

Village Head 62

Chapter 62 Tree Nymphs (2)

In a sudden flash, the ultraviolet light intensified, and within mere seconds, and just as quickly as it came, it began to dim. As the tree ceased its violent shaking, I found myself shielding my eyes from the bright light. Despite the distance between us, I remained on high alert and squinted to catch any movement. As the light dissipated, I caught a glimpse of two hands emerging from the back of the tree, followed by a mysterious, colourful humanoid figure.

As I gazed upon the enigmatic female figure, my eyes widened in astonishment. Clad in a puffy gown that accentuated her voluptuous curves and ample bosom, her body possessed a translucent glow and was split into two distinct colours. Her upper body blazed with a fiery volcanic red, while her lower half shimmered with a deep and alluring shade of purple. Her stunning and otherworldly appearance left me awestruck, and I couldn't help but blink in disbelief.

With her chest heaving and her fiery gaze fixed on us, the otherworldly figure remained silent for what felt like an eternity. Her short red hair bobbed from side to side as she surveyed us with a mixture of rage and suspicion. Finally, Fiona took a step forward "We are sorry for disturbing you," she apologized, her voice calm and respectful. But before anyone could react, the translucent spirit let out a piercing scream that reverberated throughout the area. The sheer force of her voice was so intense that we instinctively covered our ears to protect our eardrums.

After a few moments of silence, the piercing screeching sound that filled the air abruptly disappeared. I gasped for air as I struggled to regain my bearings, only to realize that the woman had vanished into the tree, which now emitted a faint ultraviolet glow before disappearing as well.

As we slowly regained our composure, gasps of breathing could be heard all around. The girl who had slapped her hand against the tree and fallen to her knees was the first to speak up, voicing the question on all our minds "What was that?".

Fiona let out a deep breath as she finally regained her bearings, and responded with a stern expression "That is why you should never disturb or harm a tree, especially one like this."

As the crowd murmured amongst themselves, a voice spoke up again, "But what was--" The speaker cut themselves off mid-sentence, correcting their mistake, "I mean, who was that?".

Fiona let out a tired sigh and began massaging her temples, a sign that this was not the first time she had to explain this. "That," she began, "was a tree nymph. There are many of them residing within the trees of this forest, and we must treat them with respect and avoid disturbing their homes."

A murmur of understanding rippled through the crowd, but I couldn't help but voice my thoughts, "But mistakes are bound to happen when we pluck the fruits. They slapped the tree bark a few times, and our ears almost bled out. What if someone accidentally breaks a branch? Will the tree nymph retaliate?"

I didn't even need to finish my question to know that everyone present understood the severity of my inquiry.

Fiona's understanding of my concerns was noticeable as she nodded her head and flashed a reassuring smile. "Don't worry," she began, "The tree nymphs won't go that far, because we have a team of villagers who have awakened their inner strength and are tasked with dealing with these sorts of things -like those men positioned outside the farm. So you can be rest assured that they wouldn't want us to retaliate either."

As she mentioned the watchful men positioned outside the farm, we all nodded in agreement, our unease subsiding.

"These men have undergone extensive training and have the necessary abilities to handle such situations," Fiona explained. "Although they deal with other troublesome problems, those are not your concern as not everyone is capable of awakening their inner strength."

I nodded my head in understanding with her explanation while still pondering about the phrase 'inner strength,' which I had heard my mother mention a few times. However, like her and others, they seemed to focus more on gifts and barely talked about inner strength.

And just as my mind was consumed with doubt, Fiona seemed to read my thoughts and reassured me with her words, "Don't worry about whether you'll awaken your inner strength or not, as only a select few in the village are able to do so. However, you will still be put to the test on the last day of the ceremony to determine your potential. In the meantime, our focus during the awakening ceremony is to help you tap into your gifts and impart other valuable knowledge. With a sigh and a hint of annoyance, Fiona added, "I even prepared a lecture for you all on the last day, but it seems it won't be necessary now."

As I suppressed my curiosity, I gave a nod of comprehension to indicate my understanding. As the sun began to set, I reminded myself that I still had two more days to have my questions answered, so there was no need to rush.

Fiona broke the silence with an announcement, "Alright, everyone, let's get going. It's already getting late." She observed the exhausted expressions on some of the faces and concluded that there were no more questions to be asked.

Without any complaint, we shouldered our sacks and followed Fiona as she led us out of the dense vegetation.

After several minutes of walking, we finally emerged from the greenery and made our way towards the wooden hut. Upon arrival, we were greeted by a middle-aged woman who collected our fruits and divided them based on the amount of effort we had put into gathering them.

I wasn't surprised by the fair distribution of the fruits in this society and therefore saw no need to complain. Those who had climbed the trees and worked harder received two Kalna fruits and one Lipry fruit, while those who had gathered fruits from the ground received one Kalna fruit and two Lipry fruits. This amounted to approximately half of what each of us had gathered, but it was a just and reasonable distribution after she explained why the other half was taken by the farm.