep it.'' To prove his point, Zoro drew a sword, holding the blade up next to his companion's wrist.

``Nooo~!!'' Luffy yanked at his arm desperately.

Suddenly letting go, Zoro laughed as his captain went flying backwards smacking down on to the deck.

Zoro gestured `thumbs down' at the boy. ``You lose.''

Luffy sat up immediately and pointed at Zoro. ``That's not fair, you cheated!''

Roronoa let himself fall onto the deck and stretched. ``Pirates cheat. You should know that.''

Luffy stuck his tongue out at his first-mate. ``Cheater.''

Placing his arms behind his head, Zoro let out a yawn. He felt so much better now. It felt like he had lifted some sort of weight from his shoulders. The feelings were still there, but he felt like he could deal with them now. If he could just keep his emotions in check, things could be just as good as before. Things could even be better. Zoro turned his head and saw Luffy making his way closer. He was

crawling on his hands and knees, the wooden planks of the deck rubbing against his rubbery knees, creating a squeaking sound. Zoro let out a chuckle upon seeing this.

“What's so funny?” Luffy asked as he plopped down on his belly in front of his friend.

“Your knees.”

“Huh?”

“They squeak.”

“Oh...” Luffy folded his arms to support his head with his hands.

Zoro reached out and pinched Luffy's cheek, pulling a bit and letting go. “You're made of strange stuff, Luffy.”

“You don't like it?” Luffy asked, looking into Zoro's eyes.

Zoro was caught off guard by his captain's expression. He seemed so concerned over whether the swordsman approved. “No, I mean I... Like it.” He yanked Luffy's ear. “Don't look at me like that.”

The boy's face went back to normal. “Haha, sorry.” The captain yawned loudly.

“Go to bed.”

“I'm not tired.”

“You just yawned.”

“So did you!” Luffy pointed out.

“I'm gonna go to bed in a minute.”

“I feel like sleeping out here tonight.” Luffy said stubbornly.

Before Zoro could respond, a second yawn escaped his mouth.

“Ha! Now you yawned twi-” The contagious yawn caught Luffy mid-sentence.

They both laughed.

“Do you want to sleep out here with me?” The captain offered.

“You're not sleeping out here.”

“Yes, I am!” Luffy wore a pouty expression. “C'mon Zoro, sleep out here with me!”

Zoro sighed and stood up.

``Where are you going?"

The swordsman began walking to the entrance to the inner rooms of the ship. ``I'm gonna get my blanket..."

``Yay!" Luffy popped up and practically skipped after Zoro. ``I'll go get mine too!"

~~~Chapter End~~~

Nee~!! Oh the possibilities of the next chapter!! I can't wait! I wish that voice in my head would stop saying sleepsleepsleeps over and over. I wanna write more! Oh well, hopefully I'll still be this motivated when I wake up tomorrow. At least I have the day off. ^^

The reason I'm so inspired is because I've been watching One Piece all day since I got home from work. I just got a new box set in the mail! \*Dances\*

I have candy for pretty reviewers!! \*Waves a bag of candy\*

## 6 - Zoros Weakness

I'm writing again so soon! Oh the yayness! I'm `sploding with ideas right now. `Kay, here ya go! ^^

The One Piece is not mine.

-o-Chapter Six-o-

It was around two a.m. when the two pirates tiptoed below deck to where the men of the ship slept. Luffy had to keep his hand over his mouth to prevent his quiet giggles from escaping. The young captain was ecstatic. *Zoro's gonna sleep with me tonight! He's being nice again! This is going to be fun!* Without realizing, Luffy let out a small chuckle. Zoro turned to him and motioned for him to keep it down. ``S-" Luffy had to catch himself before he apologized out loud.

Everyone was already asleep in their beds. Well, asleep in their hammocks and sofas. The only one missing was Usopp. It was currently his turn to keep watch over the ship. The boys each grabbed a blanket and pillow and crept out from the room.

As the pair returned above deck, Luffy let out an odd sound that could only be a squeal of delight. ``This is going to be fun!"

Zoro just gave his friend an odd look. He didn't understand what would be so fun about sleeping up here. He had accidentally fallen asleep and stayed the night above deck before. You wake up very wet and very cold. ``Why is this going to be fun?"

Luffy turned to his companion. ``Because you're sleeping here too! We can stay up all night!"

``What? Why all night? I like sleeping."

``You always sleep."

``So?"

``So, you should stay up and keep me company! You never want to hang out with me anymore, Zoro!"

Zoro felt a pang of guilt hearing this. ``I... Sorry, I've just been distracted."

``But, you aren't distracted now, right?" Luffy asked hopefully.

*You're the one who's being so distracting!!* ``No."

``Then you should stay up with me!" Luffy grinned.

``..."

``...What?"

``Nothing."

Luffy smiled uncertainly. ``You're weird, Zoro."

``I'm not as weird as you are."

``What? I'm normal!"

Zoro couldn't help but laugh at this statement. The Straw hat joined him immediately.

``Okay, so maybe we're both freaks," Zoro offered.

``Yeah, that's okay. I like that you're weird."

Zoro smiled. ``I like your weirdness too."

``Nee," Luffy grinned, making another one of his strange noises.

The swordsman sat down against a wall, bringing his blanket over his lap. Luffy quickly followed, seating himself next to his friend. For a moment the two just sat quietly, enjoying each other's presence.

``Zoro... I'm bored," Luffy whined, the moment being over.

``I told you sleeping out here wouldn't be any fun."

``Think of something fun for us to do!"

Zoro's mind was instantly flooded with perverse suggestions. He nearly choked on his own tongue.

``...Are you okay?"

``Y-yeah..."

``Anyway, think of something!"

``You think! I just want to sleep."

``You suck!"

``If you're so bored, think of something on your own."

Luffy replied by blowing a raspberry.

And then there was a second stretch of silence. Zoro was beginning to wonder whether this had been a

good idea. Being this close to the object of his newly discovered feelings was difficult even for a short time. Zoro had enjoyed their little `fight' earlier, but that was different. How was he going to spend the entire night with Luffy? He couldn't handle another onslaught of sexual images of his captain. Not again... Not...

``Dammit!" Zoro swore angrily. He had accidentally triggered the images by thinking about not thinking about them. ((Yeah...))

``What??"

``Uhhh..." Zoro held up his arm. ``A bug bit me?"

Luffy laughed. ``And you yelled like that from a bug bite!?"

Zoro decided not to even try to defend himself. That was the lamest excuse he had ever come up with...

``Lemme see," Luffy said as he grabbed his first mate's arm and examined it. ``There's not even a mark! When did you turn into such a wuss, Zoro?"

``Shutup," Zoro growled as he yanked his arm away.

``..."

``..."

``Zoro?"

``What..?"

Did you think you think of anything for us to do yet?"

Zoro turned to his companion. ``Weren't you supposed to be the one thinking about it?"

``Huh...? Oh, yeah!"

``I'll assume that means you didn't think of anything either, right?"

Luffy nodded. ``Right."

``..."

``..."

``Luffy?"

``What?"



``Why are we sleeping out here again?"

``..."

``..."

``I don't know."

Zoro sighed and hung his head in mental exhaustion. Luffy had a way of doing that to people.

Luffy studied his friend. It was clear that unless Luffy could find a better reason to stay, Zoro would end up going downstairs to bed. He just couldn't accept that. Even if he had been playing it off like he didn't really notice, Zoro had been deliberately avoiding him. Luffy couldn't accept the fact that his best friend didn't want to be around him, so he had been planning a way to get him alone so they could hang out like they had before. Zoro was noticeably uncomfortable, and all the Straw hat wanted to do was get Zoro to relax and be happy. *Maybe the reason he's unhappy is me...*

``Zoro...?" Luffy mumbled in a voice barely audible.

``...What is it, Luffy?" His captain's tone made him uneasy.

With his face turned downward, Luffy's eyes were hidden behind his bangs. ``Do you hate me?"

``What??" Zoro was shocked. How could Luffy think that? Immediately, he knew the answer. Zoro hadn't been very kind to Luffy over the past weeks. He wanted to tell his friend that he felt exactly the opposite, but he couldn't bring himself to admit it.

``Luffy..." Zoro reached and ruffled his fingers through the boy's hair. ``I could never hate you, stupid."

Luffy brought his eyes to meet Zoro's and smiled. Zoro thought he detected a hint of embarrassment before Luffy blinked it away.

``Don't call me stupid... Stupid!" Luffy said with mock-anger.

``Okay."

Luffy gave his friend an odd look at hearing him agree so easily. The swordsman just stretched his arms and back, settling himself against the wall. Seeing him getting comfortable reminded Luffy of how sleepy he was. Before he could stop himself, he let out a great big yawn.

``Ha. That makes three for you and two for me." Zoro grinned triumphantly.

``Just wait until you yawn again..." Luffy warned.

Zoro chuckled and closed his eyes. He was hoping that if he stayed quiet for long enough, Luffy would eventually fall asleep. When he heard Luffy's blankets being shuffled around, he wasn't sure if his captain was getting ready to sleep or to get up and run around. He felt something resting on his leg and

opened his eyes. Luffy was snuggled up under his blanket, using Zoro's leg as a pillow. He was hugging his actual pillow to his chest.

The boy beamed up at Zoro. ``You don't mind, right?"

Zoro faked an irritated face. ``Do whatever you want."

Chills went down the swordsman's spine as Luffy wriggled to make himself comfortable. *Nakedbonclaynakedbonclaynakenbonclay*. Zoro desperately thought of the least attractive image he could imagine, hoping to undo what what happening `downstairs'.

``There, I'm comfy now."

``I'm happy for you," Zoro replied sarcastically. ``Now go to sleep."

``I'm still not sleepy enough..." Luffy turned his body to face Zoro. ``Tell me a story!"

Zoro scowled. ``Are you kidding? If you want a story, ask Usopp."

``You're no fun!" Luffy poked Zoro in the side.

``Gah!" Zoro twitched. ``Stop that."

Seeing what he had done, Luffy giggled and poked a second time.

Again, the poked resulted in Zoro twitching ever so slightly. ``I said stop it!"

``You're ticklish!" Luffy cackled as he continued poking.

``S-stop it, Luffy!" Zoro tried to defend his side, but with Luffy's rubbery body, he was able to get around his attempts to block the pokes.

Zoro couldn't take it. He didn't know if he was angry, humiliated, or aroused. Either way, he didn't want to have to deal with any of those emotions at the moment.

``L-luffy! Cut it ou- out!!!"

Luffy continued to poke, laughing like a maniac all the while. ``I found your weakness!"

``I'm gonna kill you!!!"

``Try it! You can't beat me if I know your weakness!" Luffy stuck his tongue out triumphantly.

``Shut u-up! That's not m-my weakness!"

``Oh?" Luffy's eyes lit up. ``Is there another one?" Luffy began poking and jabbing Zoro in various places on his body. A few places that Zoro dare not name.

``Gah!! Cut it out!"

A door opened, causing the two young men to stop. Nami stood in the doorway glaring at them in her nightie.

``Do you two know what time it is??"

The boys exchanged glances then answered that they did not.

``It's four-thirty in the morning, you idiots! Keep it down or go to sleep!!"

Nami turned and slammed the door. Sanji's voice squealing `Nami-swan' could be faintly heard from inside.

``..."

``..."

The pirates were silent for a moment. They were still frozen in the position they had been when Nami had opened the door. Zoro was on his back with Luffy on top of him. Roronoa was grasping one of the boys hands at the wrist. The other was in mid-poke. The swordsman's face was beat-red, but no words would escape from his lips. Even Luffy's cheeks were tinted with pink as he stared blankly at his friend. For a moment, the only sound came from the waves crashing against the Going Merry.

The two finally snapped out of it and separated themselves, still staying silent. They sat again at the wall, bringing their blankets up into their laps, facing the same direction.

``..."

``..."

Luffy turned his gaze to Zoro, keeping his face still turned toward the ocean. He noticed that Zoro was doing the same. They both knew the other was looking, and yet neither fully turned his head. Suddenly, Luffy reached out and poked Zoro a single time in the side. This time the swordsman didn't twitch.

Zoro's eyebrows knit together as he tried to hold back laughter. Luffy too was trying to keep a giggle from leaving his lips. And then they both broke down and let their laughter escape. They tried their best to keep the laughter quiet, but whenever their eyes met, they laughed even harder.

When they finally stopped, the sky was lightening ever so slightly. Zoro sighed. The sun would be up soon and he hadn't gotten a wink of sleep. He looked at Luffy who was still giggling. *Oh well...*

Stretching for a final time, a yawn escaped Zoro's lips.

Luffy settled his head on his friend's lap once more and smiled. ``That's three yawns each. Now we're even."

“Yeah, I guess we are.”

-o-Chapter End-o-

Warm fuzzies? Yes? No?

This chapter was a little difficult, but I hope it turned out well. Review if you love me! I still have candy!

## 7 - Dont Trust A Redhead

Okay... I was inspired last night, but sadly I needed to sleep, so I choose bed over computer. The ideas aren't flowing as well as yesterday, but at least I'm writing, right? Well, here I go. ^^;

-o-Chapter Seven-o-

Nami woke up in an irritable mood. She hadn't gotten a whole lot of sleep the night before thanks to a pair of rather loud pirates. She could hear the others moving around the Merry, but didn't feel like joining them just yet. It was one of those mornings where you know right from the start, that you're going to have a bad day. The navigator wanted to avoid beginning the day for as long as she possibly could.

``Nami-san~!!" Came Sanji's voice from the other side of her door, followed by three knocks. ``May I come in?"

``..." She was still in her pajamas. Since she had decided to sleep in her new pretty nightie the night before, she wasn't sure if she wanted Sanji to see her in it. *But then again, a compliment or three never hurt...* ``Come in, Sanji-kun."

The moment the door was cracked, Sanji instantly noticed her nightie and acted accordingly.

``Nami-swan~!!" The Love-Cook's nostrils flared as he quickly committed the way she looked to memory before averting his eyes. ``You look so charming in your nightgown, Nami-san!"

Nami smiled. ``Thank you, Sanji-kun. What is it you came here for?"

Sanji's eyes lit up when he heard Nami's `thank you'. ``You're welcome, Nami-san! I came to tell you that I finished making your breakfast. I made yours with extra love!"

``Thank you for telling me, Sanji-kun. I'll eat after I get dressed."

``I'll keep it warm for you, Nami-san!" Sanji sang as he left Nami alone to change.

Nami let out a sigh as the cook closed her door. *I guess his compliments wont be enough today...*

The redhead got up and dressed herself as slowly as she could manage. She didn't even feel like trying to look nice today. *There's no real point in it. The only one who ever appreciates it is Sanji...* Putting on a pair of blue jeans and a black spaghetti strap top, Nami opened her bedroom door.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

``What are you doing, Usopp?" Chopper asked as he tried to figure out just what he had asked.

``Shhh!!" Was the only answer the young sniper would give.

Usopp had been entertaining himself with his still sleeping nakama all morning long. First, he had decorated Zoro and Luffy with a big black marker. The pair was covered in squiggles and gibberish on every inch of exposed skin. After that, since Usopp decided he wouldn't get another chance like this for a while, he arranged their bodies in to rather... uncomfortable positions. He was currently tying Luffy's hair up in rubber bands all over his head while giggling like a school girl.

Chopper just watched from a safe distance. ``I don't think they'll be very happy with you when they wake up..."

The long nose just continued what he was doing. If anything, he just giggled louder.

``Breakfast is ready!" Sanji shouted from the kitchen.

Luffy's eyes blinked open at the word `breakfast'. He was about to go tearing into the kitchen when he realized he was wrapped around his first mate. Literally. His torso was wrapped around Zoro's chest like a sash. His stomach was facing Zoro with his right leg pulled around the back of the man's neck then wound around his right arm. Luffy's left leg was wrapped around his first mate's other arm. The upper part of Luffy's body was wrapped mostly around Zoro's right leg with his right arm wrapped around the other leg. Since Luffy's hands were also tied together Zoro's legs were bound to each other. Needless to say, Usopp was nowhere to be found.

``Uhh... Zoro?" Luffy tried moving, but he wasn't sure what was where. ``Zoro??"

The swordsman slept soundly. So soundly, it was a little disturbing.

``Zoro!!" Luffy bit down on the closest piece of swordsman he could find. ``Ouch~!!" It happened that he bit his own arm which was definitely not part of Zoro.

``Gah!!" Zoro exclaimed as Luffy bit a second time. ``What the-" It took a moment for him to process where he was and what he was before he could speak again. ``What the *hell??*"

``I'm stuck..." Zoro heard Luffy's voice whine from somewhere near his foot.

Struggling to sit himself up, Zoro was able to get an idea of why he couldn't move properly. ``Hold on, Luffy..." He tried bending his arms. ``Did you feel that? Try to unwind your arms..."

``What have you two been up to?" Asked an amused voice. ``You'll miss breakfast if you keep fooling around like that."

Luffy didn't even hear, being so preoccupied with trying to unravel himself from his friend.

``What do you want?" Zoro scowled. If things weren't already bad enough, he didn't need Nico Robin making it worse by laughing at them.

``Do you two need a hand?"

``We can figure it out on our-" Zoro was cut short when Luffy managed to unwind one arm, smacking his friend in the face in the process. ``Gah! Be careful!!"

``Sorry!" Luffy quickly apologized with a grin that made him seem a little less than believable.

Robin chuckled as she watched the pair slowly untangle. She literally lent a hand or six a few times, but for the most part she just watched. Why pass up free entertainment, right?

``Yay, I'm free!!" Luffy stretched happily.

``..." Zoro straightened himself out and scowled. ``Where's Usopp? This is something he would do..."

``You mean you two didn't get that way voluntarily?" Robin asked with a knowing smile.

Glaring at the woman, Zoro stomped away in search of the long nose.

``Aren't you going to eat?" Robin asked, turning to Luffy.

``Oh yeah!!" And the boy was in the kitchen in seconds.

-o-o-o-o-o-o-

After beating the shmidt out of Usopp, Zoro was finally able to go to the kitchen to eat. He still felt like he was half-asleep, and even though he felt this was a good reason to be cranky, he couldn't keep the corners of his mouth from turning up. When he entered the kitchen, Luffy was stuffing his face gleefully. Seeing this made it difficult to hide his smile.

``Good morning, Zoro," Chopper greeted with a hoofed wave.

``Morning," He replied.

It seemed Chopper had already finished breakfast. Actually, the only one still eating (Or even in the kitchen, aside from Sanji and the previously mentioned) was Luffy. It was clear that the straw hat had already finished off most of the food. Zoro quickly grabbed a plate and started eating before everything was gone. One doesn't take their time getting to a meal on the Going Merry. The remaining food was gone in a few minutes.

``You two are disgusting." Sanji spat as he was taking all the dishes to the sink. ``Luffy, you have to help clean up today, remember?"

``Uhhh..." The boy still had a bone in his mouth as his eyes darted to the door. It was obvious that the pirate was planning on making a break for it.

``If you try to run, you wont get any lunch."

``What??" Luffy turned to Zoro with big round eyes, hoping his friend would somehow get him out of cleaning.

Zoro just shrugged his shoulders apologetically.

“...Fine. I guess I'll help...” Luffy slowly got up and started to help Sanji put things away.

Roronoa finally allowed his mouth to do as it pleased, letting a grin show. He almost felt bad for not trying to help Luffy escape. The boy could be so cute sometimes. Seeing where his line of thoughts were going, Zoro decided to leave the kitchen. He figured if he was going to smile like an idiot, he shouldn't do it where everyone could see him. Though why he was ashamed of smiling, not even he was certain of.

The swordsman couldn't keep his thoughts away from his captain as he wandered about the ship. The more he tried not to think of the charmingly strange boy the harder he failed at it. After so long, he gave up entirely and allowed himself to daydream like a love-sick school girl. (*If only Luffy would ask me to the dance... \*sigh\* ^^; Sorry, I had to.*)

Once he grew tired of meandering around the Going Merry, Zoro settled himself against a railing on the deck. There were a few clouds in the sky. It looked like it might rain later, but Zoro wasn't worried about it. *If it was anything big, Nami would notice.*

“Zoro?” Came Nami's voice almost as if on cue.

Roronoa turned his gaze away from the sky. He silently cursed himself for not noticing her sooner.

“What do you want?”

“I need to talk to you about something,” Her expression was unreadable as she turned, continuing to speak as she began to walk. “Follow me.”

“And who are you to order me around?”

“Zoro...” She didn't turn, but somehow her tone made him want to hear what she had to say, so he grudgingly followed her to her room.

“Close the door, please.”

Zoro did as she said and turned to face the navigator. “So, what is it?”

It had always been difficult for Zoro to understand Nami. She was a woman he'd usually rather not deal with. Nami could pick your pocket with a smile and then make you believe it was her money to begin with. She was a dangerous woman. He tried to figure out what she was thinking from her face, but she was good at wearing a mask. On top of that, Zoro had never been good at that sort of thing to begin with...

“I want to know...” The redhead paused. “How do you feel about Luffy?”

“What??” *What??* Zoro's brain exploded on the spot.

“I knew it!”



``Wh- Knew what???"

``You're in love with Luffy, aren't you?" She smiled like a witch as she asked Zoro the one thing he couldn't deny.

``N-No I'm not!" Well, he could still try...

``It's written all over your face. You can deny it all you want, but I've known for a while..."

``How could you have known for a while if I didn't know until a couple of days ago?"

``So, it *is* true!"

Zoro mentally slapped himself.

``And I've known you were in love with him since well before we left Alabasta," She added a-matter-of-factly.

All the swordsman could manage was to glare. *How could she have known? ...Could she be right about how long I've felt this way?*

``Well, is that why you wanted to talk to me? So you could rub it in my face?"

``No, actually," Nami sat down on her bed and looked Zoro directly in the eyes. ``I wanted to tell you that I'm not going to let you have him."

-o-Chapter End-o-

Ha, ha, HA! Aren't I evil? Don't you want to hurt me? Mwahahahahahaha~!! So what do you think about this? I've decided to try something new. A love triangle! Whee! I was going to write more, but I also thought it might be fun to try something cliffhanger-ie. XP You can kill me if you really want, but I don't think that will help anything.

I have cheese and crackers for those who review! ^^

Oh, and I know this chapter was painfully short, but I plan to write some more as soon as I post this. The next chapter should be finished soon, so don't worry.

## 8 - Competition and a Persuasive Reindeer

Gah!! I'm so sorry! I swear, I really did think I would have this chapter finished so much sooner! I even started writing this chapter right after the last one, but I had to take a break for that sleep thing, and I've been supah busy ever since.

Thanks so much to all of you beautiful people who have reviewed! I probably would have left this chapter unfinished much longer if I wasn't regularly reminded to write in reviews. Actually, I'm writing right now only because I just read a nice review from Digital Dreamer, heh. ^; Thanks to my lovelies. And the time for reading is now!

I dun be ownin' One Piece.

-o-Chapter Eight-o-

The swordsman stared blankly at Nami. *Did she say what I think she said??*

Nami didn't say a word. She seemed as though she was waiting for Zoro's reaction to her sudden challenge.

"What do you mean, you wont let me have him?"

"I mean exactly what you think I mean," Her expression dared him to object. "I'm in love with Luffy as well, and I'm not going to lose to you, Zoro."

The pair sat in silence. *She's... In love with Luffy? Zoro's head felt like it was going to explode. How could she be in love with Luffy? Can she even feel that emotion??*

“Wait... What do you mean, `lose'? This isn't some stupid competition,” Zoro stared obstinately at the navigator. “And how I feel about Luffy has nothing to do with you.”

Nami stood up. “Well, I expected you to say something like that, and you're right; this isn't a competition, but in the end at least one of us will lose.”

“Why are you telling me all of this? What makes you think I even want to be with Luffy?”

“Oh, stop your idiotic macho act, Zoro! I can see it in your eyes every time you look at him. You're such a child, I swear.” The navigator shook her head.

“And all this your doing is so adult? You women are such hypocrites.”

“Yeah, you would say that wouldn't you...” Nami narrowed her eyes. “Now that you're gay.”

“Hey!! Since when was I...?” He couldn't even say the word.

Grinning evilly, Nami chanted `okama' a few times before the swordsman held his katana against her throat.

“Well, you'll have to come to terms with that if you're going to love a man,” Nami said eyeing the blade as he sheathed it.

“Watch your mouth, woman,” He warned, making certain the blade caught the light as he put it away.

Nami shrugged her shoulders. "Well, either way..."

"Either way, what?"

"Now that you know how I feel about Luffy, I can't let you leave this room without promising that you won't breathe a word of this to anyone. *Especially* Luffy."

"Why would I tell anyone? Why did you even tell me?? How does telling me this help you? I know you, Nami. You don't do anything that won't help you in some way..."

Nami narrowed her eyes at the swordsman. "If I told you that, what would be the point?"

Zoro growled and made his way to the door. "Well, if you have nothing left to say, there's no reason for me to hang around."

"Do what you want," Nami replied then grinned devilishly. "Just keep in mind that I'm not going to go easy on you just because you're a man..."

Zoro scowled as he left the woman's company. His day had gone from being fairly pleasant to disgustingly bad in only a handful of minutes. Normally, he would have been better prepared. After all, being a pirate, your day tends to go sour fairly often. What bothered him was how his day had been ruined. This whole ordeal was beginning to remind him of a crappy romance comic he had flipped through years ago. He had chucked that comic off a bridge into a river after reading thirteen pages.

"Zoro!" Chopper ran up to greet the swordsman. "I was looking for you."

"What do you want?" He asked, his tone a little harsher than he had intended.

“Uhh...” Chopper slowed his pace, stopping several feet away from his crew mate. “Am I bothering you?”

“No, what is it?”

“Well...” Chopper shuffled his feet, suddenly not so certain he should disturb Roronoa. “I had an idea, and I thought I would tell you... But I can tell you later.”

Zoro sighed. “No, what is it?”

“Well, I was thinking...” Chopper stood on his tiptoes and whispered. “About you and Luffy... I have an idea.”

“What?” Zoro quickly looked around to make sure no one was around then grabbed Chopper and lifted him under his arm. “Hold on a second... Lets not talk about this here.”

“Eh??”

The swordsman knew if he was going to discuss this with Chopper it would have to be in someplace private. So naturally, he took the tiny reindeer to the only place he knew: The storage room. They sat facing each other on boxes of what seemed to be food.

“Uhh... Zoro?”

“Yeah?”

“Why did we have to come on here? There are other places we could-”

“I always come here to be alone. There's nothing wrong with this room.”

The reindeer examined the cobwebs in the corners of the room warily. He might have been an animal, but he still disliked spiders.

“So, what did you want to tell me?” Zoro asked impatiently.

“Well... This si probably going to sound weird, but...”

“But, what?” The swordsman raised an eyebrow questioningly.

“I thought that maybe you should just tell Luffy how you feel instead of trying to ignore what your heart wants.”

“How could I possibly tell Luffy that?? He'd probably think I was insane. He would get all creeped out, and then we'd never be friends ever again.”

“But-”

“These feelings are just an inconvenience. If I tell Luffy, our friendship would be ruined...” Zoro looked unusually pained. “I'd rather just deal with this silently than ruin what Luffy and I have.”

Choppers eyes were starting to water up. “Zoro...” The reindeer burst into tears. “That's just too horrible!!”

Roronoa panicked. If there was one thing that he didn't know how to deal with, it was tears. "Uhh, stop that! There's nothing horrible about it!"

"Yes, th-sniff-there is! Why should you have to keep it a secret and suffer?" Chopper looked up at Zoro with his big, tear-filled eyes. "Don't you want Luffy to love you too?"

"..." Zoro couldn't answer. The thought of Luffy actually returning his feelings was too much for him to ever hope for. "That wont ever happen..."

"That's not true! You wont ever know if you don't tell him."

"But, I can't just tell him something like that! He's Luffy. He probably wouldn't even know what I was talking about. You know how he is... I'd have to spell it all out for him before he even understood enough to be disgusted."

"But, he wouldn't be disgusted. What makes you so sure he'll turn you down?"

"What makes you so sure he wont?"

"Well..." The little doctor thought for a moment. "Even though he doesn't seem like it all the time, Luffy's a very kindhearted person. I don't think Luffy cares about things like whether you're a boy or a girl..."

"..."

"I think if you tell him, he'll understand. Even if he doesn't return your feelings, Luffy would never be disgusted by you, Zoro. I know you two would still be friends."

Zoro stared at his feet as he listened to his friend. Maybe Chopper was right. He knew for a fact that what the reindeer had said was true. Luffy was too good of a person to make him feel bad about the way he felt. But still... If he told Luffy, there would be a change, whether it was good or bad.

On top of all that, there was now Nami. He knew there was no way he could ever accept her being with Luffy. Not being with Luffy himself was one thing, but seeing him with someone else was not something he could allow.

"...Zoro?"

"Maybe you're right."

Chopper's eyes lit up. "Does that mean you'll tell him?"

"I don't really have a choice, do I? If I tell him, there's a chance I'll lose my best friend. If I don't tell him, I'll be miserable for the rest of my life, while possibly losing him to someone else. Either way seems like a bad idea, but at least if I tell him I can get all of this over and done with."

"Why are you making it sound so hopeless? You forgot to mention the possible outcome of you and Luffy living happily ever after."

"There's no such thing as 'happily ever after'."

Chopper stuck his tongue out. "You're so pessimistic..."

-o-Chapter End-o-



Yeah, it's short, but at least this should feed you guys for a little while. This was just the kind of chapter that isn't very fun to write. It's mostly all that important stuff you need to get through so you can move on to the good stuff. Hopefully the next chapter will be filled with goodness.

Does anyone think I made Chopper too... I don't know, lovey? It just seemed to me like I made him a little too determined to get Zoro and Luffy together... But then again, maybe Chopper's a love-freak deep down. ^^;

Anyway, if I get oodles of reviews, it'll make me feel more guilty about not writing. So guilt trip me with love and you'll get a new chapter sooner. I wuv you all so much, my pretty reviewers!

## 9 - Damn Women and Their Games

Helololo, my lovelies! Did you miss me terribly?

I almost feel bad for writing right now. For the past three days I've been obsessively reading fanfics and being a terrible `pooter nazi to my lovely roommate, Leah. I finally finished (ran out of chapters of ;\_;) the fic I was reading so I thought to myself `Maybe I'll see if Leah wants a turn?' When I went to her room, the door was closed and lights seemed to be off, so then I thought `Maybe I'll just send her a text.' So I looked for my cell phone, but it was nowhere to be found and I was too lazy to log out of AOL so I could call it on the house phone, so I continued looking. When I finally decided to try calling myself, I heard the familiar sound of incoming mail. So *then* I thought to myself `Maybe I'll just check my mail real quick first.' So I checked it, and low and behold, it was a review. Then *another* thought crossed my mind. `Maybe I should just write for a little while. I don't have to *finish* the chapter, just start it. Yeah...' And we all know what those kind of thoughts lead to... ^;

The funny thing is that the review was once again from DigitalDreamer. That girl really has good timing, no?

Is it sad that I only sometimes write a disclaimer? It's not my fault that I forget that not everyone knows I don't own One Piece. After all, someone could crawl out from beneath a rock, find a computer and mistake me for the one who does. Okay, or maybe not. \*Sobs\*

-o-Chapter Nine-o-

*Maybe this wasn't such a good idea after all...*

Zoro sat cross-legged on the deck of the Going Merry. He was resting his back against the ship's railing as he studied the object of his affection. Luffy was laughing like an idiot, listening to another one of Usopp's nonsensical tales. Zoro was purposely tuning out what the long nose was saying. He judged from the lude gestures that Usopp was making as he rambled his story, that he probably didn't want to know. The dark-haired captain seemed to be enjoying himself enough though, occasionally asking a question or two in-between his own bouts of hysterical laughter. *What's so funny about Usopp, anyway?* The swordsman scowled. If Zoro had been a less pridefull man, he might have admitted that he was a touch jealous of all the attention that was not being directed towards him. In reality, however, Zoro was a very, very pridefull man.

Luffy's eyes suddenly turned to Zoro. The boy smiled, seeing his first mate watching him. Zoro nearly jumped out of his skin, then immediately looked away. When he looked back a moment later, he was surprised to see that Luffy's attention was still on him. Zoro managed a weak smile, which satisfied the boy who smiled wider in return then went back to listening to Usopp.

*My god, I'm pathetic...*

The green-haired man stood up and walked over to his friends.

``So, what bullshoot are you feeding him today?" He directed at Usopp.

``Hey, it's not bullshoot!" The long nose protested. ``I really did defeat Crapzilla!!"

``Crap... zilla?" Zoro stared at the younger man. ``Are you retarded?"

To this statement, Luffy busted up laughing.

``What?? Of course I'm not retarded! Crapzilla was the terror of South Blue!" Usopp crossed his arms proudly. ``If only you knew how many lives I saved that day..."

``Right, and I'm Thumbelina."

``Who??" Usopp and Luffy asked together.

The young man sighed deeply. ``Never mind..."

The threesome turned their heads in unison as a voice called from inside the ship.

``Usopp! Could you come here for a second, please?"

Zoro immediately recognized Chopper's voice. He had more than just a hunch that the pint-sized doctor had a real reason for calling Usopp. *Damn meddling reindeer...*

The liar turned to Luffy. ``I'll finish telling you the tale of my heroic deeds later, okay?"

Luffy nodded and grinned.

Zoro watched Usopp run feelings to Luffy while he was still on the Merry. *There are way too many ways things could go wrong with all those seedy pirates around...* (As if he wasn't one of them.) Zoro glared at all the possible hiding places surrounding them as if the entire crew was in hiding, waiting for him to say something embarrassingly unmanly. The image of them all jumping out and shouting `surprise', however unlikely, put the quite paranoid Zoro on edge.

``Zoro?"

The pirate stopped eyeing a barrel. ``What?"

``What are you looking at?" Luffy began to stare at the barrel as well.

``Uhhh... I thought I saw a rat."

``Oh?" Luffy got that `I-wonder-if-I-can-eat-that' look in his eye.

``Believe me Luffy, you don't want to eat a rat."

“Huh?” Luffy turned to his friend in amazement. “Zoro, you just read my mind!!!”

Roronoa chuckled. “No, I just know you too well.”

“You do.” Laughing sheepishly, Luffy adjusted his hat. “Probably better than everyone else.”

The statement caught Zoro off-guard. He tried to dismiss the comment as just another one of the strange things Luffy tended to say, but... *It almost seemed like he really meant it.*

Zoro suddenly realized that he hadn't yet responded. “Heh, yeah... Maybe.” The swordsman mentally smacked himself. *How lame can I possibly get?? Maybe I'm the one who's retarded!*

For a split second, Luffy wore a strange expression that Zoro could have sworn was disappointment. But, before he could blink, Luffy was wearing his usual cheerful grin again.

“I'm hungry... I'm gonna go see if Sanji's done with lunch yet,” The boy smiled and headed toward the kitchen.

Zoro didn't respond. He had a feeling deep down that he had (once again) said something really stupid.

“Wow, that was really pathetic.”

Zoro turned and glared at the source of the voice. Nami came down from her tangerine grove with a smug look on her face.

“Now you're eavesdropping?” Zoro

“Actually, it was just a coincidence I happened to see you two. I'm just not dumb enough to miss a chance to survey my opponent.”

A lesser ma-er-woman would have cried like a little girl if they had received the death glare Zoro was giving the navigator. Fortunately (Or possibly unfortunately) for Nami, she had spent a great deal of time with people who could snap her spine like a twig. Even the fact that Zoro could most likely have taken all those men and snapped their collective mass of spine like a *bundle* of twigs didn't change the look of confidence the young woman wore.

That look pissed Zoro off more than anything she could have said. She was wearing a look that said ‘I've already won’. Zoro didn't like that look one bit.

“What the hell are you up to?”

“Didn't I already explain to you about how telling you these things is silly?”

“Well, you already told me one thing.”

“Yes. I did, didn't I?”

The swordsman growled. *Now she's just playing with me.*

Nami laughed. "Is that the only way you can respond? Growling like an animal won't get you anywhere, you know."

Zoro took the insult with unusual calmness. "I don't know, Luffy might be in to that sort of thing," He replied with a smirk.

The redhead raised an eyebrow. The sudden change in Zoro's behavior surprised her slightly, but she hardly showed it.

"Maybe..." She trailed off. "But he might also be into someone who's... Well, let's just say built a little smaller. Men like curves, and I don't think the ones you have are exactly what he's looking for."

Zoro carefully hid how much the comment had stung. "I don't know... Luffy didn't seem to mind them when he was on top of me the other night," *Ha. Two can play dirty.*

Zoro grinned inwardly. Though only slightly, the woman's eyes had widened. *Take that, dog!*

Nami looked as though she was going to respond when a voice distracted them from their cat fight. ((AN: Yeah, I said cat fight. They were only a hair pull away from one.))

"Nami-saaaaan~!!" Sanji flew from the kitchen with hearts where his eyes should have been. Zoro could have sworn the young blonde's feet weren't touching the floor as he glided toward the woman he adored. "Lunch is re- Huh?"

Zoro and Nami though now silenced, continued to stare each other down.

The cook narrowed his eyes at Zoro. Without asking a word about what was going on, he asked. "Do you want me to take care of this cactus-head, Nami-san?"

The thief waved her hand dismissively at Sanji. "Don't bother, Sanji-kun," She said smiling sweetly. "Now what were you going to tell me?"

Sanji didn't take his eyes off Zoro, trying to glare an explanation out of him. After a moment, he turned back to his goddess. "I finished preparing your special lunch, Nami~san!" He answered, purring out her name.

Zoro's expression went from homicidal to disgusted. If there was one thing that made him really hate Sanji, it was the way he gushed over women. *The most pathetic thing about him letting her lead him around on a leash is that it's a completely lost cause.*

Nami left with Sanji without saying another word to the swordsman. Zoro preferred it that way. However, he was hungry and was forced to follow the two inside.

*I guess I'll just eat fast.*

-0-0-0-0-0-0-

Zoro stared up at the night sky. He was once again on watch duty. Even though he seemed to be stargazing, his thoughts were far away from astronomy. He couldn't stop thinking about Nami's actions. *Something doesn't seem quite right...* The woman and himself had always had a tendency to argue, and he had always had problems trusting their navigator, but for some reason he found it difficult to believe that Nami would behave that way. As much as he had witnessed (and been a victim of) her scams, he had also seen the young pirate's softer side. He was also well aware that Nami wore a very deceptive poker face at nearly all times. He didn't know what it was that she was planning, but he couldn't help but be a little nervous. There had been times when Luffy had shown what could have been interest in the woman. It was hard to forget about how the captain had behaved at Arlong Park. Even though the woman's actions perplexed him, he knew he couldn't let his guard down.

*No. I wont let her take him.*

The sound of footsteps brought Zoro out of his own mind. It didn't take long for him to recognize the rhythm.

``You're early, cook."

There was no response, but Zoro knew the blonde had heard him. A moment later, the sound of Sanji climbing up the rope ladder.

Neither man spoke as the cook climbed into the crows nest and promptly lit a cigarette.

Letting out a puff of smoke, Sanji turned to Zoro. ``What did you say to Nami-san?"

Zoro had expected to hear something along those lines. ``It's none of your business."

``Nami-san has been acting strangely lately," Sanji turned his gaze toward the sky. ``I know it has something to do with you. At the very least, you know what's troubling her."

``I might have an idea."

``Tell me what's going on, Cabbage-head."

``But I've been sworn to secrecy," Zoro replied innocently. ``You wouldn't want to go against what *'Nami-swan'* wishes, would you?"

Sanji glared at his companion. ``Why the hell would she tell you anything?"

Zoro shrugged irritably. ``If I could figure *that* out, I'd have fewer problems in my life."

Sanji silently examined Roronoa. He wore the expression of a man who thinks his wife is cheating on him. ``Stay away from Nami-san. Whatever you're doing is making her unhappy and I wont tolerate that."

Zoro looked like he had a bad taste in his mouth. ``Are you out of your mind? First of all, she confronted me. Second of all, I wouldn't touch that woman with a ten-foot pole and I get the feeling she feels the same way!"

Sanji only scowled. ``Even if that's true, you're still the one that's causing all of this!"

Zoro almost considered telling the cook what was really troubling Nami. He could almost imagine the shocked expression the Love Cook when he realized his rival for love was his own captain. However, Zoro knew what exposing Nami's secret meant and he didn't want the whole ship to know about his little crush.

``Keep thinking whatever you want," Zoro replied in a bored tone. ``Enjoy your shift."

Zoro hopped over the side of the crows nest after giving an informal wave to the cook.

The blonde stared angrily at his pocket watch then at the space the swordsman had occupied previously. *Bastard still has five minutes left!*

-o-Chapter End-o-

Heh... I guess I lied a little about the goodness. Eep! Don't hurt me! I can't help it. I don't really plan what I write so much as start typing and go with the flow. Whenever I try too hard, things don't work properly. C'mon, no likes playing with a broken toy, right? Believe me, the best kind of rewards are the kind you have to work hard for. And naturally, by `work hard' I mean review.

...

\*Stares\*

Has my smooth talking lulled you into that lovely review-giving mood? Oh, I just *know* it has.

I promise I'll try to get to the good stuff soon, but I can't rush things. If I rush it, it wont be worth it in the end, ya know? Anyway, shower me with praise! Or kisses. Yeah, kisses. I mean the chocolate kind of course. If I collect enough, I can build a castle of kisses and reside there for the rest of my days. Oh yes~!

## 10 - Food Poisoning

Body\*Squeals\* I had so much fun on Saturday! I went to an anime convention at the mall near me. It was so wonderful to be surrounded by my crazy otaku peers!! I dressed as Hinata from Naruto. It made me so incredibly happy when people would shout 'Hinata!' at me and take my picture. I got hugged by a Sasuke and groped by a Sanji. Well, the Sanji was my friend, but she still did it, the little freak. The best part of my whole day was kissing Zoro. Yeah, that's right. I. Kissed. Zoro. My life is now complete. But then again... It wasn't really in the way that might sound. The Zoro was a very adorable five-year-old. I got to kiss him on the cheek and I even got a picture of it!! I'll have to put all the photos online. I got lots of pics of all the pretty cosplayers! I can't believe how much fun I had!\*Remembers what she's supposed to be typing\* Oh yeah... The fic. ^\_^;Well, I promise to try and make this chapter cute and snuggly. Well, at cute and snuggly as Zoro would allow. It all depends on what my fingers decide to type, though. I'll try and persuade.I doesn't own Da Piece..-o-Chapter Ten-o-"Stupid Love Cook!!" Zoro swore for the hundredth time.Earlier that morning, Nami had announced that they would be reaching land that afternoon. It had been decided that they'd stay the night at the island to rest and gather supplies. Not even Zoro could deny that this was a perfect opportunity. If he could get his captain alone, he'd finally be able to put an end to this whole affair. Or at least that's what he continuously told himself. The only problem was that he was feeling quite nauseous. Zoro, who never got sick, immediately blamed it on Sanji's cooking. The fact that no one else who had eaten was feeling sick didn't even begin to change his mind about the matter. After all, it's not like he had butterflies or anything. Zoro never got butterflies.Aside from his case of "food poisoning" Zoro couldn't help but recall the last plan he had that was similar to this one. It was hard to forget the day he spend wandering around town searching for his idiotic friend. He really wasn't too keen on repeating that experience, either. Fortunately for him, Chopper had come up with a plan.<Storage room, the previous evening>"Why don't you just follow him?" Chopper sat on a crate, dangling his feet."I was thinking about that, but Luffy's good at disappearing in a crowd when you don't want him to.""Well, you could always try asking him to eat with you like you planned to last time. This time ask him before we dock, so he can't get away.""I would, but..." Zoro trailed off. He didn't want Nami to see him leaving with Luffy. He couldn't risk the woman following them and ruining everything."But what?"Zoro considered telling Chopper about Nami. He knew he could trust the reindeer not to tell, but that wasn't what kept him quiet. Even if the woman wasn't his favorite person, he still considered her one of his nakama. He wouldn't mind strangling her in her sleep, but he couldn't expose her secret. This was between him and her."I'd rather meet up with him after we leave the ship."Chopper just rolled his eyes. Zoro didn't say so, but the gesture was extremely cute when performed by the tiny doctor. "No one will think anything of you two leaving the ship together, you know.""It's called being cautious," The swordsman replied."Whatever you say..."Zoro shifted uncomfortably. He felt a touch guilty for hiding the truth from Chopper. The little fuzz-ball had dug a spot for himself in Zoro's heart. The swordsman could barely keep from spilling his guts. Tony had a way of doing that to people. Especially Roronoa."Do you have any other ideas?""Well... I do have one.""What is it?""What if I leave with Luffy?" Chopper suggested. "We can pick someplace to 'accidentally' bump into you. Then I'll find an excuse to leave and you'll have Luffy all to yourself!" Zoro didn't appreciate the emphasis on the last three words, but he couldn't say the plan wasn't a good one. "That's perfect, Chopper," Zoro said with a grin.The reindeer beamed at his friend, obviously proud of himself."But where will we meet up? We've never even been to this island before.""Uhhh..." The doctor hadn't considered that part of the plan yet."Well, it doesn't matter," Zoro added quickly, seeing the look on



Chopper's face. "We can figure that out when we get a look at the island." <End of flashback> "I see it! I can see the island!!" Usopp shouted eagerly from the crow's nest. Zoro and Chopper immediately ran to get a good look. At first the island was hardly a pinprick on the horizon, but as they got closer, the shapes of hills and buildings could be seen. Zoro looked for the most noticeable landmark he could spot. He tapped Chopper on the shoulder as soon as he found what he was looking for. "See that tower?" The man asked. "The one with the red roof?" "Yeah, that one. Do you think you could meet me there?" "Okay." Chopper nodded. The two were visibly excited. Their plan was beginning to come together. All they needed to do now was-

"Zoro!" The green-haired pirate nearly yelped when Luffy suddenly appeared behind him, grabbing him by the arm. "Let's explore the island together, okay?" Luffy was practically hopping with enthusiasm. "Uh.. Y-yeah," Zoro's nausea from the 'food poisoning' was beginning to worsen. "Yay! Nami gave me some money. We can get food! Doesn't that sound great?" "Yeah..." The pirate looked a shade pinker than usual. Of course, Zoro would later blame it on his feverish state due to Sanji's cooking. The 'ailing' swordsman wasn't really surprised to see that Chopper was nowhere to be found. The reindeer had picked up the habit of doing that whenever Luffy and Zoro were together for even a brief moment. Zoro looked at his captain who was chanting 'meat' to himself repeatedly. You could have sworn the boy hadn't just eaten his own weight in bacon that very morning. ((AN: \*Gags\*)) "Luffy.." Zoro began. "Huh?" The boy wiped some drool from his lips. "What?" Zoro had the sudden urge to hug his friend. When he realized what he was thinking, he quickly averted his eyes from Luffy. "Nothing. Forget it, Luffy." "Zorroro~!!" Luffy shook his friend's arm and whined. "You better not act weird again today. I want us to have fun!" He ended his statement with a grin. Zoro's face turned bright red. Luffy frowned at Zoro's silence. "Zoro-" Luffy was interrupted when his friend grabbed him around the neck and gave him a noogie. Hell, if I can't hug him, I'll just do the next best thing. Zoro refused to admit how much he was enjoying the close contact with the boy. "Owowowow~!!" The swordsman stopped grinding his knuckle into Luffy's scalp and laughed. "Of course we'll have fun, stupid." Luffy grabbed Zoro's arm - which was still wrapped around his neck - and threw his friend over his shoulder in front of him. "Yeah, we will." Luffy grinned down at his friend who was now lying on the deck, face up. Zoro couldn't help but laugh. Luffy joined in immediately. All thoughts of his former plan were forgotten as Luffy reached out a helping hand. Gladly accepting the gesture, Zoro took it and pulled himself up once more. I don't care if Nami sees us. It won't be too hard to hide away in a big city like that anyway. Zoro turned to look at the island again. Something's going to happen today. I'll make sure of that. Today he would tell Luffy. What would come of his confession, he didn't know, but the possibilities were racing through his mind. "Zoro?" "...Hmm?" "What are you looking at?" Luffy was staring at the island with his head cocked to one side. "Nothing." "Are you looking at that restaurant?" The pirate scowled. Restaurant? How can he make out what any of those buildings are? Zoro wouldn't have doubted that the boyish captain had smelled the restaurant rather than seen it. "No, Luffy. I wasn't looking at any restaurants." "Oh?" Zoro could see that his friend wasn't paying attention now that he had somehow spotted a food establishment. He couldn't help but ruffle his captain's hair as he walked away. "You had better not take off without me." Luffy smiled. "Don't worry, I won't." Roronoa couldn't wipe his own smile from his face as he left the boy to gaze at their destination. Things had turned out a bit unexpected, but he could work with this situation. It had seemed to turn out the way he had planned before. Only this time, it was Luffy who invited him. He could only hope that things would continue to go as smoothly. -o-o-o-o-o-o- It seemed as though they'd sailed an eternity to reach the dock. When they finally made it, Zoro and Luffy had disappeared before the rest of the crew had even finished with preparations. "I swear!" Nami sighed. "I expect this from Luffy, but Zoro too?" "Nami-san~!" Sanji sang. "Don't worry about those idiots. Let's just get started with our shopping, shall we?" "You're right, Sanji-kun," The cook's chest swelled at the words. "I'm better off not thinking about those two. If I'm not careful, I'll start to wrinkle young because of them..." "It would be impossible even for those two to mar

your perfect face, Nami-san," Sanji assured his crush. He could see more than just usual irritation in her eyes and wanted desperately to help. Unfortunately for him, showering her in compliments was all the woman would allow him to do. "Thank you, Sanji-kun," Nami said with a smile, that despite the emptiness Sanji could clearly see, melted the cook's heart.-o-o-o-o-o-o-"So, where do you want to eat, Luffy?" "Uhhh..." Luffy was looking all around, searching for the perfect restaurant. "I don't know... You can pick," he said indecisively. "But pick some place that serves meat." Ha added quickly. "What, do you think I'd choose some vegetarian restaurant?" "I dunno... You're weird, Zoro." Roronoa laughed at the statement. "You're calling me weird?" "Yeah," Luffy answered, failing to catch the playful insult. Zoro meant to sigh, but it ended in a chuckle. He couldn't help it. Being alone with Luffy was making him unusually giddy. Actually, he was beginning to sicken himself. "Hey," Zoro pointed out a building. "How 'bout we eat there?" "Okay!" Luffy quickened his pace, wanting to eat as soon as possible. "Slow down! It's not like the food will run away." Luffy grinned. "It might not be cooked yet." "I doubt they have livestock running around in there just waiting to be killed and eaten." Luffy laughed. "That would be weird!" "Just like you. A restaurant like that would be perfect for you." "I'm not weird!" "Are you kidding..?" "...Yes." The two of them entered the restaurant laughing. A few of the employees eyed them as they made their way to a table. "Oh no... We've got loud customers again," One waitress said to another. Her friend eyed Zoro's weapons. "Loud customers with swords..." -o-Chapter End-o-Yay! I've been good, right? I didn't leave you all hanging for weeks like I've done before. I guess I can't help but want to write. It's finally getting closer and closer to that time we've all been waiting for! I know I've been dragging things along a bit, but I can't help it. My favorite kind of romance is the kind that's long, painful, and drawn out. I figure Zoro would probably do it this way. He's got a lot of pride. If he was going to put it all on the line like that and tell Luffy what he feels, of course he'd draw it out. That's a big risk, you know? Anyway, I want to know what you guys think! Tell me what you're expecting to happen, what you hope will happen, and what you don't want to happen. You know, all that lovely stuff. If I get any good suggestions, I won't hesitate to use them. Keep in mind though: I won't write anything too... adult going on between them. Their union is too innocent in my mind for that. I will promise, however, that in the end there will be enough kittens and fluffiness to choke a donkey. I just have to work my way up to it. Oh, and by the way, I really want to apologize for any Nami fans that may have been offended by my portrayal of our lovely redhead. I really do love Nami. You just have to understand that I needed to make her this way to keep my idea going. Everything will be spiffy in the end though, just bear with me a little while longer. Just don't dis' Nami-swan, 'cause I love her, okay? Review if you like kittens!! \*heart\*

## 11 - Fear The Birdle

Bodyl cleaned my house!! Aren't you proud? What do you mean I should have been writing instead?? How rude. You should just be happy for a chapter this soon. Jeebus, I just updated last night!Uhh, anyway, I suppose I'll start the chapter now. \*Shifty eyes\* I may or may not incorporate an idea suggested by Chakenmo, even if she did forbid me from allowing her to influence this fic. ^;We all know I don't own One Piece. Sometimes that cold fact makes me cry at night.-o-Chapter Eleven-o-"Waitress!"Zoro almost felt sorry for the woman who was serving them. This would be the seventeenth time Luffy had called for more food. He only hoped the boy had enough money to pay for it all."What can I get you this time, sir?" The young woman asked nervously."Uhh..." The captain looked as if he was in deep thought. "How 'bout some more chicken? Oh! And another one of those plates of beef!"The girl scribbled the order down on a pad of paper and turned to Zoro. "Did you need anything else, sir?"Since his (sixth) plate wasn't quite empty yet, Zoro took the last swig of his drink. "I could use a refill.""Yes, of course!" The girl bowed and escaped to the kitchen to bring the pair what they had asked.Luffy rubbed his belly and grinned. "This food is really good!"Yeah. Their drinks are pretty good too." Zoro couldn't wait for the waitress to return. He wanted his cup full so he could continue drinking. A new part of his confession plan involved getting really drunk.The waitress reappeared with a pitcher of alcohol, filling Zoro's empty mug. "Here you go, sir. Just call me when you need more, okay?"The pirate stopped her hand as she was pulling the pitcher away. "Don't bother taking that with you."R-right..." She laughed extremely nervously."Is my food ready yet?" Luffy asked her impatiently."Uh, no... It'll be a few minutes until-"Shut up, Luffy," Zoro scolded, cutting the girl off. "You can have some of mine until it's done."Really?? Thanks, Zoro!" Luffy beamed at his now blushing friend and began shoveling food into his mouth.If she hadn't been equally terrified of the pair of them, the waitress might have thanked Zoro as well. However, she chose to run away to the kitchen once again after giving them another quick bow."Hey, I didn't say you could have all of it!" Zoro protested."Awww..." Luffy somehow managed to look cute, even with food hanging from his very full mouth.The first-mate scowled. "Forget it, you can have it. It's already got your drool all over it, anyway..."Yay!" The boy inhaled the plate of food.Not even Zoro, who was infatuated with the boy, could say the display wasn't disgusting."Mmmm~!! That was good!"I bet..."A half-an-hour later, the two emerged from the restaurant. Luffy had come up a little short when he got the bill. Fortunately, Zoro had enough belli on him to cover what was left. Sadly, he didn't leave a tip for the poor, terrified, waitress."Ahh! That was delicious!" Luffy stretched as he walked. It didn't bother him a bit that he was walking down the street with his pants unbuttoned. How could anyone expect him to keep them buttoned after eating such a meal?"Yeah.." Zoro was angry at himself. He had been planning on letting the secret out during the meal, but he had told himself that the restaurant had been too crowded. He knew that wasn't why, though. He had been too afraid.Dammit! I haven't been afraid of anything in my life! Why the hell did I have to start now??"Zoro, stop spacing out!" Luffy waved his hand in front of his friend's face. "You kept doing that the whole time we ate!"Roronoa snapped out of it. "Well, that's 'cause I was getting bored watching you eat. I was done way before you were."That's 'cause you don't eat enough," Luffy playfully poked his friend in the belly."If you think the amount you eat is enough, the rest of the world must be anorexic."What's that?" Luffy asked with a face."You know... Anorexic. People who purposely don't eat."WHAT??" The expression on the boy's face suggested he had just seen someone light a puppy on fire. "Why would someone not eat on purpose?? That's just stupid!"Zoro couldn't help but laugh. "Yeah, it is."Luffy suddenly stopped walking and looked around. "Where are we going?"Huh? I don't know. I was following you."Luffy laughed. "That was a dumb thing to

do."Zoro stared at his friend. "You do know you just insulted yourself, right?" "Hey, look at that!" Luffy exclaimed, running toward what seemed to be an animal. Zoro sighed and followed, a bit irritated about being ignored. "What's wrong with this dog??" Luffy grinned and reached out to pet what looked like a cross between a rooster and a turtle. "In what way does that look like a dog to you?" "Ouch!! Hey, leggo of me!!" Luffy was now trying to shake the creature off his arm. Zoro ran up and grabbed the 'dog' by the feet, trying to yank it off. "Idiot! This is what you get for trying to touch it!" "Owww~!! Get it off me, Zoro!" "GWAK!!" The creature let out a yelp when the swordsman finally pried its beak loose and chucked it away from his friend. When the thing stood up again and faced the pair with fire in its eyes, Luffy grabbed his first-mate by the arm. "Run away~!!" The pair took off down an alley way, hoping the creature wouldn't follow. Unfortunately, it not only followed, but it was much faster than it looked. Zoro groaned inwardly. I can't believe we're running from a chic.. tur.. What the hell is that thing, anyway?? Luffy made a sharp turn, taking Zoro with him. The pair ran into a dead end. "What now, Captain?" Zoro's hand went to his sword. "Should I just take care of it?" Without answering, Luffy wrapped his arm around Zoro's waist and sent the other flying over the wall. The boy had obviously grabbed onto something, and let the natural elasticity of his body pull them over. The two of them landed in a pile of pirate on the other side. "Ouch..." The captain groaned as he attempted to sit up. Roronoa straightened himself and tried to dust off his clothes. He could hear the creature gwaking from the other side of the wall. He only hoped it wouldn't find a way around it. The two exchanged looks at each other. Zoro was amused to find a feather in Luffy's hair. He reached out and plucked it from the boy's head and showed it to him. The two of them laughed out loud. "I can't believe we just got chased by that thing!" Luffy said wiping away a tear. "I can believe we ran away from it..." Luffy laughed again. "Yeah, why did we run, anyway?" Zoro turned to his friend. "Why are you asking me? You're the one who was pulling me around!" The captain continued cackling like an idiot. Zoro would have been mad, but the laughter was infectious and he couldn't help joining in once more. It seemed like he laughed a whole lot more whenever he was around the boy. The captain wiped more tears from his eyes as he finally stood up. "That was fun." Zoro stood as well. "Only you would say that." Luffy grinned mischievously. "Let's find something else fun to do." The effect those words had on Zoro's mind caused the swordsman's skin to flush slightly. His thoughts were getting dirtier and dirtier lately, and it was getting quite distracting. He blamed Luffy completely. "Like what?" "I don't know. Let's just find something." "Sounds good to me. You just lead the way." Luffy gladly complied. Taking the lead, he headed toward who-knows-what with a grin. Zoro knew putting the boy in the lead probably wasn't a good idea, but he didn't care. It didn't matter to him where they went, anyway. He was enjoying his friend's company, and that was enough. Plus, he thought, a little bit of walking might make this stupid confession a little easier. They shared a comfortable silence as they walked. Each of them appreciating their company. It was nice. Zoro couldn't stop thinking about how little moments like these would be lost forever if his secret wasn't taken well by his friend. He didn't like the idea of losing his bond with Luffy. "Zoro..." Luffy started, breaking the silence. "Yeah?" "I really like hanging out with you." Zoro's heart skipped a beat. Even though it was such an innocent statement, Zoro couldn't help but wish there was more behind it. "Well, you'd better. I like hanging out with you too." Luffy slowed a bit, allowing Zoro to walk with him side-by-side. "But I really like hanging out with you," Luffy brought his face closer to his, cupping his hand to Zoro's ear. "Don't tell the others, but you're my favorite nakama." Zoro nearly stopped in his tracks. He had always considered Luffy his best friend, but he had never imagined that the boy felt the same. The idea that preferred him over all the other crew mates filled him with idiotic glee. One side of his brain was singing, while the other tried to fill him with doubt. Say something, stupid!! Before he could change his mind, Zoro stopped walking and mimicked his friend, bringing his face close. "You're my favorite, too but you can tell whoever you want." He could help getting a rush from being that close to Luffy. The boy looked surprised at first, but his expression changed to an ear to ear grin. Zoro punched his friend in the arm playfully.

"Why are you acting surprised? You're definitely my favorite." "I'm glad." "Hmm?" "I'm really glad I'm your favorite." The earnest smile on Luffy's face nearly melted the man to a puddle of goo. "I'm glad you like me best, too." Zoro blushed and scratched the back of his head. "I would have been jealous if it had been someone else..." Luffy laughed. "Hey, what's so funny??" Before Zoro knew what was happening, Luffy's face was inches away from his. A stray lock of Luffy's hair tickled Zoro's forehead, almost as if it was teasing him. Luffy had stopped laughing, but the amusement was still there in his eyes. The moment only lasted a few seconds, but it seemed like an hour. Just when Zoro was about to lose all control and tackle the object of his affections, a familiar 'gwak' broke the two from their little world. "Oh my god, it found us!!" Luffy shouted, eyes wide. The bird... thing was standing a few yards ahead of them. It looked pretty proud of its self for finding its prey. The creature took a step toward the pair, holding its beak up high. "Why you little..." Zoro's voice was barely a whisper, but it was filled with enough anger and hatred to make a serial killer cry. How dare that thing interrupt us!! The swordsman drew his swords. Mimicking the bird, he took a step. Man and creature stood still, waiting for the other to make their move. Zoro's battle aura was practically visible. Anyone within a mile of Zoro felt a sudden chill. The bird-turtle was suddenly looking a little less brave. "Come here, you little piece of shoot!!" Zoro leapt towards the creature with a mad look in his eye. "I'll bring you back with us for dinner!" Without a moment's notice, the birdle turned tail and ran. Naturally, Zoro chased after it. "I'll kill you!!" "Zoro, wait up!" Luffy called, running after his friend. The swordsman was practically foaming at the mouth. He was so close... Who knows what might have happened? I'll tear that thing apart!! "Zoro~!!" Luffy was just behind his friend. In the second Zoro was distracted by the voice, the birdle disappeared. "Dammit! Where's it hiding?" He slowed and looked in all directions. "Zoro!" Luffy panted, looking around as well. "Where'd it go?" "I don't know..." Zoro met Luffy's eyes for a second, then quickly looked away, pretending to search for the creature. "Oh well," Luffy adjusted his hat and laughed. "I guess you really scared it." Zoro tried to laugh with his friend, but the sound died before it could leave his throat. What had just (almost) happened was beginning to sink in. What was Luffy planning on doing? "Luffy..." "I'm hungry," Luffy said suddenly, before the other man could finish. "I wonder what Sanji's making for dinner?" Zoro considered continuing his line of thought, but decided to play along. "How could you be hungry? We just ate." "Yeah, but Sanji's cooking's so much better than everyone else's..." Luffy grinned. "Let's go back to the ship now." "...Alright. Whatever you want, Captain." -o-Chapter End-o-Whee-haw! Now was that a fluffy kitten, or was that a fluffy kitten? Do you hate me for interrupting them? Who do you hate more? Me or the birdle? If I were you, I'd blame the birdle. You just can't trust a rooster with a turtle shell. Those things are just plain evil. I'm proud of me, though! This is the first time I've gotten far enough in a fic to start and taste the good stuff. We're so close to the goodness now, you could spit on it. But you better not, because spitting's a nasty habit. If you don't review, the birdle will come back with a vengeance!! Beware~!!

## 12 - She Knows a Lot of Things

BodyHo-kay!! I decided that I should hurry up with this fic since I have to start school in about a week. It's not fair! I've spent the last thirteen years of my life waiting to be released from the shackles of schooling and now I have to go to college? Not fair!! Not only do I still have to go to school, but now I have to pay for it! Isn't it all just so wrong?? Well, the up side is that I'm taking some fun classes. Since I'm working, I only have three: Art, Digital Painting, and Japanese. I really can't wait for that last one. The day I can turn to imports and raws instead of waiting for slow translations will be a happy one indeed. Plus, it'll make those poorly translated One Piece dvds of mine so much more enjoyable! ^^Anyway, I don't own it. But one day I WILL! Okay, maybe I wont...-o-Chapter Twelve-o-"You didn't tell him??" Zoro couldn't help but flinch when his furry friend scolded him. Tony Tony Chopper wasn't taking the news of the failed confession very well. "Well... things happened!" The green-haired young man defended himself. "There was this bird... turtle... thing. It was chasing us all through town and-" "Zoro, I can't believe you're making up stories now!" "What?? I'm not making anything up!" Zoro pointed accusingly at his friend. "And how can you call my true story a lie when you believe everything that long-nose tells you??" Chopper sighed and looked at his feet. "I'm sorry, Zoro... I just wanted you to be happy. I really thought you'd tell Luffy today..." Zoro instantly forgot all his anger. It was all he could do to keep himself from hugging the little fur ball. Damn him and his... cute!" "Don't worry," Zoro forced a smile. "I'll have plenty of chances to tell him. I got a little distracted this time, but I'll tell him next time, okay?" Chopper smiled up at Roronoa then replaced his expression with that of an angry mother. "You better. If you don't tell him soon, I will for you." "I will, I will..." Zoro left the doctor's little office wearing a frown. He hadn't mentioned what had happened between him and Luffy. What would he have told him anyway? He didn't even know quite what had occurred in that moment they were only a breath apart. Why did Luffy do that? He wasn't going to...? No, there's no way. "You look a bit troubled." The swordsman nearly jumped. He turned around to see Nico Robin smirking at him. Her eyes, like always, seemed to say 'I know all your secrets'. He made certain to keep his eyes on hers, no matter unsettling they were. In his mind, the moment he looked away was the moment he let the woman win. "What do you want?" The woman took a few steps closer. "I just happened to notice that sour expression on your face, so I thought I'd offer my ears to you," She smiled. "I wouldn't mind listening if something's bothering you." "I don't have anything to say," He spat. "If you want to play psychiatrist, try someone else." Robin sighed. "You're awfully irritable tonight, aren't you?" She chanced taking a few more steps. "Does it have something to do with what happened earlier? You went out with Sencho-san, right?" Zoro stiffened. Could she have seen something? No, I would have known... But then again... She smiled as if he had given her an answer without saying a word. "It might be my imagination, but it seems as though there have been a few things going on between you and the captain lately." The santoryu user glared at the woman. "It is your imagination. Now leave me alone. I'm not in the mood to deal with you." "Now, now," She raised her hands in a gesture of apology. "There's no need for you to be so hostile, Kenshi-san. I didn't mean to offend you." "You didn't offend me, you're just annoying. I already told you; I'm not in the mood." He turned to walk away, but Robin slowly trailed behind him. Zoro turned back around and was about to yell at the woman, but she spoke again before he had the chance. "There's nothing to be ashamed of, you know." "What?" "I know you're in love with the captain." Roronoa's face reddened. Whether it was with embarrassment or anger, not even he was certain. "You don't know anything." "That's not true at all. I know a lot of things, actually." "Well, obviously you're wrong this time." "No, I'm not." The older woman's calm demeanor only added to Zoro's aggravation. If there was ever a time when he really wanted to hit a

woman, it was right then. "Shut your mouth!" "I also know that he loves you back." "What??" The anger in his voice was replaced with utter confusion. "What did you just say?" "He loves you just as much as you love him," Robin's smile widened. The astonishment on the man's face was too amusing. Suddenly, Zoro remembered to be pissed and scowled. "Whatever. What the hell do you know, anyway??" Robin was nearly grinning (which is extremely rare for her) when the swordsman stomped away. She could never have too much fun with that one. -o-o-o-o-o-o- "Dammit!" Zoro slammed his fist into a sack of flour which immediately exploded. I can't believe I let her make a fool out of me like that!! He thought as he dusted the white powder off his clothes in irritation. He could only imagine the pathetic array of expressions he had worn during his conversation with the mysterious woman. As if she even knows what she's talking about... Her words kept repeating themselves over and over again in his head. He couldn't help but wonder if she was right. She had, after all, seen right through Zoro's attempts to hide his feelings about the black-haired boy. Could she have possibly seen the same in Luffy? It was possible... right? But he couldn't bring himself to trust anything the woman said. Why the hell would she say all that to me? Women are so... Gah!! Maybe this is why I have feelings for a man! He thought angrily. All the women I have to be around are out of their fracking minds!! -o-o-o-Chapter End-o-o-o-Yes, I know it was painfully short, but the chapter told me it should end there. I mean it, it did! Anyway, I'll try and have a new chapter for all my lovelies soon. The end is approaching! Or at least, I think it is. My damn short attention-span is letting me get distracted by all sorts of shiney plot twists and I just can't resist! I hope I was able to write Robin okay. I just LOVE Nico Robin, so I've been trying to find a way to fit her into the fic a little more. I figured this would be a good way. Robin's pretty observant, so I thought it really wouldn't be suprizing for her to already know about what's going on. Speaking of fitting in characters more, I really need to write up some Uso-louve. I just haven't been able to figure out quite how to do that yet. Maybe I'll try in the next chappie. ^ ^ Oh, and since I couldn't remember what it was that Robin called Zoro and Luffy, I used the names I found in a couple of ZoroLover11's fickies. I just thought I'd mention that. (Psst! You should read them! She writes good Zoro/Robin^ ^) Review if you wanna touch it!

## 13 - A Thief's Confession

BodyNew chappie for your enjoyment! I'll warn you right now, though. I'm currently filled with anger, so don't be too suprized if I take it out on you. I think I can forcefully make myself forget the rage though. I just have to make this chapter take a turn for the fluffy and I'll get too distracted to be pissed off. ^;One Piece belongs to the man with the plan. Go Oda! Go Oda! ...What? Don't give me that look!!-o-Chapter Thirteen-o-"What's your problem!?" Usopp shouted at a very irritable swordsman. "Stop bothering me! I don't have time for you right now," Zoro knew he was being unreasonably mean to the liar for no real reason, but he was too pissed off to care. He had been like that since his encounter with Nico Robin the two days before. He had even snapped and yelled at Chopper. Between Nami's declaration of war and Robin's display of knowledge, he was nearly homicidal. He was beginning to consider cleansing the world of all women. "I just wanted to borrow one of your weights! I only need a small one!" "I said no!" "C'mon~!! I'll give it back when I'm done with it!" "Get away from me before I cut off one of your arms!" Usopp instinctively held his arm. "Why are you being such an asshole?? I need it so I can test out my new invention!" Zoro narrowed his eyes. "If you don't stop pestering me by the time I count to three, I will remove one of your limbs." Usopp swallowed noticeably. "But, Zoro-" "One." "Come on, please?" "Two." Roronoa pulled a katana partially from it's sheath. The long nose's eyes widened at the sight. "Thr-" Usopp turned quickly and bolted for the other end of the ship. He nearly flew right into Nami who had been walking towards them. "Hey!" She turned to watch Usopp flee. "What's wrong with him?" "What do you want?" Zoro's tone indicated that he wanted a quick answer. "I was just going to ask how things were fairing for you and Luffy," She smiled innocently. "There's no reason we can't have a friendly chat about the one we love, right?" The swordsman glared. "What do you really want?" "Is that answer really that hard to believe?" She batted her eyelashes. "I can be nice sometimes too, you know." "When you want something, you can be." The redhead laughed. "And what would you have that I could possibly want? You're not just broke, but you owe me money!" Zoro stayed silent. There was really nothing he could say to that. It was true that he owed the navigator quite a few belli. "Actually," She began. "I came to tell you to take a nap." "What?" "I don't know why you're in such a bad mood today, but it's really getting on everybody's nerves. You even made Chopper cry!" Roronoa looked at his feet. "I- I didn't mean to..." "Well, do us all a favor and take a nap or something. It's not our fault you're cranky." "I don't need a nap! If everyone would get the hint and leave me alone, I'd be fine!" "Well, if you want to be alone, stay away from the places we are. We shouldn't have to change our routines to suit your needs, you know!" "Gah!! Fine!" Zoro stomped away to the storage room. I hate that woman so much!! He knew she was right, but that didn't change the fact that he wanted to skin her alive and roll her in salt. He blamed all his anger on Robin. If she had just minded her own business, I wouldn't be so pissed off! The storage room was still a mess from the night before. There was flour everywhere. Luckily, Sanji hadn't had to venture in for ingredients yet. If he had, the cook would be a little less than pleased. In fact, he doubted any of the crew would be too happy about it, considering they were all already on bad terms with him after the way he had been behaving... Zoro made a noise that was somewhere between a growl and a sigh. God, I'm a jackass... He left the room and went to the kitchen. He was lucky enough to find that no one was there at the moment. He grabbed the broom and dustpan from a corner and headed back to the storage room. I guess I can at least clean up this mess. Maybe Sanji and Nami wont notice the flour that's missing... He almost laughed. Yeah, right. It took a while for him to get most the flour. The powder had managed to get everywhere. It didn't help that there was tons of bags and boxes to get in his way as he swept. It also didn't help that he sucked at cleaning. He wasn't able to get nearly all of it,



but at least he managed to sweep up the majority of the mess. The youth couldn't help but feel a little proud of himself for sweeping up the flour. It wasn't often that the man cleaned a mess without it being requested first. When he returned the broom to the kitchen, he was disappointed to find Sanji there. I guess I can only be so lucky... The cook gave him an odd look. "What were you doing with the broom?" "What do you think I was doing with it?" "Don't give me that shoot. I've never seen you sweep a thing since I first set foot on this ship." "I made a mess. I cleaned it," Zoro placed the broom where it belonged and stared at the cook. "Is there something wrong with that?" Sanji looked as though he was contemplating the answer. "I... guess there isn't..." "Okay, then." Sanji narrowed his eyes and stared at the swordsman as he left the room. He couldn't help but be suspicious of a Zoro who cleaned his own messes. The Love Cook made a mental note to check the ship for damages later. What's so weird about me cleaning?? He frowned. There's nothing wrong with it! I can clean a mess if I want to!! He meant to head back to the storage room, but without thinking, he walked onto the stern. He couldn't help it. It was where he usually liked to sit when he was annoyed. When he realized what he had done, he stopped walking. He immediately noticed Luffy perched on top of Merry's figurehead. Even without seeing his captain's face, he knew the boy was grinning like a child. Before he could stop himself, he approached his friend. "Hey, Luffy." "Hi, Zoro," Luffy turned his head, the grin present. "Having fun up there?" He asked with an eyebrow raised. "Yeah." Zoro stared out at the waves with his captain. It made him feel a tiny bit better. The ocean would never fail to ease him. That's what made him love being a pirate. Being surrounded by ocean had always eased his mind. "Zoro..?" Luffy began suddenly. "What?" "Do you think we should have caught that bird?" "What? Well, I wanted to... Why?" "I bet it would have tasted really interesting," He said with an ear-to-ear grin. "Uhh... I guess it might have. I've never eaten a bird-turtle before..." "Too bad we left it..." Luffy frowned. Zoro chuckled. "Well, if I ever see another one, I'll bring it back for you." "Really?" Luffy smiled excitedly. "You promise?" Zoro returned the smile. "I promise." The straw hat adjusted his hat and beamed at the swordsman. The green-haired boy felt a familiar flutter in his stomach. Now would be a good time to tell him... He thought nervously. Just do it. No one's around right now. Do it and get it over with. "Luffy..." "Yeah?" "Doitdoitdoitdoitdoitdoitdoitdoit... "I've been meaning to tell you something..." Luffy turned around on the figure head to give his friend his full attention. "What is it, Zoro?" Zoro's courage was beginning to waver. Just say it! If you say it, this will all be over. Even rejection is better than dragging this on like this! "... He kept his eyes on the boy in front of him, but there were so many thoughts buzzing through his head, he could hardly see straight. "I wanted to tell you that... Well, I..." Luffy tilted his head and blinked. "What do you want to say?" "Lately I realized that, well, I noticed a few things." "Uhh..." "A few things... about you," Zoro wanted to smack himself. Stop stalling, pussy!! "Me?" "Uhh, yeah. Well, actually, what I did was notice the way I was noticing things about you." The captain looked like he had been asked a difficult algebra question. "...What??" "I... Never mind!" Zoro's face was bright red as he stormed away. I can't do this! This was a stupid idea! What even made me think this would turn out well!? The young man went straight to the storage room. His entire body felt hot, like he was covered in a blush from head to toe. He slammed the door shut and flopped onto a sack of flour. All he could do was glare at the ceiling. If he could have thought of a reason to blame the ceiling for what had happened, he would have. Damn ceiling... Why am I having so much trouble telling Luffy? He had never had any problems communicating with the boy before. In fact, one of the things he had always loved about the boy was the fact that the two of them could often understand each other without using words at all. Maybe that's the problem. Neither of us are very good at talking. Maybe I should be trying this another way... He turned onto his side. But how could I let him know any other way? I doubt he'd stay still long enough for me to show him... He had to mentally slap himself to stop the naughty images that immediately filled his mind. He sighed. Not that I'd even know what to do with him... The teen hadn't had a whole lot of experience with women, let alone men. He doubted he would even know what went where if he had the opportunity to - Well, you know - With Luffy. He stood up. Things were just

getting ridiculous now. He left the room and headed back toward the stern. I'll just tell him. I can't let this go on any longer. I'm a man! I won't cower like a woman any more! He continued to mentally egg himself on as he walked. He just hoped Luffy would still be where he left him. When he reached his destination, he was disappointed to see the spot on figure head was empty. To make things worse, Nami was standing near it instead. "Are you looking for Luffy?" She asked as he failed to escape without being detected. "It's none of your business what I do." "He went downstairs." Zoro eyed Nami suspiciously. "Why are you telling me that?" "What?" She put a hand on one hip. "Knowing where he is won't make him yours." "And helping me won't make him yours," He replied. "I know you're hiding something from me." "Congratulations," She said sarcastically. "All you have to do now is figure out what it is." "Dammit, Nami! Stop frackin' with me!" He got a few paces closer. "First, you told me to make up with Luffy. Then you tell me you won't let me have him," He counted off each event on his fingers. "Then you try and act like you've already won," He stared at her. "And now you're helping me find him? Just what are you trying to pull??" She smirked. "Maybe I'm just trying to confuse you." "Nami..." His tone sounded as though he was making a request. The woman almost looked regretful for a split second. "If you want to know what's motivating me, you'll have to figure it out on your own," She turned around and leaned on the ship's railing. "It's really none of your business, anyway..." Zoro grabbed her by the arm and turned her around. "Nami, you..." His words died in his throat. There was a stray tear rolling down the woman's cheek. "What are you...?" She shoved him away. "Do you really want to know what's going on?" She wiped away the tear angrily. "I already know I don't have a chance, okay? Does it make you happy to hear that? Does it??" The color had drained from the swordsman's face. He could barely understand what was going on. She's crying? Could this all be an act? One look at the red head's face told him it couldn't be. "I already knew how Luffy felt about you..." Nami looked away. "I wanted to believe I could make him forget, but it wasn't long before I knew it was pointless." "But..." "I knew the only person he would be happy with is you." She narrowed her eyes. "But you're too stupid to do anything right yourself..." "So, you tried to help by getting in the way??" Zoro stared at the woman in disbelief. "What the hell is the point in that??" "Are you a complete idiot?? When did I ever get in the way?" She let out a deep sigh. "Since you're a moronic man, I did the only thing that a moronic man can understand. I became a threat. I know how your brain works, Zoro," There was almost a smile on her face. "I figured if I threatened to take Luffy away, you'd try a harder to win him for yourself. The only thing you understand is a challenge." Zoro refused to admit that she had been right. It had been her challenge that had finally made him decide to tell Luffy his feelings. He never would have thought that the woman had done it on purpose, though. "But, why..? Why would you go through all this trouble?" She smiled weakly. "Because I want Luffy to be happy." Zoro couldn't believe what he was hearing. Since when was she capable of doing something so... selfless?? "Even if his happiness means I have to let a muscle-brained idiot like you have him," She added. The swordsman was too taken back to respond to the insult. "Nami..." He felt like he had done something horrible to the woman. He knew there was something he should say, but he had no idea what. "Don't you dare!" She barked. "If you even think about pitying me, I'll make you regret it! I knew what I was doing from the begging. I don't need anything from you," Her eyes were filled with resolve. "Just be happy I decided to tell you any of this. You're lucky I didn't carry it to my grave." Zoro looked down at his boots. "Uhh... Thank you." His voice was barely audible. Nami cocked an eyebrow. "What?" Roronoa met her eyes. "I said 'thank you', dog. Don't make me say it again!" Nami's eyes widened. "Did you just say...?" She let out a laugh. "If you want to thank me, do it with gold." "Like you said earlier, I already owe you money. Don't expect anything from me." She scowled. "Then don't waste my time with a thank you." She turned and began to walk away. "You had better do something about Luffy soon. If you don't, I might change my mind and keep him for my self." He watched her disappear through the door to her room. She closed the door without looking back. Zoro leaned against the railing and stared at the ocean. "I will." -o-Chapter End-o-Finally!! I've been waiting for that part forever! See?

Nami's not all bad! In fact, she was even a little corny! I hope I wrote that scene okay. Hopefully neither of them seemed too out of character. Are you pleased with the length? I made sure this chapter wasn't as pathetically short as the last one. That last chapter even made me sad. ^; Oh, and I'd like to thank all of my reviewers! I've made it over one hundred reviews! And that's only on FF.net. I'd like to thank you all so much! I wish I could respond to every single review, but I'm too lazy for that. Plus, it might take a while... I just want you all to know how much I love and appreciate each and every comment. If it wasn't for you guys, I doubt I'd have even gotten this far. \*Hugs her reviewers\* WUV! The end is near... Review!

