

Ascension of the Sylvan Cosmos.

Chapter 16. Cinderielle.

A woman with fiery red hair and beautiful orange-colored eyes was seen walking down the street. She was wearing a beautiful red dress, and her steps were light and cheery.

She was currently walking toward the school, and today was the initiation day. Usually, Sylvans and Humans waited until they were 18 to gain their first points of Experience and become Level 1.

This ceremony was meaningful because one would know if they were apt to become someone important.

Fortuna City, where the 18-year-old lived, had many prestigious schools. However, to enter the top-notch ones, one needed to be talented. Moreover, more often than not, Sylvans and Humans were separated.

Only public schools allowed for mixes to happen. But Sylvans attending that kind of place was strange because of the innate nobility of their race.

While Sylvans weren't as numerous as humans, they were innately stronger and had longer life spans.

The only limitation of their race was their predetermined paths to build themselves up. Each Sylvan was blessed and born with a unique talent. Of course, that didn't mean that they were locked in that path. However, success was almost always guaranteed if they did.

In the case of the red-haired woman, she knew that her talent would be something related to fire.

After all, while she still hasn't become a Level 1, she knew the name of her race. She was a Pyroaether Emberites, a very rare type of Sylvan that specialized in fire control.

The woman passed over a stall at the side and saw herself reflected in a transparent surface.

She had grown a lot since she was little. Now, she was tall, slender, and with a mature face. Even at 18, with traces of her young visage left, it was clear that she would become a striking woman once she reached her mid-twenties.

During these 18 years, she had learned a lot about her own race and the humans. While both races grew up and matured similarly, Sylvans were connected to trees by

ancestry. Hence, their middle stages of life were longer thanks to some extra genes coming from those trees.

What was difficult for Sylvans was to have humanoid children. There was a way to sow seeds and make them grow into trees but to create Sylvan offspring, a Sylvan needed one of the two.

First, a human male that was compatible with them. This was not only extremely difficult to find, but also the chances of a Sylvan being born from sexual intercourse were slim and unreliable.

That's why most Sylvans didn't see humans as potential partners. Plus, as a Sylvan, having intercourse with humans was scientifically proven not to be that pleasant.

Her own family made of a human and a Sylvan was rare.

So, if not humans, which were Sylvans' options for mating and creating Sylvan offspring?

Plant creatures or other Sylvans.

While all Sylvans were female, very few were born with an organ to impregnate. It was so rare that only 1 in 100,000 was born this way.

With such a low birth rate for those, Sylvan's last option was flora.

Sylvan's pregnancy worked by fertilizing the seeds in their wombs with a plant's pollen or a compatible sperm. Depending on the species, there were cases of Sylvan planting their seeds in a tree or a flower and allowing them to grow.

However, not all plant beings were appropriate to mate with.

For example, wild trees without thoughts, regular flowers, bushes, etc., are like monkeys are to humans. They might be somewhat similar to humans, but seeing them as sexually attractive was not only frowned upon but also strange. The same happened to Sylvans looking at flora.

Still, thanks to the ability to grow granted by the System, many plants could gain consciousness equal to humans. Sylvans cared for them, and if both sides agreed, they would develop into a partner situation.

Those creatures could be trees, human-sized flowers, or even another kind of flora. They were candidates as long as they had crossed the threshold of being an intelligent species and not a monster-like one.

Plus, a Sylvan's love was different from a Human's in that it was prevalent. Once Sylvan chose a partner, it was very difficult for them to lose affection toward that partner.

Now, how could you tell where this line was? Well, it was similar to humans seeing other humans and knowing by instinct which people were worthy and which were not. In short, instinct.

But regardless of the world's customs and culture, the red-haired woman has never felt attracted to anyone or any plant in her life.

She was beautiful, and above all, she was the rare type of Sylvan with both sexual genitals, making her prime relationship partner. However, she had turned down all courtship and focused on bettering herself.

For Sylvans, humans, and similar humanoid races, the state of the body was important in the sense that it brought more base improvement.

The red-haired woman continued walking down the street and arrived at the place she had probably visited the most throughout her life.

It was a street with typical street stalls and low ceilings, allowing people to raise their gaze a bit to spot the massive World Tree that towered over everything, covering half the city with its canopy.

"So many years have passed since that day..." She sighed and lightly tapped her cheeks. Cinderielle, wake up. Now is not the time to go search; you are too weak."

After saying that, Cinderielle, the red-haired Sylvan woman, picked up her pace and walked through the city to reach the place to do the initiation.

It was not very complicated because, as a Level 0, they only needed 10 Experience points to level up.

After arriving at the large plaza, she could spot her parents waiting for her. Her mother called her. "Cinder! We are here!"

Cinderielle moved toward them with a smile. "I'm coming, Mom!"

Her mother saw a few loose strands of hair from the wind blowing and sighed. "Where did you go, child? I thought you wouldn't arrive in time!"

Cinderielle chuckled mischievously. "Mom, I'm also eager. How could I not arrive in time?"

Cinderielle then looked around at the crowded place and saw a middle-aged woman with a dignified appearance stepping forward. The flowers on her pure black hair with white natural accents revealed her nature as a Sylvan.

While humans and Sylvans looked similar physically, in official situations, Sylvans wore flowers in their hair, while human women wore beautiful wooden accessories.

Moreover, while a human's hair color ranged between blonde color and back colors, Sylvans didn't stop there. As soon as you looked around, you could find Sylvans with all types of hair colors, most of the time related to their heritage.

The black-haired woman started her speech with a flat tone, her sharp eyes looking indifferent.

"First of all, let me thank all people who have come to see this sacred ritual. With the help of the [Growth Fruit], our children will now step into the holy path of the system. While innate differences exist, I ask all children and parents present not to be judgmental. Innate qualities are important, but what matters is how we live and how we advance. The headmaster of our school was someone with low talent, and yet he has managed to become someone of a high stature. I hope that following him as an example can soothe your heart if you are someone without an excellent aptitude."

Her speech was short and concise, and her voice sounded neutral.

For a Sylvan to show signs of maturity like the black-haired woman had meant that they had lived for a very long time. Cinderielle thought with a laugh. 'She has probably done this so often that she goes completely by instinct now.'

The speech continued for a while, promulgating the customs and also praising the World Tree in the middle of the city for such valuable fruits.

After a while, the ceremony truly started.

"Aackasoc Riverdoor, step forward."

With the call of the black-haired Sylvan, a human man stepped forward. He was, like everyone participating today, 18 years old. With a lean body and a nervous appearance, the boy-just-turned-man walked forward stiffly.

A rough voice was heard from the back. "You stupid son, what are you so embarrassed about? Stick your chest out!"

Although rough, one could tell it carried unmistakable good intentions.

Of course, this provoked a few laughs, which made the fair-skinned man blush. The black-haired woman didn't stop it.

It wasn't unusual for the family to give a few words of encouragement. Moreover, while this ritual was formal, it was a ritual made to step into adulthood, not some religious and sacred ritual where no interruptions were allowed.

As long as people didn't go overboard, it was fine.

Aackasoc arrived in front of the black-haired Sylvan and bent forward while extending his arms and cupping his hands in a gesture to receive. "I-I, Aackasoc, declare that today, I have become an adult!"

The woman nodded flatly. "Good, Aackasoc, take the fruit and eat it."

Aackasoc took it and straightened his back, saying one more sentence before doing so. "I thank our protector, the World Tree of Fate City, for this gift!"

The middle-aged woman nodded, and Aackasoc took the fruit. It was half the size of a palm, making it easier to eat it in one bite.

After eating, he masticated the sweet fruit and eventually swallowed it.

[You've eaten <Fortuna Fruit>, your destiny is increased by 50 for one year, and you gain 10 Experience Points. You can only eat one <Fortuna Fruit> in your life]

After that, he poured his 10 Experience Points into his level.

[Level Up!]

[Aether +1, Physique +2, Anima +1, Willpower +3, Destiny +2.]

A small rush of energy was released from his body, and then, it finished. Aackasoc blinked and looked at the black-haired woman.

The woman asked. "How many stats did you gain? Remember, if you lie and you are later discovered, you'll be punished with life imprisonment."

Aackasoc obediently told her, and the black-haired woman nodded flatly and assessed him. "Aether: F- Rank. Physique: F Rank. Anima: F- Rank. Willpower: F+ Rank. Destiny: F Rank. Overall score, F Rank. Next, Aavorila Furfest."

Aackasoc blinked a few times, dazed, but he didn't dare stay there, so he quickly returned to his parent's side. His father slapped his back, forcing him to stumble a few steps. "Didn't you hear Lady Eila Neoflora say? Stats are not everything."

Aackasoc looked at him and nodded. "Sorry, Dad."

The rugged middle-aged man smirked. "Let's go home, Son. We need to see which schools will accept a loser F Rank like you. HAHAAAAHA."

Aackasoc almost tripped as he left.

Cinderielle looked at that situation from a distance with a thoughtful look. Her mother grabbed her hand. "Don't worry, Cinder. We also won't mind what rank you are."

Cinderielle smiled and squeezed her hand back.

After a while, she was finally called. "Next, Cinderielle Emberites."

Cinderielle walked out, and when she stepped outward, nobody noticed, but Eila's eyes flashed with surprise. However, she was quick to hide it, acting as indifferent as she did with the rest.

Cinderielle bent forward, extending her arms, and said with a firm voice. "I, Cinderielle, declare that today, I have become an adult."

Eila nodded. "Good, Cinderielle, take the fruit and eat it."

Cinderielle took it and straightened her back, curiously observing the white fruit. However, she didn't take any more time to observe than the one she used to retrieve her arms. Then, she said solemnly. "I thank our protector, the World Tree of Fate City, for this gift."

Then, she ate it and used the 10 Experience points to Level up.

The person with the best score until now was someone with an overall E- Rank. Moreover, they barely reached it, so the effects of the Level-ups weren't that noticeable.

However, Cinderielle was different.

The air around her began swirling as strands of flames appeared around her. Pure energy rushed at her and was absorbed in her body, and then, she leveled up.

[Level Up!]

[Aether +6, Physique +3, Anima +4, Willpower +5, Destiny +12.]

[Title unlocked!... Error: Title conditions have not been met yet, moving it to <Hidden Titles>.]

[Innate Affinities Unlocked]

[Hidden Attribute: Aether Flame Affinity, enhanced!]

[Two New Talents Acquired!]

[One New Passive Skill Acquired!]

Eila's eyes flashed as she looked at her system. With the difference in levels between them, inspecting Cinderielle shouldn't be a problem.

However, unlike what she expected, she just saw the essential information.

Name: Cinderielle

Level: 1 [0/140]

Aether Mana Shards: 96/96

Phoer Body Shards: 46/46

Anima Energy Shards: 58/58

'I can't see through?' Eila Neoflora's facade was almost broken as she barely held herself from showing surprise. 'With my level, I'm still unable to see further. Interesting.'

The black-haired woman closely observed Cinderielle. 'However, for those basic stats...'

Eila had seen plenty of people, so she knew that the child before her was at least E Rank, approaching the E+ Rank, which was extremely rare. Seeing one or two at this rank in a remote place just after being initiated was rare to the extremes.

'Plus, if her Aether Mana is that high at Level 1, she might have D- Rank Aether.'

Eila saw Cinderielle finished stabilizing her situation, so she spoke in a stoic tone. "Cinderielle, would you like to join our school?"

Cinderielle, who was preparing to turn and leave, blinked her orange eyes a few times and made a stupid sound. "Eh?"

Chapter 17. Cinderielle Attends School!

"Wow... I'm really here."

Cinderielle stood before a pair of massive wooden white gates with her mouth agape. She still could remember the invitation and how stupidly she reacted, making her face blush. 'Ahh! Why did I answer stupidly like that? I could see her lips arching up in amusement! That stoic woman laughing is like a hereditary humiliation!'

Cinderielle internally shed tears, but she quickly recovered. 'Whatever. Now, I'm part of the Fortuna First School, so I must put in effort to become someone powerful in the future.'

Cinderielle's mind flashed back to the past, and her eyes became void of any of her usual playfulness. 'I must be strong enough to roam the world and find the owner of that leaf...'

With that in mind, she confidently stepped forward and approached the gates.

A man with an indifferent expression welcomed Cinderielle. "Welcome to the Fortuna First School. Please show your Identification Slab."

Cinderielle reached into her bag, which was made out of perfectly sewn blue leaves, and picked a white and black wooden plaque. The texture was a bit different from usual wood, as it was smooth and soft. The size was about a palm's width, with her information written on it, together with a small nail-sized orb.

This orb had Cinderielle's Aether Mana, which could be used to verify the identity with almost no possibility of being able to fake it. Security measures were significantly developed because of the almost endless variety of skills that existed. There were people with transformation skills, impersonating skills, etc.

There was a saying that said, "There are no two identical system pages." This saying was often used to warn young people about each individual's uniqueness while raising awareness of the dangers some skills could pose.

After going through the identification procedures, the guard allowed Cinderielle in.

'Okay, let's do this... Woah...'

Cinderielle's eyes opened wide as the massive structure entered her eyes. As Fortuna City's most renowned school, it was naturally built very close to the World Tree. Its size was about 15 meters tall, with five floors of pure wood crafting marvel.

Just after crossing the tall frontal gates, the humbling sight of the beautiful school was enough to instill reverence in the students, and yet, that was not the most impressive sight.

Behind the large building, a colossal World Tree towered far up to the sky, making even the school building look insignificant. The figure of the giant tree resembling a woman's body and holding a sky-shrouding canopy was nothing but startlingly awe-inspiring.

Usually, between beings, trying to look at another's system stats was considered a bit rude. After all, it was a small invasion of privacy. There were devices to prevent analyzing.

However, that was not the case with World Trees. Using analytical abilities in World Trees was, more often than not, a waste of time. As long as they had matured even slightly, all World Trees had natural anti-inspecting defenses.

So, out of curiosity, Cinderielle tried opening the System page of Fortuna City's World Tree. In her mind, she remembered that this World tree was a <Seedling World Tree Of Fortune>. The one that gave her that Destiny boost when she was little.

That day burned in Cinderielle's mind; after all, her strong emotions from that day were still vividly remembered.

While Cinderielle expected to see nothing, something appeared in her retina.

Race: Seedling World Tree of Fortune.

Level: 26

Aether Mana Shards: ??????/??????

Phoer Body Shards: ??????/??????

Anima Energy Shards: ??????/??????

Cinderielle blinked a few times, incredulous. 'Huh? I can see her level and race. There are also a certain number of question marks for each essence...' Cinderielle counted them, and her lips twitched. '... She has six digits?'

Looking at her own pitiful 2-digit essences, her mind ached. 'Lady World Tree is four orders of magnitude higher than me.'

In a world where even a 5% difference in stats could make a difference in a life-and-death situation, this kind of difference in strength was like looking up to a god-like being.

Cinderielle wanted to look at the sky, but after lifting her head, the tree's giant canopy prevented her from doing so, making her eyelid twitch. 'More than 100,000 in each of the ternary essences? That's... stupid. When will I be able to reach those heights?'

With a sigh of awe, she walked forward and finally entered the school.

She finally arrived at her class after walking through an orderly set of hallways.

The classroom was composed of a stand where the teacher would give the class and a semi-circle of wooden tables.

The class was half-filled when she arrived, with some people having already become a group.

Cinderielle observed her surroundings, but between all of the people here, her eyes couldn't help but lock on a green-haired woman in the corner.

The aura around her was soft and gentle, remarkably resembling nature. Her face had a mature beauty that a 16-year-old usually didn't have, and when Cinderielle's eyes moved downward, her lips twitched. '...Big.'

She looked at herself, and while she wasn't small, she didn't have a prominent bosom. She stopped comparing and pondered. 'From her aura... is she a Sylvan with nature affinity?'

While all Sylvans have some nature-related affinity as descendants of World Trees and other powerful flora, having purely nature affinity was not common.

Meanwhile, the woman felt someone's gaze and lifted her eyes, meeting a pair of curious and large orange-colored eyes. She couldn't help but pause.

When their sights collided, they both felt strange for a few seconds.

"Hello, are you Cinderielle?"

However, someone approached and broke their trance. Cinderielle blinked and looked sideways at a tall, handsome, and muscular youth. As a Sylvan who didn't see male humans as potential mates, Cinderielle felt nothing other than what an average human would for looking at a pretty flower.

Therefore, Cinderielle smirked and nodded without showing a flustered expression. "Yes! Who might you be?"

The man paused, looking at Cinderielle strangely for a fraction of a second. However, he didn't show much, as he smiled brightly and showed a charming smile. "I'm Theodore, one of the top-ranked humans in this year's admission test."

Cinderielle nodded. "I see. How did you do?"

Theodore smiled. "I've qualified as a D- Rank."

Cinderielle smiled. "That's not bad at all!"

When Theodore saw the lack of surprise in Cinderielle's eyes, he couldn't help but feel slightly embarrassed. 'Why is she not reacting? All the other girls I've spoken to have shown interest.'

Cinderielle tilted her head, confused. "Is there anything wrong?"

Theodore grinned, this time, a bit stiffly. "No. Nothing wrong."

"So... Where are you sitting?"

'Since he has come to speak to me and seems quite nice and forward, I should make friends with him.' Looking behind him stealthily, she muttered to herself. "He seems to know quite a few people."

Theodore was about to answer when he heard a small voice, and he asked. "Did you say something?"

Cinderielle smiled. "Not at all." Then, she dragged her voice. "So...?"

Theodore laughed. "Right, I sit there. I actually have a free spot by my side. Do you want to sit with me there?"

Cinderielle nodded. "Sure." Then she said frankly with a grin. "I don't know anybody, so please present a few people to me."

Theodore patted his chest and grinned back. "Leave that to me."

After walking toward the seat beside Theodore, Cinderielle felt a few prickly gazes directed at her back, making her frown and turn around. 'Huh? What are those human girls looking at?'

One of them sneered with clear resentment. "Is the plant girl so eager to taste human? I hope you are not a carnivorous variant."

Cinderielle's puzzled face cracked. She had never been a person with a good temper, so she went right back at her. With a mocking smile, she laughed. "Hey, do you know how your great-grandchildren will look if you have any? Probably not, right? You will probably rot away because of age by then. Don't worry, though. I'll make sure to take a photo of when they marry and leave it in your tomb. If you apologize right now, I might

even bother using a bit of my time to bury them by your side when they, too, die of old age."

That girl's face turned red with anger, and she slammed the desk as she stood up. "WHAT DID YOU SAY, BITCH!?"

Cinderielle laughed. "Not only do you expire quickly, but you also came defectuous and with hearing problems. Girl, you didn't have quite good luck, did you?"

The girl was about to rush forward, but the entire room was suddenly enveloped in powerful pressure, which made everyone's face change to one of horror. The pressure was powerful enough to make most people's legs bend a notch.

"Silence. This school is not a street inn where you can fight at will."

Every person in the room looked toward the entrance and saw an elegant woman wearing black hair slowly walking in, wearing high heels and a black dress.

The natural white accents in her hair and stoic and indifferent face made it clear who she was.

All of them stood up hastily and welcomed her. "Welcome, Teacher Eila!"

With a neutral voice, she ordered. "Sit down. If you haven't chosen any seats yet, choose one randomly and sit down."

They all moved, and Cinderielle finally reached her seat by Theodore's side. Once everyone sat down, Eila began speaking at a clear cadence.

"Let's start by explaining the most important question, or at least trying to shed some light on it. The system."

Eila ordered. "Everyone, open your system pages."

Cinderielle did so and gave it a read.

Name: Cinderielle.

Titles:

<Aether Flame Bearer>: A Sylvan born with the ability to manipulate fire, an exceedingly rare case.

<Nature's Friend>: As a Sylvan, you have an innate affinity with plant beings. However, this title will disappear the moment you harm non-hostile plants with malicious intentions.

Hidden Titles: [2]

Race: Pyroaether Emberites

Energy Method: Ember Source Devouring. You can either consume a material rich in Fire Aether Mana properties or absorb the Aether Mana in an environment full of Fire Aether. Gain 1 Experience point per 1 unit of Fire Aether Mana. Max Experience Points gain per day is equal to Level.)

Level: 1 [0/140]

Aether Mana Shards: 96/96 (+0.7/Hour)

Phoer Body Shards: 46/46 (+0.34/Hour)

Anima Energy Shards: 58/58 (+0.42/Hour)

Attributes: Aether 8 (6+2), Physique 4 (3+1), Anima 5 (4+1), Willpower 5 (5), Destiny 12 (12)

Affinity Percentage: Aether Resonance (20), Physique Refinement (15), Anima Affinity (15)

Resistance Percentage: Aether Resistance (19), Physique Resistance (13), Spiritual Resistance (14), Mental Resistance (14)

Talents:

<Aether Flame Manipulation (E Rank Level 1 [0/9300])>: As a Sylvan born with the ability to control fire, you can innately manipulate Fire Aether Mana. You can use Aether Mana to summon flames around you at will. You need to use Anima Energy and Aether Mana to control the flames.

Passive Skills:

<Heart Of Fire (Dormant) (D Rank Level 1 [0/49400])>: You have been born with an incredible affinity toward fire-type Aether Mana. Moreover, your flames will only burn what you desire. You can avoid hurting anything with them at will. However, what you are using now is nothing but a shadow of how bright you can burn. Fire-type Aether Mana Affinity +50%.

<Love of the Forest (D Rank Level 1 [0/49400])>: You have a higher chance of giving a first good impression to all plant life.

Accumulated Experience: 0

Once Cinderielle checked her system page, she nodded and looked up, eager to listen to the explanations.

Chapter 18. A Class With Teacher Eila Neoflower.

Eila Neoflora waited for a few moments and then spoke aloud. "Now that all of you have the system page open in front of you, let's start with the class. Today, we'll learn what each of the things is and how we can increase them, and if we have time, we'll also speak about energy cycles."

Eila paused and then spoke. "Let's start from the top: name and Titles. The name is self-explanatory. However, it's not as simple as it looks. The name that appears on your system page will be the name you feel you are the most related to. System pages are personal and not for others to see; that's why there are no surnames unless you consider your name and surname as entirely yours."

Seeing the confusion on some students' faces, Eila further explained. "For example, if in the future you become paired and after you have descendants, you feel your surname as being an important part of what defines yourself, your name might change from just Eila to Eila Neoflora."

One student asked. "What about the teacher? Which of the two appears on your page?"

Cinderielle looked over with a speechless expression. 'Do you really think she will answer?'

As she expected, Eila looked over and stated, "I will not answer questions about my own system page." Then, she looked around and asked, "Are there any more doubts about the name?"

After checking and seeing none left with doubts, Eila nodded and continued in her usual natural tone. "If you have anything else to ask, remember to come in the recess. Being forward to asking about your doubts about the class subjects to the teachers is one of the hints to success. Next, Titles."

Eila continued. "Titles come in many shapes and forms; we'll learn their denomination later. Today, I'll give a general introduction. Titles are gained passively and actively." Eila paused and added. "A passively gained title is something like the ones some of you have..."

The teacher looked around, and Cinderielle saw her eyes landing on her. "Student Cinderielle, can you present a title of yours that you think is a passively acquired title?"

Cinderielle looked at <Aether Flame Bearer> and <Nature's Friend> and nodded. "Teacher, I think both my titles are passively acquired; one of them is called <Nature's Friend>."

Eila nodded. "Correct. <Nature's Friend> is a title almost all Sylvans are born with. Of course, if any Sylvan present doesn't have it, it only means that you did something to nature in the past that revoked <Nature's Friend> title. A Sylvan not being born with that title is rare, after all."

Walking toward a wooden board at the back of the class, Eila used an erasable sap pen to write on the board. She wrote. "Passively acquired titles are given by your nature or are hereditary. As an example, monsters in the wild sometimes have <Chief> titles, and these are passed down when the <Chief> steps down or dies and a <Heir> is alive. Monsters with such titles are usually stronger and harder to deal with."

Thompson asked. "What happens if the <Chief> dies before an <Heir> is chosen?"

Eila nodded. "Good question. It entirely depends on the strength of the title. If it were a title for an F or E rank monster, the title would just vanish. After all, to get a "chief" title for those weaker monsters, they only get to unlock their first [Energy Cycle]."

Cinderielle blinked. 'Energy Cycle? What's that?'

Eila knew that someone would ask, so she explained it a step ahead. "Energy Cycles is a subject for a bit later. One must understand many nuances, so explaining it now in a hurry makes no sense. Moreover, you can only come in contact with it for the first time in the jump between Level 9 and Level 10, so don't be hasty. Let's continue with the system page."

Cinderielle nodded to herself and continued listening.

"Now, active titles are ones you gain through actions. For example, <Sword Master>. These titles are given when your comprehension reaches a certain point. More often than not, they are just titles without any effects, but if one takes a certain art to the extreme, bonuses for those kinds of actions might arrive through the title."

Eila added as a side note. "Titles that give any kind of stats are precious because they don't use either Aether Mana, Phoeer, or Anima Energy. So, people who have powerful titles are usually stronger than others. It's naturally not always the case, but people selling their skills by using them is often seen in the market."

The students in the class looked at their titles and got thoughtful. Cinderielle's eyes were specially locked on <Aether Flame Bearer>. 'I can probably use this in the future.'

Eila commented. "Let's move one..." She paused, remembering something. "Hm... Well. Sometimes, there are people with an extra line in their systems called <Hidden Titles>, with a number at the side. These <Hidden Titles> are innate ones that the system suppresses for one reason or another. To activate them, you need to either become stronger or do the action that would unlock them."

Cinderielle asked, raising her arm. "Teacher, how do we know which actions are needed to unlock them?"

Eila looked at her and said bluntly. "We don't."

Cinderielle blinked a few times. "Eh?"

Eila smirked a bit. "There is no way to know. Either you do it by luck, or you don't. Of course, they are probably related to yourself, so exploring oneself is sometimes useful. However, cases of people going their entire lives without unlocking their <Hidden Titles> are much more common than people unlocking them."

Eila looked around and spoke clearly. "As a piece of advice, for those who have <Hidden Titles>, ignore them. If they get unlocked, it's perfect. If not, nothing changes. Work on yourself, not some hidden and obscure knowledge or power."

Then, she turned around and was about to walk toward the wooden board perched on the wall to write when everybody saw that she paused. When she turned toward them again, her face was cold. "This is the first and last warning. If someone dares try to analyze me with their system again, I'll kill them."

Cinderielle followed Eila's gaze, and at the end, a terrified man was looking down while trembling and sweating badly. 'Woah... Have you really tried analyzing a teacher who is so many levels higher than you? Your guts are like roots reaching to the sky.'

The other people were also looking at that man with stunned expressions.

Eila turned around again, continued the class, and continued writing the system page's following line. "Now, let's move on. The <Race> is quite straightforward—perhaps the most straightforward of everything. It tells you the name of your race, and that's all. If you are human, it should say your human variant, for example, <Copper Skinned Human>. If you are a beast-man, it should say your current race and gender, for example, <River Otter Beast-man> or <River Otter Beast-woman>. If you are a Sylvan, it should tell you the name of your Sylvan race, for example, <Silver Rose>."

Everybody expected a bit more, but Eila continued and began writing the following line. Cinderielle's eyebrow twitched. 'That's all? Even the <Name> had a much lengthier explanation!'

"After <Race>, there is one of the most important things in the entire system page. Some of you might have it blank. Others might have something written on it. The name of the next line is <Energy Method>."

Eila wrote it on the wooden board with beautiful strokes and spoke. "This is the thing that will allow you to gain <Experience Points> without needing to battle or kill other beings. It's essential for growth, and usually, a power's prestige is based on how good their <Energy Method> is."

Eila added. "The ways of gaining experience are varied: Eating treasures, completing quests, killing creatures around your level, practicing the energy method, creating items, and others."

One person asked. "What happens if we kill creatures much weaker?"

Eila commented. "You can lose experience. If you just leveled up, it is also possible to drop levels. So, it's not worth it."

Cinderielle was surprised, and another person asked the question she was about to ask. "You can drop down levels?"

Eila nodded. "Naturally. Some people lose levels as they age, and some lose levels after they are crippled. Levels, while they are a way to push our strength, they are also a quantifier of our general strength. Naturally, because of tiers, Levels are not all. A high-tiered creature can have strong enough based stats to fight much higher-level beings."

Eila finally added before returning to the system explanation. "Also, stats don't give us strength; our strength is shown in the stats. Remember that."

Everyone nodded and continued listening.

"Let's explain the <Energy Method> a bit deeper. For those of you who have one innately, you should've realized that they have a condition. Every person can train differently, so you must be attentive to it. Our school provides support for disciples, so if you need a type of material, energy, or something similar, please inform me later. I'll make a list so that the school can prepare them."

Eila added. "Moreover, <Energy Methods> are acquirable skills. You're not limited to just one. However, there's a cumulative experience cap. For instance, if you possess three different Energy methods and the first two yield 4 Experience Points per day while the third garners 10, you'll only be able to accrue a total of 4 points from the first two methods and the remaining six from the third. In short, you will gain 10 Experience Points per day."

By Cinderielle's side, Thompson asked. "Then aren't the four Experience points methods useless?"

Eila asked back. "What if the conditions for gaining points from the 10-experience point method are too complicated?"

Thompson and the other students realized what Eila was hinting at.

"What are experience points?"

Cinderielle's ears perked up when she heard the gentle, nature-like voice. Looking over, she spotted the green-haired Sylvan that had previously caught her attention, raising her hand.

Eila looked over and smiled. "Good question, Verdantia. Experience points are a type of energy that's dedicated entirely to the system. We can't interact with them without the System's help. At the same time, that type of energy can't be used without the system. We'll delve deeply into our theories behind it later in the [Fundamental Energies] class."

"Now, students. We'll leave what Level is and everything below that for the following class."

Right after she said that the rustling of leaves sounded like a ring, signaling the end of the class.

Eila picked up her materials and sat down, opening a book made of leaves to write down what materials each needed for the <Energy Method>.

It took around 12 minutes to list everything down.

In the meantime, Cinderielle looked at Verdantia and spoke. "Hey."

Verdantia looked over and nodded softly. "Hello. Do you need anything?"

Cinderielle and Verdantia were both tall women, reaching around 180 centimeters in height. Moreover, as 18-year-olds, they were still growing. The average Sylvan was around 160~165 centimeters tall, similar to the average human woman's height.

Looking eye to eye with another woman was rare for them, so they couldn't help but feel comfortable. Cinderielle smiled. "Wanna go eat something together later?"

Verdantia smiled as well, but suddenly, she remembered something and put on an apologetic expression. "I'm sorry, Miss Cinderielle. I need to go home and prepare food for a few little ones at home."

Cinderielle blinked. "You have pets?"

Verdantia smiled widely. "Yes! I have a quite thorn rose spider and a blue petal Dionaea muscipula!"

Cinderielle's lips twitched. "I see. Have fun, I guess."

Verdantia nodded and was about to speak when Eila called her over. "Miss Verdantia."

Hearing her name being mentioned, Verdantia bowed and left. "See you later, Miss Cinderielle."

Cinderielle nodded dazedly and looked down at her chest with a bitter expression. 'Verdantia's... T-They really bounce...' Curious she went up to her toes and fell back a bit forcefully. 'Oh? Mine do so too~.' Then, she looked up with a smug smile, feeling happy again.

Author Note: In the next chapter, we return to Liu Shu's side~. I hope it didn't feel too heavy reading about all of these explanations~.

Chapter 19. Flor's Decision.

"You... How did you become so strong so suddenly!?"

The Thornstride leader, who had arrived after feeling the large energy fluctuation, looked at Flor with terror in his eyes.

Flor looked over, her aura entirely different from what it was just a few moments ago. "Froorar. Retreat with your people. However, know that from now on, it is war."

Flor didn't want to fight by Liu Shu's side unless she was forced to. If anything happened to the World Tree Sapling, she would be saddened enough to take her own life to atone for her mistakes.

As such, Flor decided to give up the chance to kill Froorar right after her power boost, with the sole intention of protecting Liu Shu.

Naturally, Flor knew that after reaching Level 3, Liu Shu was not a weakling. Her stats were half between an F+ tier Level 10 and a Level 9. So, on a one-against-one, Liu Shu was in an awkward spot where no Level 9s could probably hope to defeat her, but a Level 10 was still able to defeat her relatively easily.

Moreover, Froorar and the Thornstride had already realized Liu Shu's specialness. If they fought, Flor was sure that Froorar and the rest would attempt to fight close to Liu Shu so that the Rose Fairies would need to be careful while they could be more reckless.

In such a situation, Flor wasn't sure she could protect Liu Shu with 100% confidence.

"Froorar, today, I'll let you go. However, if you keep bothering us, I'll make sure you pay dearly. Leave!"

With her shout, Flor released a terrifying gale that pushed some lower-level Thornstride back.

Froorar's eyes moved toward Liu Shu, but the second he did so, Flor rushed forward and used a big chunk of Wind Aether Mana.

WHOOSH!

A powerful wind blew up, smashing against Froorar and pushing him back several steps. Even with his powerful body, he could do nothing to resist the sudden attack.

Flor snarled. "This is the last chance, Froorar. If you decide to fight here and something happens, my life's objective will be exterminating your race from the face of this planet!"

The Thornstride leader looked at Flor while baring his fangs, feeling highly frustrated. However, he knew his limits.

That surprise attack had sliced around 200 Phoer Shards from his reserves. And while it sounded little compared to his 8000 Body Shards, with his natural regeneration, that would take around 7 hours to heal.

After a few tense moments of looking at each other, he finally roared. "Return!"

All the Thornstride that were standing around rushed away, disappearing into the dense forest.

Clavel arrived by Flor's side with a grim expression. "Leader, do we follow them?"

Flor looked at their retreating back for a few seconds and shook her head. "No need. There are some bugs that want to take advantage of the situation."

She lifted her hand and pointed sideways, her red eyes turned over, and said coldly. "Disappear."

Several wind crescents rushed over rapidly and managed only to slice a few branches while bisecting a pair of giant ants standing there.

Clavel's eyebrows came together as she grumbled. "Even the ants are here?"

Flor looked around and sighed, extending her arms to release her <Rose Fairy Queen's Embrace>. A gentle aura enveloped the area, healing plants at the cost of Aether Mana Shards and a bit of Phoebe Body Shards.

Then, Flor returned to the now four-meter-tall tree's side and caressed her trunk with gentle and compassionate eyes. "Tianlian Liu Shu, how are you?"

Our Liu Shu, who had been observing everything, couldn't help but focus her <World Tree Eye> on Flor. 'How did she call me!? She learned my name!? How!? System, please tell me~.'

The system decided to pamper the curious World tree.

[System Hint: Flor has recognized you as a World Tree. Being the first being to notice consciously, she has received many benefits.]

'Oh!' Liu Shu exclaimed. I'm so happy! They finally learned my name~.'

The Rose Fairies were confused when their leader named the tree. After all, Liu Shu had shown evident rejection time and time again toward being named in the past.

Clavel commented. "Leader, didn't we agree not to..." Clavel paused and looked incredulously at Liu Shu. "...Why is she so happy!?"

The fairies looked speechlessly at the tree, which was quite clearly dancing in joy. The movement was not overly noticeable, but her aura and thin, drooping, long branches, unique to willow trees, were clearly moving when there was no wind.

Clavel pouted. "Why did she like your name and not mine?"

Flor chuckled. "That's her name, not one I came up with on a whim."

Clavel blinked, looking at her leader confusedly. "What do you mean, leader?"

Flor shrugged. "I mean it literally. This little one's name is Tianlian Liu Shu."

Clavel blinked two times. "How did you know?"

Flor smiled. "The system told me."

Clavel felt speechless for a while and then pouted. "Leader, can you stop speaking in riddles and tell us what happened?"

Flor laughed aloud, but she didn't answer. In her head, she was considering that letting these little ones know that Liu Shu was a World Tree would be more harmful than good.

Amapola flew over to their side and asked Flor. "Leader, now that you are Level 12, why don't we go attack them? We have enough strength if you lead us to take down an entire race."

Flor commented in the passing. "Not only have I leveled up two times, but my tier has also crossed over from F+ to E-. My strength is probably enough to fight three or four of my previous selves."

"Ohh~."

All the fairies exclaimed.

Flor coughed and returned toward the problem at hand. "No need to hunt anyone down yet. We have to at least help Liu Shu become Level 5. If we can make her reach that level, we'll be able to begin our counterattack. Until then, we are on the defensive."

Amapola tilted her head. "Level Five?"

Flor nodded. "With her growth pace, she should be able to fight a Level 10 and hold her own at Level 5."

Amapola and other fairies blurted instinctively. "Ridiculous!"

Hearing her, the 45-centimeter woman smirked. "Yeah? Look at her stats. You have yet to see them after she leveled up, right?"

The Rose Fairies looked over and saw this.

Level: 3

Aether Mana Shards: 1013/1013

Phoer Body Shards: 1499/1499

Anima Energy Shards: 1044/1044

Amapola, a level nine with similar numbers, felt her heart constricting in pain. 'I understand that as a tree, they need more resistance. Therefore, I never bothered about a tree's Aether Mana or Anima energy... However, what are these numbers!?'

Amapola seriously pondered and tried to recall. 'What were my numbers then...? Ah, right!

Level: 3

Aether Mana Shards: 138/138

Phoer Body Shards: 65/65

Anima Energy Shards: 66/66

When those numbers resurfaced in her mind, Amapola looked at the sky, almost shedding a tear. 'So... unjust.'

Flor saw similar looks on many fairies and almost burst into laughter. 'I mean, if, as a World Tree, her attributes were lacking, it would not make sense.'

With that sorted out, Flor began planning their defensive routines. Because Rose Fairies usually lived in one tree and protected it, they were accustomed to planning defensive battles.

Meanwhile, Liu Shu focused on her new skill called <Woodcrafter>.

<Woodcrafter (E- Rank Level 1 [0/3900])>: The World Tree can create tools and similar items with basic effects. It costs Aether Mana and Anima Energy if there are materials. If the World Tree wants to use itself as material, it will also cost Phoer.

'Tools?'

[System Hint: Humanoid creatures, and even trees and other non-human beings, can all utilize items, treasures, or other types of crafts to increase their strength.]

After that, the system spoke again.

[System Hint: Here is the blueprint for one item; please check it. It's the reward for upgrading <Woodcrafting> from Level F to Level E.]

Liu Shu was filled with confusion. 'Upgrade? But I never used it.'

[System Hint: As a Tree, you have innate control over wood, which helps you learn this profession rather quickly. You've gained a bonus because you skipped the <Basic Rank> and reached the <Low Rank>.]

Our cute little tree finally understood. 'I see!... Basic, low?'

[System Hint: Ranks can be called F Rank, E Rank, etc. However. There is a more general way to call them. Basic (F-, F, F+) -> Low (E-, E, E+) -> Medium (D-, D, D+) -> Advanced (C-, C, C+) -> Profound (B-, B, B+)...]

Liu Shu read it and ignored it. 'So complicated. I'll call them by the letter! It's much easier~.'

[...]

Then, Liu Shu refocused on the skill again. 'Hm... I need materials, but it says that I can also use myself as a material. Should I try once?'

Tianlian Liu Shu first took control over her Aether mana and Anima Energy. Then, she slowly poured them toward a branch and began thinking, only to realize. '... What shapes are tools? Tree shape? Flower Shape?'

Liu Shu couldn't help but stop to ponder. 'Hm... Perhaps they are human-shaped because humans use them?'

Standing by her side, the fairies were confused when the energy gathering toward one of Liu Shu's branches dissipated like nothing.

Clavel asked. "What was she about to do?"

Aster shrugged. "Let her be. It's not like she will suddenly attack us."

Agreeing with her friend, she asked. "Shall we go? It's our turn to guard."

Aster nodded and sighed. "Such a non-fun job..."

Clavel rolled her eyes as she flew away with Aster.

On another place, near Liu Shu, Flor was sitting in front of a rock that had a somewhat inaccurate but at least usable map. "Hm... We live in quite a good spot. I guess we are lucky. While this place is an open forest, once Liu Shu grows, she will need space to spread her roots."

Her eyes moved outside the Golden Sap Forest, where they lived, and she looked deeply at the small cities she remembered about and marked on the crude map: "Sirol City, Fortuna City, Marefol City..."

Of all of them, Fortuna City worried Flor the most. "That place also has a World Tree, and she is decently matured. Compared to our little sapling..." Flor looked at the four-meter-tall tree and shook her head. "Fighting Lady World Tree, if we need to fight her, will probably be impossible. At least in the short term."

Flor's eyes landed on one of the berries growing on Liu Shu's branches. "However, not all hope is lost. Those berries are strong, especially the one that gives Experience Points. Using them will allow many fairies to cross boundaries they never thought of before... But... Even if everyone became Level 10, I still feel that we wouldn't be able to take down a power yet."

With that and many other complicated thoughts, the day finally passed, and night arrived.

Chapter 20. Tinkering with Enchanted Growth.

Now that Liu Shu was at Level 3, and her Aether Mana had crossed the 1000 Shards limit, she moved her eyes toward one of the skills she had not used until now, <Enchanted Growth>.

Enchanted Growth was an E+ Rank skill. Even Woodcrafter, the skill she just got, was E- rank, two small boundaries below.

However, now that Liu Shu could use E Rank skills, she thought that she would be able to at least make a proper attempt.

Before doing anything, Liu Shu gave the skill description another read.

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

Liu Shu expanded her vision with <World Tree Eye>, and after looking around, she focused on a flower around 30 meters away from her.

With her new growth, her roots could now spread much further, aiding her vision and ability to interact with her surroundings. She was still petite, just four meters tall, but our tree was slowly growing.

'Hm... This little flower... can I feed you some energy?'

Liu Shu approached with one of her thinner roots and reached out toward the flower's own roots. However, she didn't feel a response other than a feeling of happiness when she touched it.

'Happy because of my touch?' Liu Shu was confused and looked at it with curiosity.

As a World Tree and the "Apex" of all flora, her mere presence was enough for other plant creatures to feel reverence toward her.

'Well, since you are happy... Let's try using <Enchanted Growth> on you.'

She was still a bit fearful, as the previous times she tried to use it, Liu Shu felt as if her insides were about to be sucked out.

So, she carefully activated it and sent a small stream of energy toward it. After Flor and the other Rose Fairies explained to her the concept of energy control, she had been practicing a lot, increasing her efficiency at a high pace.

It was still not as noticeable, but there were times when Liu Shu felt that she could do much more with the same energy she used in the past.

Between them, the one she used the most was naturally her constant growth of flowers, a process that has become almost subconscious by now.

Anyway, returning to the <Enchanted Growth> skill. After being careful and gathering Aether and Anima Energy,

Her energy moved through her roots, reaching out and finally spreading into the flower.

Liu Shu checked her Aether Mana and Anima Energy and saw them reducing at around fifty per second. When her energy reserves reached three-quarters, she stopped and observed.

A few Rose Fairies that were roaming around also stopped, having felt the flow of energy toward the flower.

"What is Liu Shu doing now?"

The other shrugged. "Who knows? While I adore them, I'll never understand how a tree thinks."

The other fairy smiled wryly. "Well, I can't really disagree."

They observed the flower for a few moments, and seeing nothing, they decided to leave and continue their chores.

Liu Shu, on the other side, was not that impatient. If there was one thing that trees got over all races, it was patience.

That was both a good and a bad quality.

Like that, one hour passed, and then three, and finally seven.

Liu Shu had been observing the petite flower all this time, and time didn't feel as if it was passing. It was a strange phenomenon in which her consciousness was present but also absent.

Finally, after these seven hours, Liu Shu felt a reaction to it. 'It's... Growing?'

Well, it couldn't do much more as a skill called <Enchanted Growth>. However, would there be something other than growing?

A tap on her trunk took Liu Shu out of that strange trance, and she redirected her gaze toward the person who did so. 'Oh, it's little friend Clavel!'

"Hello, little Liu Shu. How have you been doing? I've heard that you were completely dozed out, and the guards asked me to check on you. Are you okay?"

Liu Shu naturally couldn't answer verbally but gently swayed her branches. The movement was almost indiscernible to the naked eye, but it was enough for Clavel to feel satisfied.

Then, the flower suddenly reacted. Clavel and the other Rose Fairies flying around stopped to look at it.

First, they saw the stalk thicken as the body grew, and the petals became larger and more complex, gaining an exotic appearance.

Liu Shu focused on it, and a message appeared in her mind.

[<Bluewave Fresia (Enhanced)>.]

Confused, she thought. 'No Level?'

[System Hint: Only creatures with enough intellect will develop a system. Other creatures that have not reached the bare minimum of intellect threshold will be considered material, treasures, or something similar.]

Our young World Tree exclaimed. 'Oh! Thanks, system. You are so kind~.'

Meanwhile, Clavel flew toward the flower's side with a strange glint in her eyes. 'Did Liu Shu do this?'

Clavel looked at the now much larger flower with interest. However, it didn't last long.

Liu Shu, who had been thinking, saw the large Fresia flower start to wilt, and in nothing but a few seconds, it fell dead.

The Rose Fairies blinked a few times while looking between Liu Shu and that flower.

One of them asked. "Was she jealous because we focused on that flower more than on her?"

A friend of hers said in a strange voice. "Does a tree even know what jealousy is?"

Clavel descended and tried reviving it with her Aether, but she soon gave up. The best Clavel could do was replant the overgrown flower elsewhere, just in case the earth where it was growing was contaminated by something.

Liu Shu saw Clavel carrying away her test subject, COUGH, her first attempt at using <Enchanted Growth>, and fell into deep thought.

'So, using it in a single thing will make that thing grow, and then, bam! They don't move ever again.'

Liu Shu understood the concept of death to some extent, so she knew that "killing others=bad" usually. Not always, but Liu Shu wanted to.

'Hm... What should I do? Should I try to release it outward like an aura and let the friends around me consume it?'

First, Liu Shu looked at her energy levels.

Aether Mana Shards: 307/1013 (+36,5/Hour)

Phoer Body Shards: 1499/1499 (+54/Hour)

Anima Energy Shards: 351/1044 (+37,6/Hour)

Liu Shu had previously produced a large batch of 200 Phoer fruits and fed them extra energy to reduce their germinating time.

Hence, she lacked around 400 because of the power fruits and around 300 for the thing she did to that flower.

'Hm... Let's rest and allow my energy to climb back up. I remember Flor once told me never to go too low on energy, just in case-. Hm?'

[<Charm of the Seedling> has attracted a <River Beaver Level 9>. Proficiency increased by 9.]

Liu Shu's eyes went toward the place where this signal came from, and she was quick to spot quite a large Beaver walking her way.

Checking her surroundings with a 360° perfect vision made it relatively easy for her to reach the conclusion that the Rose Fairies had left her to her own devices. All of the Rose Fairies had flown upward and hid in the branches of nearby trees.

Liu Shu looked at the system page.

Aether Mana Shards: 193/193

Phoer Body Shards: 1139/1139

Anima Energy Shards: 396/396

The tree became intrigued. 'All creatures have slightly different numbers... Interesting.'

The rest of the abilities were similar to the ones shown before, so Liu Shu glanced at them briefly before refocusing on the Level 9 creature.

The River Beaver arrived at this place because he felt a really good and robust scent coming from it. It was not intelligent enough to form its own rationalized mind. However, the beaver knew that if she got the tree he had briefly felt, he might be able to break through into Level 10, becoming the first River Beaver to do so in decades.

Naturally, it was quite quick to spot that four-meter-tall tree. The reason for that is not because his senses are better than Froorar's, but because Liu Shu had become stronger, which made quite a few more creatures feel greedy toward herself.

Liu Shu saw how it rushed at her, and her aura became cold. The drooping branches danced dangerously, advising the other side that coming over was a mistake.

Her swimming thoughts concentrated on the battle ahead, and by the time the River Beaver entered her strike range, she did so.

[Willow Strike]!

Like a metal whip, it bent and lashed out toward its head at ridiculous speed.

BANG!

The River Beaver got smashed into the ground, its head smashed against the ground as the skull cracked.

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An enormous number Liu Shu had never seen popped into her mind.

The River Beaver quickly tried to scramble away, but escaping a world tree was not easy. By the time Liu Shu attacked, she had allowed the prey to be close enough for a barrage of attacks.

[Willow Strike]!

BANG!

CRACK!

Liu Shu heard something being broken and over with curiosity. 'Hm? Did I break his skin so loudly it crunched?'

[Congratulations on defeating <River Beaver Level 9>. You've gained 8 Experience Points.]

Liu Shu returned to her calm after Clavel appeared; the swaying wind blowing around Liu Shu disappeared.

Clavel flew down with a small laugh. "Little Liu Shu, you've become so strong."

'Thanks, Clavel~.' Even if she couldn't be heard, she wanted to answer a few of their questions.

While this beaver was probably just an F rank, and Amapola was an F+ rank, it was considered a tiny overlord around the Golden Sap Forest.

Liu Shu took away her attention from the dead beaver and refocused on what she was doing. 'While using a lot of enchanted growth in one creature will make it grow too much if I can share it with many, won't it be perfect?'

Liu Shu waited for her energy to recover entirely and started again. Time flew by quickly, and after around two weeks, she finally managed to create a way to allow her roots to emit it passively at a pace slower than her Aether Mana and Anima Energy regeneration.

This way, she could use around 70% of her regeneration to create berries while constantly using the last 30% to allow her roots near her trunk to release that energy in the form of <Enchanted Growth>.

The effects wouldn't be noticeable yet, but Liu Shu could see the potential in this skill. At least, as long as she continued to grow stronger, she would become much more proficient at it. 'Every plant will be able to grow with me!'