

Reality Check

By: Uttara Horae

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Have you ever woken up in the morning and thought, *I am going to be stuck in a world filled with magical plants and magical people and fight off an old boss tree! Today is going to be a GREAT day.* Yeah, me neither. Unfortunately that is exactly what happened to me. Not the thinking about it part, everything except that happened. I did get stuck in a magical plant forest filled with magical hippies, and I did fight off an old boss tree very heroically. Sort of. It was all very sudden.

It started this morning when my mother called me down for breakfast. I was on break. I planned to do so many fun things that day. That was entirely wiped out when *The Thing* happened. I walked down the stairs, skipping the creaky twin stairs so they wouldn't wake my psychopathic dog. When I reached the bottom stairs, something weird happened. I felt a swooping sensation in my stomach, like what you feel in those rides that let you defy gravity. I blinked. Big mistake.

"What the heck?" I gasped. I was standing in a forest grove with trees as tall as the Eiffel Tower. The plants had all sorts of flowers and colors to them, and it looked like they *glowed*. I could immediately tell that I was not home anymore, and that I needed to find a way out. Now. I panicked. What if there was no way out, what if I was stuck here forever and I would never see mom or dad again? WHAT IF I DIED HERE? Suddenly, the bushes rustled. My heart rate quickened. I got that feeling of foreboding as I saw a shadow pass among the plants. "I NEVER EVEN SAID GOODBYE!" I screamed dramatically as the figure lunged at me.

"Whatever are you yelling at? And who are you?" A pompous voice asked. It was a girl. She had curly, waist-length hair, colored black and red. She wore robes of purple, red and yellow, the colors of Dusk. She had yellow eyes that screamed *I'M SASSY SO GO AWAY OR BOW DOWN* sort of thing. "You will wake the plants and-OH!" she started, then stopped as she looked me up and down. "It's you!" she said in wonder. I awkwardly did jazz hands.

"Ta da?" She grabbed my hand and yanked me through the endless grove of foresters. She stopped at a small tree and whispered to it. Perfectly normal behavior I'm sure. I was still, however, thoroughly confused. Where am I? Why am I here? And how does this magic lady know me? She led me to an opening in a cliff, where there is a giant cave. It's completely dark in there. I prayed she wouldn't make me go in.

"There is a famous beast in there, called the Doroman. It is an ancient spirit that terrorizes the people of the magical forest. A prophet once delivered a vision, saying you were the one to silence him for the next hundred years. So now go do that," she said quickly, shoving me towards the cave. I stared blankly at her. Then I started laughing.

"I have no idea about what this is about, but it is a great prank. I have no idea where I am, who you are and I am certainly not going in there. Now you better tell me how to get out of this world," I said, staring her dead in the eye. She smiles.

"That's what he said you'd say," she pushed me in, and I was face to face with a giant tree. Literally. It had big yellow glowing eyes and teeth as big as boulders. I panicked. It was all so straightforward. WHY DIDN'T THEY TELL ME ANYTHING. She just shoved me towards a giant boss tree and expected me to do something? Maybe she'd help get out me if I killed it or whatever. The boss tree roared and charged at me. I dodged out of the way just before it stomped and snapped its teeth on the place I had just been. This went on for a few more minutes before I jumped onto a ledge just out of its reach. I thought hard. I clearly wouldn't win this by running around. My father had often dropped words of wisdom on my head every now and then. I tried running through all the things he had said over the years. I stopped on one that rang throughout my head all the time. 'Life is straightforward. You must follow how it is,' I remembered with a sob that I may never hear his messed up grammared way of talking again. But I shook that out of my mind. I jumped down and looked the tree in the eye. It stormed towards me. I wanted to run, but I couldn't. I wanted to move, my brain was screaming at me to do it. But I don't. It keeps coming. "I need you to stop. I need you to stop," I keep saying this, my voice growing louder and louder as it comes closer and closer. It skids to a stop right before it crashes into me. It tilts its branches, as if confused that I am not afraid of it. I said it again, with all my meaning and words and feelings. "STOP. RIGHT. NOW!" A ping and a golden glow circled through the cracks on the floor, snaking its way towards the tree. It whimpered and whined as the golden threads weaved their way around it, binding it to the floor. It gives a last shiver and crumples the floor, asleep. I stared at it for a while before returning to the mouth of the cave, where the Dusk lady jumped up and down clapping and suddenly there was A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE STARING AT ME. And then they started cheering as well. Dusk lady ran over to me and hugged me. I didn't know what to do but awkwardly pat her on the back.

"Now I can tell you all about this place. This is the magical forest of Lerenoth and the spirit you just defeated is the Doroman. It has haunted the woods for years now, and you have finally put it at rest! My name is Lilith and these are the people of my village. We use the herbs and plants of the magical forest to our advantage," she said in her cripes, clear voice, clasping my hands. I smiled nervously. "The reason that I didn't tell you anything was because the curse was getting to a point where some of our people were dying. The prophet then delivered, and I set out to find you, oh thank you!" She said excitedly, still wringing my now numbing hand. She smiled wanly, then waving goodbye, I fell into a dark pit. I screamed and cried out, but there was nothing I could get a hold onto. I fell, down, down, down. Into my bed?

"ANITA, BREAKFAST," my mom roared from below. Wow, what a crazy dream. I walk down the stairs, and right when I reach the bottom I blink, and suddenly I'm in the forest. Oh no.