

Ascension of the Sylvan Cosmos.

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Chapter 1. Eternal Vows in the Twilight of Reality.

"Why are you doing this?"

A woman was screaming at a tree, her form flickering with infinite colors.

"This doesn't make any sense!"

Her anguished tone and gestures echoed in the fabric of the Universe as just a wave of her hand created ripples through reality.

"Why must you be so ruthless and forget our promise!?"

This person was talking to a tree so big that the planets didn't compare.

"The only outcome of this is pure chaos! Nothing is for sure. IT'S A HAREBRAINED GAMBLE!"

She was talking to a tree so huge that the stars didn't compare.

"If you follow through, the heavenly layers will be destroyed!"

A tree with galaxies interlocking around its roots and with the universe resting below its gargantuan canopy.

"Galaxies will die out, killing life throughout the Universe!"

A tree that the speaker could "see" only because of her power was so vast that few could even fathom challenging them.

"The fabric of reality will collapse! And your strength will disappear!"

However, even with the clearly desperate pleas and anxious voice, the tree that expanded throughout the Universe continued to crack, its iridescent sap flowing through the bark and creating stars just with the leaking energy.

Even its "blood" broke the laws of physics as if said laws were not something natural but something it controlled.

Something it was made out of.

Something stronger than a World tree.

The one and only Universal Tree.

The woman speaking cried in the last moments of their time, desperately asking in incomprehension and confusion, surrounded by agony and despair.

"WHY ARE YOU KILLING YOURSELF!? YOUR FALL WILL ONLY LEAD TO THE DESTRUCTION OF LIFE THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE COSMOS!"

Knowing that her screams didn't appear to reach it, her voice lowered, becoming heartbreaking and low, sounding like an anguished but muffled plea of a person losing all that mattered to them.

"If you kill yourself, I won't be able to continue living with you for eternity..."

However, there was no answer. The only "sound" that reached them was the sound of the dying Tree.

The eerie sound of a collapsing Universe.

Distraught, the powerful woman cried.

"Why won't you speak to me..."

The fabric of reality cracked, creating voids that swallowed galaxies and every kind of celestial object.

The anguish of the female reached a heartbreaking point, making her sight blur with the tears that accumulated on her eyelids.

And when her heart was about to break and collapse like fragile glass. When she thought she couldn't bear the sadness accumulating in her heart, a palm-sized leaf fell onto her hand.

The humanoid woman looked at the ethereally beautiful golden leaf surrounded by an iridescent glow, and the water that accumulated in her eyes flowed, spilling her tears down her cheeks and making them fall onto it.

She brought the leaf close to her chest with utmost care, hugging it tenderly. 'I see...'

If anybody from the collapsing Universe saw the current state of the previously thought absolute being, it would've made them incredulous of their reality.

Holding the leaf dear and close to her chest, the woman poured her energy into it so gently, so carefully, so lovingly as if blowing at it would make it scatter like dust, allowing her presence to be imprinted in it.

"If life thrives again in the future, I swear I'll find you. This time, I'll teach you from the start... I'll not leave you to develop and be influenced by anything. I'll teach you, even if you are just a normal tree..."

"That I, Stellar Devastation, can support you."

"That I, Celestial Slaughter Goddess, will stay by your side no matter what."

"That even if you are a small seed, my heart will only beat for you."

"That I..." The woman smiled through her tears and swore with her very existence, "Chaosara Veilithra can love you."

In the next instant, the Universe around the gargantuan Tree collapsed, and Reality crumbled together with the death of the incomprehensively vast arboreal being.

As the collapsing reality destroyed the all-powerful Goddess talking to the tree, it heard an ethereally tender and soothing voice.

A voice that permeated the fundamental fabric of creation with such gentleness that the Goddess, who once only found solace in slaughter, felt her entire being embraced by the Tree's presence.

"I'll be waiting. As always."

The Goddess's eyes opened wide while tears poured faster as a smile that could eclipse the Sun and the Moon with her beauty appeared on her face.

"I love you, Celestia."

And then, the void consumed everything connected to the Tree and further beyond in a cataclysmic disaster that erased life from creation.

Nothing survived.

Not Galaxies.

Not Stars.

Not planets.

Nothing.

With the death of the Universal Tree, everything was destroyed and grounded to the fundamental energies.

With the destruction of everything, an era of darkness began.

With nothing being born.

With nothing dying.

The concept of time, space, or reality did not make sense, as even an eon was nothing but a droplet of the vast river of time that flowed.

The death of the Tree led to the collapse of the Universe.

The only thing left was an infinite ocean of stilled energies that couldn't interact, as if something had forced them to a standstill.

However, while life was incomparably fragile, at the same time, it was incomparably resilient.

The stale energy might not have moved for a trillion years. It might not have flowed for a million times more.

Yet, within such a still Universe, "how much time" mattered not, as what mattered was that "It could happen."

And with a probability existing in an infinite river of time, "something" was bound to happen.

Thus, after so many years that quantifying it would be redundant, something moved.

The movement was created by a coincidence of a particle transforming into a new type of energy.

And with that single spark, the thing that kept everything stale broke.

It was a movement so small that a mortal would not even feel it, yet a ripple effect was created.

The energy shifted, reactions occurred, and particles bonded, creating new and interesting energies called Aether, Phoer, and Anima.

That single spark erased eternal darkness as energy combusted the void, exploding in a surge of matter, allowing time, space, and reality to flow again.

At first, there wasn't much, and life was nowhere to be seen.

However, with "something" now existing, it was just a matter of time.

Years went by, which gave birth to galaxies, star systems, and planets.

And on a remote planet, a spark of life appeared.

In another one, another spark.

Throughout existence, the clogs of Fate finally began turning, leading the world to a new era.

However, what the creatures of this new universe gained was much more than what they would expect.

Years passed, and the strength of individuals flourished.

And in this new thriving era, on a planet far away from conflicts, a beautiful blue and green world, a family of two just welcomed a new life.

The little child had gorgeous orange eyes, looking like a gentle but passionate fire, even from the moment she was born.

Her parents smiled lovingly, and her mother, drenched in sweat because of the hard birth, spoke. "Oh, my baby, you are so beautiful. You will be called, Cinderielle."

The man looked at the green-haired woman with a smile. "Have you checked her gender?"

The woman blinked, tired, looking at her brown-haired husband. "Huh? Didn't the flower shaman say that she was going to be a girl?"

The man laughed softly, caressing her sweaty face. "Silly, it's just to make sure."

The woman smiled and gently opened the cloth wrapped around Cinderielle. Both parents looked down, and their expressions froze in bewilderment.

"Huh?"

At the same time as Cinderielle, six other children were born in different parts of the Universe, and all their parents had similar expressions when looking at their gender.

Furthermore, when these seven children were born, someone opened her eyes in an obscure part of the Universe, illuminating her surroundings with kaleidoscopic lights.

'What's this feeling?'

A few years after Cinderielle's birth, her family of three was shopping in the city. The two parents held the hands of a little girl with orange eyes and fiery hair.

The city's architecture they walked in was mixed with natural materials like vines, trunks, and other similar nature-like shapes. There were even shops that were built inside a very wide but not too tall tree.

The people walking on the street had human forms, but looking closely, many weren't such.

While humans were the most abundant race, the second most abundant intelligent race and the most revered were those who descended from flora, not animals.

They were called Sylvans.

So, besides the usual humans, you could see a woman with rare pink hair and flowers naturally blooming on her head.

Maybe, when looking right, there was another woman with beautiful ocean-blue colored eyes and hair, releasing a mint-like natural scent a human would never have.

What was strange, however, was that every single humanoid with these extraordinary features was a female. Or at least, they had an outward female figure.

Other than the people, even the shops, streets, buildings, and even the shape of the clothes and instruments used were reminiscent of flowers or trees. It was clear that nature was deeply intertwined with the cultural development of this place.

If that wasn't enough, in the middle of the large city, a tree whose canopy covered a significant part of the place was visible from everywhere.

If one looked closely at the twisting trunk of the tree and the way the upper branches spread, one would be able to see that it had a very light resemblance to a female figure raising her arms. But, while it resembled the figure of a woman, you could easily distinguish that it was a tree.

The child of the family was curious because she felt that the tree was gorgeous and asked, having learned to speak not long ago. "Mom, why is that big tree there?"

The woman smiled, looking at it with reverence. "That's called a World Tree, Cinder. They are your and my ancestors, and they have intelligence, unlike normal trees. Their lifespans are very, very long, and their strength is high, although it varies a lot."

Cinderielle looked at it with interest as she walked with her parents through the streets covered in smooth rock slabs. The child was clever and realized that her mother didn't mention her father. "What about dad?"

The mother smiled. "Your father, unlike us, is a human, not a sylvan, love. His ancestry comes from animals, not plants."

The child looked at her father and continued asking curiously. "Which animal, Dad?"

The father answered with a smile. "Well, most of the humans come from the same animals, which are primates. However, there are a few races that come from other ancestries. Our World has people from many different places, Cinder."

Society appeared backward because there were instruments that avoided the necessity of technological advancement. Of course, it didn't mean that technology didn't exist. It was just used for other things that were not miscellaneous tasks.

And the thing that allowed them to have ease in the miscellaneous tasks was this.

[You've witnessed the <Seedling World Tree of Fortune> for the first time. Your <Destiny> stat will increase by 100 for the next three hours.]

A message popped in Cinderielle's retina. The child had heard from her parents, and this wasn't the first time in her life, so she smiled widely and said excitedly. "Mom, Dad! I've gotten a buff from the World Tree!"

The mother laughed. "Right, I forgot that Fortune City gives one to new Sylvans who visit this place. What was it?"

Cinderielle spoke. "Um... It says that my Destiny stat will increase by 100 for three hours. What does that mean?"

The father lifted his bushy eyebrow. "Oh? So much? That's worth a few levels. Let's go to the lottery lot, Cinder. With a higher Destiny, your luck must be good, hahaha."

The mother frowned. "Do you want her to gamble? She is still level zero and only five years old."

The father waved his hand. "Don't worry so much; she is just a few years away from awakening the System. Although we can't see it yet and she can't gain experience, she might be a little fortune master. After all, hasn't she been quite lucky since birth?"

The mother sighed and relented, silently allowing him to move with Cinderielle to a lottery post. However, she didn't stop nagging, which the husband accepted with a smile.

Meanwhile, Cinderielle kept looking around with interest, her orange eyes observing the surroundings with child-like curiosity. After all, she has lived in something similar to a closed sect for a while, and this was her first time outside.

While she walked, something caught her attention.

It was something everyone else would have ignored.

A very dull, palm-sized, yellow leaf that flowed with the wind.

Cinderielle's heart strangely thumped, making her frown and feel strangely excited. She wanted to run forward, but her parents were grabbing her hands tightly so that she didn't get lost. "M-Mom! That leaf! Catch that leaf!"

Cinderielle tried getting free from her parents' hands, extremely anxious as she saw the leaf gently flowing away with the wind.

Her parents looked at her, and the mother said. "Cinder, stay still. There are many people, and if we let go, you might get lost. Moreover, some bad people try to steal beautiful children like you. You must stay by our side."

Cinderielle's heart squeezed, and the young child, who didn't know what to do with her emotions, felt like crying. "F-Father, please catch the leaf before it goes away!"

The father looked at the place she was looking at and saw more than one leaf flying, so he didn't really know which one his daughter wanted. He looked at his daughter strangely and then at a nearby roadside stall. "Isn't that leaf ugly? Look at that shop. Aren't there beautiful leaf accessories there? Handpicked from very exotic trees on the outskirts of the forest nearby! Do you want to buy one, Cinder?"

Unknown anger boiled inside the child, and as tears spilled, Cinderielle shouted. "IT'S NOT UGLY! YOU ARE UGLY! I HATE YOU!"

The mother frowned and said sternly. "Cinderielle, do not shout outside!"

Cinderielle looked over toward the leaf's direction, and to her dismay, the leaf had already flown out of her sight.

Unable to hold the surging sadness back, she started to wail.

Her parents became confused and flustered, not expecting such a big reaction for not getting a simple leaf. To prevent her from crying, they asked her how it looked, found similar leaves, and tried giving them to her.

Still, for the rest of that day, Cinderielle didn't stop crying no matter what her parents did, saying that they were not the correct ones, and wept until she fell asleep from exhaustion.

Chapter 2. Tianlian Liu Shu's Awakening.

Sylvans were the evolution of plant life into organic and intelligent life. However, how could a plant, a flower, evolve into a human-like being?

The secret to that was in the trees.

Some trees were not flora without intelligence. While they normally didn't communicate, they were much more alive than a human would think.

Not to mention their liveliness, trees were even able to have progeny with humanoid races. They evolved in a way different from other normal plant life.

Naturally, not all the trees did the same, as such evolution was nothing but a coincidence that happened very long ago and then spread around because of the first "creature-like" tree.

So, while trees and Sylvans were related, they were not the same. Moreover, both races were only female, so their mixing was usually impossible.

"Usually" being the keyword.

However, let's not get ahead of ourselves.

We are here to follow the story of a peculiar tree. One that did not have much more intelligence or potential than others. It, or better put, she was just an ordinary tree that was also relatively short, about one and a half meters tall.

A sapling, if you may.

This sapling, like every creature in the world, instinctively knew how to use the ingrained system that every living being had.

Of course, as a young tree, an ordinary one to boot, it was very slow to make any decision whatsoever.

So, since it was born, it continued to be a small level 0 tree.

This made its intelligence unable to grow, making its thoughts very simple.

'Today's sun is very tasty.'

'Rain! I was thirsty.'

'Something touched my branch? It's ticklish.'

'Ouch! Who is biting my roots?'

These were very simple and straightforward thoughts. Moreover, she had two thoughts a day, three in her enlightened days, and when she had four thoughts, the little sapling would be happy for an entire week.

For now, she was not very bright.

Of course, compared to a non-sapient tree, she was leagues ahead.

And today's first thought was. 'So hot!'

And a very hot day it was, so much so that the earth around her felt dry and brittle.

But, for her, it was just another day, and while she was living her peaceful life as a small tree, she felt a strange aura. Her ability to do so came from our young tree's only unique ability. One she had gained out of chance.

Name: ---

Race: Salix Babylonica Sapling

Titles:

<Awakened>: A title that's gained when a tree gains sapience and evolves, gaining human-like intelligence.

<Destined (Unique)>: Gained because of a chance encounter. Increase the effectiveness of the Destiny attribute and the Destiny attribute by 1000, giving the user one chance to change their destiny. If the user levels up, instead, it will add ten potential growth points to every attribute. (This title disappears when the user grasps an opportunity or levels up.)

Level: 0

Experience: (0/10)

Aether Mana Shards: 10/10

Phoer Body Shards: 10/10

Anima Energy Shards: 10/10

Attributes: Aether (1), Physique (1), Anima (1), Willpower (1), Destiny (1001)

Talents:

-

Passive Skill:

-

Accumulated Experience: 120

Our nameless tree looked at this system with a blank mind. She knew that if she wanted to become stronger, she needed to use the accumulated experience points and increase her level.

It was something like an instinct. However, whenever she wanted to do so, her "gaze" landed on the Unique title, and she felt like not doing so. With her limited intellect, she somehow knew that she would lose a precious chance if she used the experience.

She might not be a very intelligent tree, but she was a perceptive one, at least.

While waiting for the opportunity, time had passed until today.

A very dim and withered yellow leaf was flying through the forest where our sapling was.

The yellow leaf moved with the breeze, never falling down, and moved toward one of the giant trees in the forest.

This tree was far away from our tree, but it was at least 30 meters in height.

Its presence was strong enough for even our small tree to feel it.

However, while the leaf floated toward that tree, a passing bird had a stroke because of the heat and fell from the sky.

While falling, the bird coincidentally struck the leaf and fell with it.

The leaf began moving, trying to slip from below the bird, showing that it was not a normal leaf. However, it couldn't really move, and both the leaf and the bird fell on top of a young tree.

Our young tree.

[An opportunity has arrived. Would you like to take it or wait longer?]

The young tree's floating thoughts focused on the message. She didn't understand it, but she focused on it.

[Would you like to take this opportunity? Yes or no?]

The tree remained silent, not knowing what to do.

[Yes or no?]

The voice asked again, and the sapling decided to use her second thought of the day to answer. 'Yes.'

And when she thought that, a massive storm of energies surrounded the young sapling.

[You've absorbed- Error. The user is too weak to absorb it.]

[Error adjustment <Destined (Unique)> title cushions the impact and locks inheritance away.]

[Successful! Using a fraction of the inheritance.]

[Race Potential Improved.]

[Growth Potential Improved.]

[Innate Affinities Unlocked.]

[Innate Affinities Improved.]

[New Paths of Evolution acquired.]

[New Energy Method Acquired.]

[Hidden attribute: Intelligence increased.]

[Nine New Hidden Titles Acquired!]

[The user is too weak to benefit from the titles, and they will be locked under certain conditions to activate them. As hidden titles, they will not appear until the user clears the conditions.]

[Level up!]

[Three New skills acquired.]

[Four New passive skill acquired.]

After the notifications flooded the sapling, massive streams of energy entered her. The tree's branches swayed, the bark cracked under the growth pressure, and the entire aura around the little tree transformed.

Before, while she was a sentient tree, even if someone looked at her, they would never notice. However, now, it was completely different.

After a few hours, the transformation finally ended, and our tree could finally regain control over herself.

While the tree was confused about the sudden clarity in her thoughts and many other aspects, she heard a woman's voice.

[Little one, the path ahead is difficult, but I hope you don't ignore those close and sincere to you in search for greater strength.]

The voice was nature-like, so gentle, so tender, so soft and beautiful that the small sapling's leaves rustled with happiness, and she completely forgot about her confused self. 'She sounds so nice~.'

She felt like the voice came from someone very close to her. Someone akin to a parental figure.

However, to her sadness, there was only one sentence, and the voice didn't appear again. Still, our young sapling would remember this sentence and keep it in her soul. 'Those close to me are important!'

That's what the tree learned.

After that, curious, the sapling used one of a tree's innate abilities to look at herself. She was instantly flabbergasted.

While her height didn't increase much, just two meters tall, her trunk had become much thicker and also changed forms. Before, her trunk was quite flimsy, and someone's hand could easily grab it.

Even her branches, from being delicate and something that would break from a strong gale, became sturdier and looked much more difficult to damage while maintaining their willow-like slim nature.

Before, she had an ordinary tree trunk, but now, it had transformed and appeared strangely similar to a woman's torso, lifting her arms to hold the canopy, surrounded by beautiful willow branches cascading down. The bark was rough, but it had smoothened out compared to before.

Of course, the silhouette was unclear, and only after squinting and maybe being a bit drunk would one discern a woman's shape out of her tree trunk, but it was certainly there.

Not many trees had this quality, even between the intelligent ones.

It was a characteristic unique to one type of tree.

World Trees.

Trees that could grow beyond normal bounds that limited a tree.

The young sapling thought for a second and opened the system.

Name: Tianlian Liu Shu

Titles:

<Awakened>: A title that's gained when a tree gains sapience and evolves, gaining human-like intelligence.

<World Tree>: A tree that can grow to be an overlord, admired by many, hated by some.

Hidden titles: [9]

Race: World Tree.

Energy Method: Basic World Energy Gathering (Gathers experience points*Level per day.)

Level: 1 [0/150]

Aether Mana Shards: 113/113 (+4,1/Hour)

Phoer Body Shards: 176/176 (+6,4/Hour)

Anima Energy Shards: 120/120 (+4,4/Hour)

Attributes: Aether 9 (7+2), Physique 13 (9+4), Anima 10 (8+2), Willpower 10 (10), Destiny 100 (100).

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (25), Physique Refinement (35), Anima Affinity (20).

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (23), Physique Resistance (29), Spiritual Resistance (24), Mental Resistance (26)

Talents:

<Enchanted Growth (E+ Rank level 1 [0/18000])>: Stimulates the rapid growth of nearby flora, creating vibrant and mesmerizing plant life. Use consumes Aether Mana and Anima Energy.

<Nature's Gift (F- Rank level 1 [0/100])>: Produces small, magical fruits with unique and beneficial properties. It uses Anima Energy and Aether Mana to produce. Depending on the strength of the fruits, there is a chance that they will also need Phoer.

<Willow Strike (F- Rank level 1 [0/100])>: The World Tree is from a willow family, with characteristic long but thin branches. She can use Aether Mana to move them and strike a target. Range 5 meters.

Passive Skill:

<World Tree Heart (A Rank Level 1 [0/589900])>: A core has formed in the middle of the Tree. As long as the core doesn't receive heavy damage, the tree can recover from any external injury. Depending on the damage, it will take longer. Innate Regeneration Increased, Innate Resistances increased, and Innate Affinities increased.

<World Tree Eye (C Rank level 1 [0/144000])>: You can see as far as your roots extend.

<World Tree Wisdom (SSS Rank Level Max.)>: You can understand all languages as long as they are complex enough to be considered a language by the system.

<Charm of the Seedling (F- Rank level 1 [0/100])>: Attracts small animals and insects to the area, fostering a harmonious ecosystem.

Accumulated Experience: 0

The tree, or rather Tianlian Liu Shu, looked at the system window with incomprehension. She thought that she was seeing wrong. 'So many numbers!'

Well, although her intelligence had increased, she wasn't the brightest girl yet. At the end of the day, she was a tree.

Liu Shu kept looking at her system status for a while, but suddenly, she realized something terrible. 'Ah! My accumulated experience is zero again!'

The poor thing would be crying if she had eyes. Her sorrow was expressed by the gloomy swaying of her long branches.

'It took me so much to accumulate 120 points...'

Suddenly, she stopped thinking, or rather, she realized that she was thinking too much. 'Is today the bright day? Maybe because the Sun is so strong~.'

Feeling happy that her thoughts were a bit more complex, her gloomy mood disappeared, and Liu Shu inspected her talents.

Talents were abilities a creature could activate with their will and inner energy. The energy took three primary forms: Aether, Phoer, and Anima.

While Aether and Anima were used to activate most talents, Phoer was tied to the vitality of a creature.

If Aether reached zero, the creature would faint until more than 50% of the [Aether Mana] was restored.

If Anima reached zero, the creature would suffer damage to the soul, which affected potential if the damage was too extensive.

Finally, if the Phoer reached zero, the being would die. Phoer was the vitality of every creature, where the physical strength, reflexes, and other physical qualities came from.

Of course, besides being killed, it was difficult for Phoer to reach zero. Aging was also the process of Phoer leaving the body, reducing the maximum Phoer a person could store inside.

The more Phoer a creature had, the longer it would live, and the later the aging process would begin.

Anima and Aether also had a hand in this, but their effects were less noticeable. Usually, someone who focuses on body development and increases their Phoer would live longer than someone who focuses on Aether.

Aether and Anima were two energies that had fantastical abilities.

Aether could twist reality and summon elemental magic and many other things, while Anima could be used to summon creatures and tamper with souls.

Our Liu Shu, who didn't know much about this, was thinking about what to do with her new abilities and how to use them.

Chapter 3. First Fight!

A week had gone by since our tree reached level one. During this week, Tianlian Liu Shu did nothing much but relish in her newfound complex thoughts. She would spend her days happily while thinking about many things.

Moreover, she was accompanied by many more beings than before. A beautiful pair of butterflies were resting on one of her branches while a small bird chirped as it rested on another.

Around her, she could see small crickets like rodents and a few other tinier little bugs flying around her.

This was all thanks to <Charm of the Seedling>; these little animals were attracted by her aura, accompanying our previous solitary tree.

While Liu Shu happily looked around her, a message entered her ear.

[<Charm of the Seedling> has attracted a <River Beaver Level 5>. Proficiency increased by 5. (103/100)]

[<Charm of the Seedling> has leveled up!]

<Charm of the Seedling>: Attracts small animals and insects to the area, fostering a harmonious ecosystem. (F- Rank level 2 [3/200])

Liu Shu smiled happily. 'Another friend!'

She used <World Tree Eye> to look over and saw a much bigger creature than what she had seen until now. With a brown-furred body, a peculiarly flat and wide tail, and a rounded body, the beaver slowly ambled toward our tree, looking at it as if it were a treasure.

'So big!'

The beaver was enormous for Liu Shu, who was accustomed to seeing small birds and rodents.

'Hm... Why is it looking at me like that?'

As she observed the new creature that slowly approached with a strange glint in its eyes, she saw a few of the other animals around her move away, making her a bit sad. 'Oh... Why are they leaving?'

[System Hint: Thanks to your <World Tree> racial trait, you can focus on creatures to see their system stats. (If the level or strength difference is too big, you won't be able to see anything, and the other party might discover your attempt).]

Liu Shu's branches swayed as she looked at the new set of words that appeared in her mind. 'Focus? How do I do that?'

Sadly, another message never came.

Liu Shu looked intently at the approaching beaver, and when it was about 3 meters away, something suddenly appeared in her mind.

Name: ---

Titles:

<Tree Cutter>: Gained after felling 100 trees.

Race: River Beaver.

Energy Method: ---

Level: 5 [254/1470]

Aether Mana Shards: 107/107

Phoer Body Shards: 345/345

Anima Energy Shards: 110/110

Attributes: Aether (2), Physique (6), Anima (2), Willpower (5), Destiny (10)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (7), Physique Refinement (15), Anima Affinity (10)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (4), Physique Resistance (7), Spiritual Resistance (4), Mental Resistance (6)

Talents:

<Bark Bite (F rank level 3)>: Gnaw on a tree and decrease its physical resistance by 10%.

Passive:

<Dam Building (D Rank level 1)>: Innately know how to build a dam and a nest in a river.

Our Liu Shu looked at it and blinked, curious. 'Oh, the numbers are different from mine!'

Her "eyes" slowly looked at the system interface that just appeared, and her slow mind began thinking about what some of those words meant, and by the time the beaver was one meter away from her, she finally understood. 'Tree cutter!?'

Seeing the beaver slowly approach, Liu Shu was terrified. With a teary voice, she began telling it to go away. 'Don't come close! Bad beaver!'

However, since her words couldn't be communicated, the beaver approached and reached her trunk's side, making her feel a chill. 'Wuwuwu, is this how Liu Shu ends?'

While Liu Shu lamented her short life, the beaver opened his mouth and chomped on the side of our tree.

Clang!

The sound of something biting a very hard material echoed.

[A <River Beaver> has dealt 1 point of damage to you.]

[You've dealt 3 points of damage to <River Beaver>]

Liu Shu, who was prepared for pain like no other, couldn't help but become confused when the bite felt very light. Curious, she read the new set of words that appeared in her mind. 'Huh?'

She opened her <World Tree Eyes> again and looked at the beaver, which had tears in its eyes as it held its mouth. Liu Shu was naturally confused. 'What happened to the bad beaver?'

The beaver looked in confusion and pain at the trunk, which only had a minor blemish because of its bite. It had never met a trunk as solid as this one.

While the beaver was level five, and our little tree was only level one, Liu Shu's natural defense and regeneration were outstanding. Moreover, her Physique attribute was higher than the beaver's while the physical resistance was also very high, making its attacks deal very little damage to her.

The fact that the beaver's teeth didn't break when chomping down was the beaver's good luck that it encountered Liu Shu as a tiny level 1 being.

[System Hint: Killing enemies grants experience.]

Little Liu Shu looked at those words and pondered. 'Killing?'

[System Hint: Killing an enemy means reducing their Power to 0.]

Liu Shu received System Hints because of her immaturity as a World Tree.

World Trees could be said to be the little darlings of the Universe, so they were aided by the system when their knowledge was lacking in some aspects.

While Liu Shu read the system hints, the beaver began attacking her again, making a few red damage numbers to appear.

[-1]

[-1]

[-1]

[-1]

This time, it was cautious as it gnawed to not damage itself.

The World Tree looked at the beaver attacking her and pondered. 'So, killing is ending a creature's life. It is part of the cycle of life and death.'

The words she read from the system hints gave a fuzzy part of her young mind a clear understanding of the basic principles of the World.

While one might think that World Trees would love all life and be generous and forgiving, that was not entirely the case.

It was true that most World Trees preferred a non-confrontational approach. However, these trees weren't revered just because of the benefits they provided to creatures.

They were revered because very few could keep their lives when someone provoked a World Tree.

Liu Shu's mind became cold as her willow-like branches moved without wind, and her gaze locked on the beaver biting her trunk. Then, she read one of her skills.

<Willow Strike (F- Rank Level 1 [0/100])>: The World Tree is from a willow family, with characteristic long but thin branches. She can use Aether Mana to move them and strike a target. Range 5 meters.

Liu Shu focused on this skill and felt the Aether energies rushing along her body and enveloping her branches.

The beaver that was biting the trunk suddenly felt its entire being explode with danger signals and wanted to leave, but it was too late.

<Willow Strike>

BANG!

The tree's branch was like a metal whip, landing on the back of the beaver with fearsome strength for a level one being.

The strike sunk into the beaver's back, reaching the spine and damaging it greatly.

[-50]

The beaver's brain felt light as a massive wave of pain coursed through its body, and the hind legs stopped responding for a second.

Meanwhile, Liu Shu looked at the consumption of Aether Mana and saw that only five points were lost. Then, without hesitating a single moment, the willow's branches began moving with ruthless precision.

<Willow Strike>

[-38]

<Willow Strike>

[-22]

<Willow Strike>

[-71]

<Willow Strike>

[-36]

<Willow Strike>

[-44]

<Willow Strike>

[-68]

The sounds of several whip lashes landing on the beaver were heard. The small animal had no chance at resisting the barrage of attacks, and its Phoeer plummeted.

This continued until a message appeared in Liu Shu's mind.

[Congratulations on defeating <River Beaver Level 5>. You've gained 9 Experience Points.]

[System Hint: Different damage values will be shown depending on where the strike lands. Weak Points have a chance at instantly killing a creature.]

Liu Shu's branches stopped moving, and they softened again while the gentle wind that came moved them with a rustling sound.

Other than nature's sounds, the surroundings became silent, returning peace to the young World Tree.

Curious, Liu Shu observed the slightly deformed body of the relatively large creature. 'I see. So, this is death. Interesting.'

There was no pity or discomfort in Liu Shu's heart. The cycle of life and death was part of nature, and as a World Tree, one of the closest beings to nature, death didn't affect her in the same way it would a human.

This didn't mean she was unafraid or indifferent about death, as she had shown anxiety previously when she thought that the beaver would chop her down.

After looking at it for a few seconds, Liu Shu lost interest and observed her surroundings. Seeing that there were no creatures, she became a bit sad. 'Oh... did my hits scare them away?'

Her branches swayed gloomily, showing sadness.

However, our little tree was quick to recover from her gloomy mood, and she became cheerful again. 'When will the next little friend come?'

Her eyes landed on the <Willow Strike> skill and saw that the proficiency had increased. She gave her system page a look.

Name: Tianlian Liu Shu

Titles:

<Awakened>: A title that's gained when a tree gains sapience and evolves, gaining human-like intelligence.

<World Tree>: A tree that can grow to be an overlord, admired by many, hated by some.

Hidden titles: [9]

Race: World Tree.

Energy Method: Basic World Energy Gathering (Gathers experience points*Level per day.)

Level: 1 [0/150]

Aether Mana Shards: 58/113 (+4.07/Hour)

Phoer Body Shards: 169/176 (+6.34/Hour)

Anima Energy Shards: 120/120 (+4,32/Hour)

Attributes: Aether (7+2), Physique (9+4), Anima (8+2), Willpower (10), Destiny (100)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (25), Physique Refinement (35), Anima Affinity (20)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (28), Physique Resistance (48), Spiritual Resistance (35), Mental Resistance (49)

Talents:

<Enchanted Growth (E+ Rank level 1 [0/18000])>

<Nature's Gift (F- Rank level 1 [0/100])>

<Willow Strike (F- Rank level 1 [70/100])>

Passive Skill:

<World Tree Heart (A Rank Level 1 [0/589900])>

<World Tree Eye (C Rank level 1 [122/144000])>

<World Tree Wisdom (SSS Rank Level Max.)>

<Charm of the Seedling (F- Rank level 2 [3/200])>

Accumulated Experience: 16

Seeing the numbers grow, our Liu Shu felt happy. 'I'm growing~.'

She was very laid back about her development, but she was happy with her progress. Since she was just a tree, the concept of using her talents constantly to increase proficiency was not in her mind.

After her encounter with the beaver, another three days passed. Thanks to the beaver's corpse, our Liu Shu had a few new visitors during this time. She saw a few larger-than-usual birds with dark plumage called crows, and the strongest one was even a level 6 crow.

The thought of attacking them never crossed her mind. If World Tree were not provoked, they would never attack at will to become stronger. They would grow naturally and slowly.

Of course, the attraction of these birds increased her proficiency with <Charm of the seedling> skill two entire levels, upgrading it to F- Rank level four. These crows seemed quite comfortable around her, and they had called their friends to set up their nests in nearby, more giant trees.

Still, they would swoop down and land on Liu Shu's branches from time to time, as her aura was very appealing to all creatures.

Thinking of something, Liu Shu looked at her skills and observed her <Nature's Gift> skill.

'Fruits... If I create fruits, will these little friends eat them and come often?'

Thinking like that, Liu Shu began moving her Aether Mana and Anima Energy around her body, slowly allowing it to flow toward her branches.

[You've created <Delicious Berry flower>.]

<Delicious Berry flower (F- Rank)>: A blue flower that blooms with three <Delicious Berry> after germinating for 30 days.

<Delicious Berry (F- Rank)>: It is a common, seedless berry with a savory taste and good scent. Low-level animals love it, especially birds. It can give one experience point when level 9 and lower creatures consume it. Maximum 3 a day.

[System Hint: You can pour one Aether Mana and Anima Energy daily into each flower to reduce the germinating period by ten days.]

Liu Shu read everything slowly, absorbing the information, and then felt elated. 'I hope they like my fruits.'

After using 10 Aether Mana and 10 Anima energy, 20 flower buds appeared along the long branches of the World Tree.

After that, Liu Shu smoothly controlled the energies in her body and fed each flower with extra energy, making her consume 30 Aether Mana and 30 Anima Energy in total.

The flower buds glowed softly and opened at a visible speed, becoming half-opened and gaining their characteristic blue color in just two hours.

Liu Shu looked at her skill and saw that she had gained 3 Proficiency Points. Feeling proud and delighted, her branches softly danced, and her aura spread and gently surrounded all the animals and plants around her.

Chapter 4. Upgrading Skills! Fraar, The Thornstride.

Days were calm for Liu Shu. Her every day consisted of leisurely looking at her surroundings while growing fruits and sometimes using her other skill called <Enchanted Growth>.

Still, Enchanted Growth was a skill that consumed too much energy, so after she used it the first day and got dizzy after just a few seconds of using it, she never used it again.

The consumption of the E+ ranked skill was still too much for a level one being, even if this being was a World Tree.

While her days passed, a system hint would arrive from time to time, clarifying a few doubts our little Liu Shu might had. For example, she learned that the power level difference was increasingly vaster as levels increased. Another example was that skills grew in rank whenever they reached level five and capped in proficiency.

For example, <Charm of the Seedling> was level four not long ago, but earlier that day, the skill had grown to Rank F- Level Five with 498/500 proficiency.

While looking at that number, Liu Shi was expectant of seeing it grow to another level.

Our little tree saw a beetle with a beautiful yellow shell flying and landing on one of her branches with a <Delicious Berry>, and the notification was triggered.

[<Charm of the Seedling> has attracted a [Level 3 Earth Beetle]. Proficiency increased by 3. (501/500)]

[<Charm of the Seedling> has reached the maximum level. Spend 15 Experience to increase its tier.]

When Liu Shu heard the second message, her mind was filled with surprise. 'I need to spend experience?'

[System Hint: When a skill reaches level 5, it can evolve and increase in Tier. The level will be reset to one, but the effects will go under a qualitative change. Experience needed depends on the tier of the skill. Difficulty in gaining proficiency for the skill will increase.]

Liu Shu took her time reading the message and understanding it. After one hour, she finally understood everything. Thoughtful, her branches swayed as. 'Should I do it?'

Her focus changed to the accumulated experience.

[Accumulated Experience: 91]

During the last few days, a few minor bugs tried to eat her berries before they were mature, so she swatted them with her branches, giving her about two experience points per kill.

Then, Liu Shu's eyes went to her level.

[Level 1 (0/150)]

Our little tree's mind slowly moved. 'Should I save for the level-up?'

If she had brows, they would be scrunched to the point of touching. This was the second most arduous decision of her life! For those curious, the most difficult was when she chose not to level up in the past to keep her title. An outstanding achievement for our little tree!

As she thought about what to do, the Sun in the sky was about to hide on the horizon. She was a tree, after all, so she took her time.

Finally, after much consideration, she chose to use the experience to tier up the talent. Her reasoning was nothing but thinking that since she liked being surrounded by other beings, she might as well upgrade the thing that allowed her to meet all the little animals flocking around her.

Our Liu Shu had nothing but time on her hands, so she wasn't hasty to level up. With that decided, after she gave the daily energy to the flowers growing <Delicious Berries> on her branches, she looked at the little friends that played around her and used the experience.

[15 Experience Points consumed. <Charm of the seedling> has gone from F- rank to F rank.]

<Charm of the seedling (F Rank Level 1 [0/200])>: Attracts small animals and insects to the area, fostering a harmonious ecosystem. There is a very small chance of attracting a friendly, bigger animal or insect that will help protect you. Creatures below the F Rank will be affected with much ease. Range 20 meters.

When the skill improved, a gentle ripple of energy spread from Liu Shu to about 20 meters around her. The plants, animals, and insects in the surroundings stopped for a second and looked at the two-meter-tall tree, their eyes, even when they didn't have intelligence, gaining a gleam of gentleness.

However, while friendly creatures were attracted, the tree's aura also drew other types of creatures.

A few moments before upgrading the talent, a quadrupedal green beast with a tree-bark-like skin, about one and a half meters long, was leisurely walking in the forest. Because it was getting late, the beast was returning to his dwellings.

This beast was a [Level 7 Thornstride].

This kind of creature fed on plants, small animals, and trees. It was a predator that evolved from plants, with an appearance similar to a lizard, with a muscular body and sharp claws that it used to slice trees and a mouth full of razor-sharp teeth to pierce into the bark and feed on it.

In a World where creatures that evolved from plant life appeared, predators specialized in eating trees were not uncommon.

As it walked, the Thornstride suddenly felt a fluctuation to its right. The pupils of the creature shrunk as the scent tempted its stomach.

As a level 7 being, it was like a tiny overlord in the nearby zone. Its strength as a predator was higher than most creatures in a small range.

Its body shifted directions, and it began walking toward where the tempting aura originated from.

Meanwhile, Liu Shu, whose roots were already spread in an area of 15 meters, saw the beast approaching from the foliage.

When Liu Shu saw the beast, she focused on it to see its stats. It was something she did often after her encounter with the beaver.

Name: Fraar.

Titles:

<Tribe Heir>: He is the son of the Thornstride Tribe Chief and was personally appointed to be the successor. After the user reaches level 10, this title will be replaced by <Tribe Chieftain>.

<Tree Devour>: Gained after eating 100 trees of level 3 and above. Damage against Tree beings increased by 5%.

Race: Barkskin Thornstride.

Energy Method: ---

Level: 7 [254/1470]

Aether Mana Shards: 150/150

Phoer Body Shards: 725/ 725

Anima Energy Shards: 231/231

Attributes: Aether (2), Physique (9), Anima (3), Willpower (7), Destiny (7)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (7), Physique Refinement (15), Anima Affinity (10)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (4), Physique Resistance (8), Spiritual Resistance (5), Mental Resistance (7)

Talents:

<Thorn Chomp (F rank level 4)>: Bite a tree and decrease its physical resistance by 20%.

<Stride Slash (F+ Rank Level 1)>: Slash with the powerful claws. Ignore 10% defense if it is a Tree.

Passive:

<Acute Nose (F+ Rank level 3)>: Your nose is 4 times stronger than usual. You can catch the scent of creatures that would boost your strength if they are five levels lower than you.

<Bark Skin (F Rank Level 2)>: Your skin is tough and resistant to slash and piercing damage. Low-level thorns do nothing to you. Reduce those two damage types by 10%.

Liu Shu saw those numbers and skills and was stunned. This thing had almost seven times her Phoeer Body Shards! Thankfully, her attributes were still stronger than its attributes. But with such a strong vitality, Liu Shu felt that if this beast had bad intentions, it would be very difficult for her.

She couldn't help but lament. 'In the end, Liu Shu is not fated to live for long. Why has this bad friend come?'

[System Hint: It's your fault.]

Liu Shu was shocked. 'My fault? How?'

As she thought of these things, the Thornstride had closed the distance, and when he was 10 meters away from Liu Shu, he finally spotted her. The reptilian eyes of the creature shone with joy when it spotted her.

Liu Shu felt the greedy desire from the creature, and her mind cooled down, setting aside her laments.

Her aura leaked, showing her strength as a World Tree, which made the Thornstride stop for a second and become wary. Although Liu Shu was just a level one, that didn't mean she was weak.

Her physique alone was 13 points, four more than the creature, not to mention her other attributes were also far superior. The only reason her vitality was low was her low level.

Moreover, after killing bugs and such that bothered her, <Willow Strike> had leveled up, becoming stronger than before.

After measuring our Liu Shu for some moments, Fraar leaped forward with incredible agility.

While a tree's thought process was usually slow, it only applied outside of combat. When a tree fought, it concentrated every single fiber of its body into the fight, making the thought process equal and, sometimes, superior to that of common creatures.

When Fraar was 5 meters away from Liu Shu, Aether Mana flowed from her trunk, enveloping one of her dropping branches, and it lashed like a whip at astonishing speed.

Fraar's pupils constricted, and he moved his face to avoid a direct hit.

Bang!

The tree branch landed squarely across the shoulder-neck area, leaving behind a trail of blood.

[-72]

A large number appeared in Liu Shu's mind, but she completely ignored that as her <World Tree Eye> focused on the creature's every movement.

Fraar had retreated a few meters, frowning in pain. 'To think that my tough skin would be so easily damaged. This tree is stronger than it looks!'

That's right, this creature had thoughts, as it was a sapient being. Of course, its intelligence was far from that of an average human or Sylvan, but it had enough mental development to form simple thoughts.

For a moment, Fraar thought of returning to his tribe and informing them about this tree. However, when he thought that his father would probably eat it without giving him anything, he frowned.

The scent Liu Shu emanated was very tempting, and greed clouded Fraar's judgment.

With his hiss-like roar, Fraar leaped forward, intending to exchange injury for injury.

Naturally, Liu Shu had observed Fraar's abilities, and she knew that letting him close the distance between them would be very dangerous. Her willow-like branch came alive, and without holding back, she began lashing at the creature.

<Willow Strike>

<Willow Strike>

<Willow Strike.>

<Willow Strike >

<Willow Strike >

While Fraar closed the five-meter range between him and Liu Shu, five strikes hit him, stealing more than half of the beast's vitality.

The pain was so bad that it made his eyesight blurry, and as a primarily wild creature, the instinct to flee dominated his mind for a second.

However, a whiff of Liu Shu's tempting scent tickled his sharp olfactory sense, making his blood boil in excitement, and he continued charging forward, disregarding everything.

After tanking those five hits, he finally entered melee range.

Liu Shu looked at the beast that was raising its claws and prepared, making her Phoeer surround her trunk. 'Resist it!'

Fraar's eyes shone, and his long claw gleamed with the Sun's reflection. Then, he used his most vigorous attack.

<Stride Slash!>

This attack was able to divide trees into half that were even three times as thick as the tree before him, so he was confident.

Liu Shu was a stationary tree, so dodging was impossible.

The claw of the beast struck Liu Shu's trunk, digging inside one centimeter and inflicting severe damage.

[-66]

Her vitality was only 176 points, and receiving such damage even after her damage reduction passives was impressive.

However, Fraar was stunned.

Liu Shu's trunk was not that thick, so he thought that a single strike would be enough to slice the Tree in half. However, to his surprise, he only saw a deep mark that began spilling honey-colored glistening sap.

The scent of the sap made his body react, and he opened his mouth, wanting to chomp forward. However, before he could do that, all the branches of the World Tree moved, and a notification appeared in Liu Shu's mind.

[You've created <Willow Strike Barrage (F Rank Level 1)>.]

Then, Fraar's mouth was forcefully closed as a powerful strike hit his head several times per second.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!

[-41]

[-41]

[-41]

[-41]

[-41]

[-41]

Hit after hit landed on him, and although they were weaker than previously, the number of attacks was incomparable.

Fraar's legs bent, unable to bear the strength of the attacks, and his body was struck constantly against the ground.

After three seconds, Fraar felt the attacks stop, his vitality nothing but a sliver away from death. This time, completely scared, he tried to stand up and leave. However, the branches of the World Tree began moving again.

Those who offended a World Tree would not be left alive by it.

<Willow Strike Barrage!>

The long branches began moving again, delivering another rain of attacks, each strike creating a loud bang. Since most of them fell on his head, Fraar couldn't even roar in pain; after being repeatedly hit, his skull shattered, and his consciousness finally disappeared.

The body of the beast looked swollen and mangled, with the skin split in several places as if someone had dug into him.

[Congratulations on defeating <Bark Thornstride Level 7>. You've gained 19 Experience Points.]

When that message entered Liu Shi's mind, her branches stopped the assault, returning to their gentle swaying.

Right after, when Liu Shi returned to her natural state of mind, the world began spinning around her. Her mind felt light and fuzzy as her <World Tree Eye> couldn't even properly give her a look at the outcome.

'Oh! Wow~! The world is spinning~!'

Curious, she looked at her Aether Mana and exclaimed. 'Wow, I have so little left!'

Aether Mana: 11/113

Our poor Liu Shu had Aether Mana deficiency.

Previously, Liu Shi had been feeding her berries with her Aether Mana. So, after using <Willow Strike> five times and <Willow Strike Barrage> twice, her Aether Mana almost reached zero, making her feel lightheaded.

But other than that, Liu Shu managed to regain her investment in the skill after killing Fraar. Spending 15 experience and gaining 19 later, she netted a total of 4 experience points!

Name: Tianlian Liu Shu

Titles:

<Awakened>: A title that's gained when a tree gains sapience and evolves, gaining human-like intelligence.

<World Tree>: A tree that can grow to be an overlord, admired by many, hated by some.

Hidden titles: [9]

Race: World Tree.

Energy Method: Basic World Energy Gathering (Gathers experience points*Level per day.)

Level: 1 [0/150]

Aether Mana Shards: 11/113 (+4.07/Hour)

Phoer Body Shards: 110/176 (+6.34/Hour)

Anima Energy Shards: 91/120 (+4,32/Hour)

Attributes: Aether (7+2), Physique (9+4), Anima (8+2), Willpower (10), Destiny (100)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (25), Physique Refinement (35), Anima Affinity (20)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (23), Physique Resistance (29), Spiritual Resistance (24), Mental Resistance (26)

Talents:

<Enchanted Growth (E+ Rank level 1 [2/18000])>

<Nature's Gift (F- Rank level 2 [140/200])>

<Willow Strike (F- Rank level 3 [0/300])>:

<Willow Strike Barrage (F Rank level 1 [20/200])>: The World Tree uses all her branches to strike at her enemy. She can use Aether Mana to trigger this skill, allowing her to attack for three seconds uninterrupted. Range 3 meters.

Passive Skills:

<World Tree Heart (A Rank Level 1 [0/589900])>

<World Tree Eye (C Rank level 1 [221/144000])>

<World Tree Wisdom (SSS Rank Level Max.)>

<Charm of the Seedling (F Rank Level 1 [7/200])>: Attracts small animals and insects to the area, fostering a harmonious ecosystem. There is a very small chance of attracting a friendly, bigger animal or insect that will help protect you. Creatures below the F Rank will be affected with much ease. Range 20 meters.

Accumulated Experience: 94

Chapter 5. A New Visitor! Rose Fairies.

The next morning, Liu Shu felt much better. During the night, her Aether mana had recovered by more than half, while her Phoeer Shards had already completely recovered.

The wound on her bark had closed, and only the glistening sap remained on her trunk. That, too, had started to harden, and soon, it would crystalize and fall off her trunk.

Tree sap was mostly made of water, with minerals and sugars mixed in it, so when interacting with air, the water would evaporate, leaving behind a concentrated matter of sugar and minerals. As a World Tree, her sap was incredibly precious, but there was no one who could collect it without being smacked in the head.

Of course, there had been plenty of bugs that tried to eat it; the scent it emitted was extremely tempting, but Liu Shu felt strange each time a creature tried to eat it, and she smacked them away with her branches.

These bugs were nothing but Level 1 F- rank creatures, so they would all get killed by a single strike. As a level one being, she would gain about 1 Experience Point when killing F- Rank Level 1 beings. For level 0 beings, she didn't earn anything.

As a result, her accumulated experience had taken a significant leap, reaching 122 points.

Tianlian Liu Shu didn't know if this was good or bad. After all, she was killing quite a few living beings. However, other than feeling a bit doubtful, there was no reluctance in her movements.

'A good day! The Sun is nice, and the wind is moving my branches~.'

She was actually quite in a good mood.

[<Basic World Energy Gathering> has triggered! You have gained 1 Experience Point.]

Liu Shu's good mood got even better. 'Now, I have 123 points!'

Bzzz

Smack!

'Now I have 124 points!'

Somehow, the tone of this exclamation was not as cheery as previously.

Of course, as a tree, she didn't really feel annoyed, just a bit exasperated. Seeing the splattered bug through her <World Tree Eye>, Liu Shu sighed in her mind. 'When will my sap lose its effectiveness?'

As she thought that, a Level 2 Jungle Fly approached, and her branch moved like a whip, smacking that fly into smithereens.

[Congratulations on defeating <Jungle Fly Level 2>. You've gained 1 Experience Point.]

Another message popped into her mind as she pondered what to do with her sap. Even as a level two being, because of her high natural tier, the fly only gave her 1 Experience Point.

Liu Shu looked at her branches and saw that many of the flowers were about to grow into berries, so she willed it in her mind.

[You've reduced the ripening time by ten days on 30 flowers, -30 Aether Mana, -30 Anima Energy.]

Looking at her branches with anticipation, Liu Shu saw her energies rush from her core up her trunk and into her branches. The soft glow of energy surrounded those 30 flowers, and the seed in the middle of the dark blue flowers began swelling.

At first, it was a greenish and unripe fruit that appeared, but visible to the naked eye, the fruit swelled and gained a beautiful dark blue color, similar to the flower it grew from.

Satisfied with her new fruits, Liu Shu gleefully thought in her mind. 'I hope the little friends like them!'

Suddenly, two messages popped in her mind.

[<Charm of the Seedling> has triggered. Attracting a friendly creature.]

If she could blink in surprise, she would. 'A friend?'

Then, she read the second message.

[<Charm of the Seedling> has attracted a <Rose Fairy Level 8>. Proficiency increased by 8.

]

Liu Shu was a bit dazed, and then she became happy. 'Another little friend! Moreover, this one is level 8! The highest I've ever seen!'

She expanded her <World Tree Eye> to the maximum, looking around in a 15-meter radius, and patiently waited for the new friend to appear.

From the east, a little humanoid-like being with leaf-like wings buzzing behind her appeared.

She had milky white skin, with her hair being a beautiful red, the same for her eyes. The eyes were not normal, as they were solid-colored eyes, completely red and shiny, like a pair of rubies.

She was slender, and her height was not more than 20 centimeters. Still, her proportions were attractive, looking like a beautiful flying doll.

Liu Shu looked at the little humanoid being with interest. It was the first time she saw something humanoid like her.

Focusing on the hovering fairy that was sizing her up, Liu Shu spread her system interface.

Name: Clavel

Titles:

<Rose Fairy>: Affinity with plant beings increased by 10%

Race: Rose Fairy

Energy Method: Simple pollination (gain experience equal to <Flora level*tier>/<Your level> per flower. Can be used once a day.)

Level: 8 [0/3245]

Aether Mana Shards: 763/920

Phoer Body Shards: 257/257

Anima Energy Shards: 411/440

Attributes: Aether (10), Physique (3), Anima (5), Willpower (4), Destiny (16)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (15), Physique Refinement (7), Anima Affinity (10)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (8), Physique Resistance (5), Spiritual Resistance (6), Mental Resistance (6)

Talents:

<Basic Pollination (F+ Rank Level 4)>: Pollinize a flower. The pollinated flower will gain a small buff of five percent extra growth rate, five percent production, and [Plant Level + Fairy Level] Experience. You can only use it once a week on the same plant. (System Note: Unless a higher-ranked Pollination is done, other creatures with this ability also can't use it on the same plant for a week. Higher-rank pollination effects will also be reduced.)

<Leaf Strike (F+ Rank Level 2)>: Use Aether Mana to move the leaves around you to your will and harden them, creating flying slashing attacks. Range 20 meters.

<Plant Heal (F Rank Level 4)>: Use Aether Mana to heal a plant-based creature. The higher the level and tier of the plant, the smaller the healing you can give them. Range 5 meters.

Passive Skills:

<Friend of Plants (F+ Rank Level Max)>: Plants innately like you. However, if you purposely harm them, they will quickly feel betrayed and hate you.

<Life Sense (F- Rank Level Max)>: As a creature born from the forest, your senses toward living beings are very sharp.

Liu Shu looked at the numbers and exclaimed. 'This little friend is so strong!' Moreover, although Liu Shu couldn't do math normally, she innately understood that the attacks of this little friend could reach her from outside her detection range, making her practically unable to defend herself. 'Thankfully, this is a little friend and not a little bad friend.'

Meanwhile, a few moments earlier, Clavel was flying toward her nest when her <Life Sense> suddenly triggered quite strongly. This made her stop and look westwards. 'Such a strong life aura. Thankfully, it feels gentle, or I might have had to call the chief.'

Curious, she flew toward it with a smile. 'What kind of little darling has triggered my senses?'

Her leaf-like wings flapped with a humming sound as she approached the place she detected, and soon, she discovered a relatively small but exceptionally beautiful Willow Tree. Even when she was just a seedling, one could feel that she would grow to be an imposing and magnificent being.

'Wow, this little darling is so pretty!'

Then, her gaze moved down, attracted by the stiff and mangled body on the tree's base, and her eyebrows shot up. 'Huh? Isn't that Fraar? What is he doing...?' After a few moments, she realized that he was dead, making her face change. 'What killed him?'

Clavel became cautious, stopping her approach and trying to analyze the small tree. 'Can it be you, little darling?'

There were plenty of flora that looked small and weak to attract prey, but instead, they were strong, so she focused on analyzing the being.

Level: 1

Aether Mana Shards: 52/113

Phoer Body Shards: 176/176

Anima Energy Shards: 91/120

Unlike World Trees, the extent to which other creatures could peer into the system was minimal. Still, it was enough to give a general idea of a creature's strength.

Clavel was shocked. 'Isn't she just a level one cutie? What are those stats?'

Still, with such low numbers, Clavel was quite sure that this little darling was not responsible for Fraar's death. 'Did another creature kill Fraar and leave it by the seedling's side?'

Clavel pondered for a second. Nevertheless, now that she was reassured that Liu Shu was not aggressive, she flew toward her side while gently asking. "Little friend, do you know anything about how this big fellow appeared here?"

Of course, her question was rhetoric, as she couldn't communicate with plants. Moreover, plants also couldn't understand speech.

Therefore, she didn't expect any reaction.

To her surprise, the tree began lightly swaying as if trying to communicate with her. Clavel's eyes shone as she laughed gently. "Oh my, you understand me? You are so clever, little one."

Clavel saw the tree moving again, and her eyes softened as she approached and caressed the Tree's trunk. However, before Clavel's hand touched her trunk, she spotted a place with a mark and some sap around it.

Her eyes instantly cooled down as Aether Mana gathered around her. Then, she snarled while looking around. "Who did this!?"

She used about 100 Aether Mana into <Life Sense>, and her detection range multiplied, sensing all creatures that might have the sap on them in an extensive radius.

To her surprise, the feeling came from right below her. Her eyes followed her senses and landed on the Fraar's claw. "Hm?"

Clavel blinked several times, looking between the healing scar on the tree's trunk and Fraar's claw. 'No way, right? A Level 1 defeating a Level 7?'

Looking closer, the injuries around Fraar appeared to be created by something hard and heavy hitting him several times.

She scanned the branches of the little darling she just found and Fraar's wounds and realized they matched. 'Ha?'

With surprise in her eyes, she looked at the tiny tree. "You did this?"

Her tone was incredulous. How could her little cutie create such horrible wounds? The feeling around Liu Shu was extraordinarily gentle and welcoming.

Clavel couldn't imagine this little tree to be so fierce to beat someone at Fraar's level to death.

However, as if to confirm her thoughts, she suddenly saw a small beetle flying toward the sap.

'Tsk, little bug. Begone-'

She frowned, about to stop the thing, but suddenly, she heard the sound of air whistling, and one of the branches of the little tree flashed, hitting the flying beetle with extreme accuracy and instantly killing it.

Moreover, the strength behind the strike bade the bug pop like a balloon, sending wings and chunks of it flying around in all directions.

Clavel's mouth and eyes became wide open. Then, she thought of placing herself in the beetle's place, and her spine chilled. 'That attack is too strong! Is she really level one? It feels like a level nine creature just attacked!'

After realizing that the little tree before her was not simple, Clavel laughed and hugged Liu Shu's trunk, making the tree gently but strangely sway. "You are full of surprises, aren't you, little darling? Now that I think about it, how could a normal being have more than 100 shards on your Ternary Essences at Level 1? I only had 23 Aether Mana, 11 Phoer, and 11 Anima Energy at level 1! Yet you almost have 200 Phoer! You are really wonderful, little darling."

Her eyes then moved toward Fraar, and they radiated chilling, killing intent. "He probably realized that you weren't normal and tried to eat you. Tree eater scum, you finally got what you deserved."

Then, she looked at Liu Shu again with gentleness in her eyes. "Thankfully, you were strong enough to defend yourself. Nice to meet you, little one. My name is Clavel. I'm a Rose Fairy."