

《The Forest Spirit who sought the Gods》

28 Waves 2

"We're fine, Oakbud is just trying to learn water magic."

"YES WE NEED HELP WE'RE SINKING!!!"

Two contradictory voices were heard at the same time, Alice's covering Thani's without much surprise. The water pixie was confused. As a creature born of an element and concentration of magic, casting water spells was second nature to her, and she was generally curious and friendly because her species had next to no predators.

"HE MADE THE BOAT WITH EARTH MAGIC AND IT'S MELTING!"

"Eh? He's never practiced his spells before? Can't he just adapt an earth magic spell to help?" The little fairy was flying around the panicked Alice's head, moving around mischievously and pulling a few strands of hair.

"What is a spell?"

"... " "..." "..."

This time all three were amazed at Oakbud's lack of knowledge. Weren't spells the basics of basics in magic manipulation? Sure, at first learning incantations was slow and tedious, but they brought stability to the casts and with habit people could just skip them. Even blessings were used to cast spell by powering them with magic, and were essentially free instant-casts. The next usual step was learning the spell without using the blessing to make variations of it and deepening one's comprehension of the God's path.

"... Bud', how do you cast your magic?" Thani was both amazed and concerned, since she had received the God's lessons about magic too.

"Grab earth mold earth. Find plant, give magic to grow and guide! But me can't grab water!" Thani's lips twitched. Alice was bordering collapse. The pixie giggled happily. That level of ignorance really was too much to bear.

"Oh Liezel, he never learned anything about magic, it's pure natural ability... I'm doomed, I'm so doomed..."

The pixie had finished making Alice nauseous with her high-speed flight in front of her eyes, and was now standing in front of Oakbud, trying to grab one of his arms to play with it. "Hey, I'll teach you a quick spell, okay? This way you can learn how water magic flows and make your own later! You're like me, you can see the magic flow, right? Right?"

After saying her piece, she climbed up to the golem's head before diving into the water. She resurfaced and stood upon the water a second later, ready for her demonstration. Taking what she thought was a heroic pose, she started her spell : "Water friend, listen to my will and come to my hand!"

Alice only saw droplets of water rose from the lake to form a fairy-fist sized bead over the pixie's extended hand. Oakbud though, was seeing the raw magic being molded through the intent and words of the little creature. Contrary to his own crude earthen hands, the flow of water magic resembled a spiralling siphon, drawing out the water elemental particles to shape the spell.

"Oh! Interesting! Looks like every elemental magic is different right from the start! Bud's earth looks nothing like that!"

"Eh? Thani, you can see the flow too?" Alice, who had water to the middle of her calves, turned back from looking at the boat's edge that was approaching the water level quickly.

"Let's just say I had a lucky encounter in Ebb." Explaining how a God of Creation taught her magic personally would be the finishing blow to Alice's spirit, and was also a secret to keep closely guarded.

"Alright! Did you see? Did you? Now try! Try!" The pixie jumped back into the boat in front of Oakbud, her eyes sparkling with excitement.

"Blood friend, follow my will and build in my hand." Thani tried out her own short incantation inspired from the fairy's at the same time, wondering what she could do with such a simple shape-shifting spell and a bit of focus. The longer the incantation, the better the precision. Thani's spell worked its wonder and her blood seeped from her skin to make a statue of Kali in her palm. The result was alright and the proportions nice, but some edges and the wings were blurry. She should have spoken more to define those parts it seems.

While she was finishing her round of magical introspection, the forest Spirit screamed out his spell while pouring out magic. "Me try! Water friend, listen to me and come to my hand!".

And just like when he tried to learn from Maya, the result was disproportionate. The surface of the whole lake shook, responding to Oakbud's enthusiasm, and a ball of water the size of the boat made its appearance over the passenger's heads.

"So Alice, are you still worried about getting to the island or what?". Still holding her little statue, Thani was grinning madly.

In a city on the west coast of the Primal, the magical shell was opened by very concerned priests of the Three that were assembled with urgency. It had arrived carried by a gigantic wave that almost crashed the whole harbor, and those kind of stranger things were always somehow divine. Doing what was written on it was only common sense.

Once opened, Nyx's possessed Child's voice reverbed through the little temple : "Call out to the Child of the God-Tree, so that he comes west of the Third to meet me!"

Oh Nature! When folk spoke of riding a dragon, he'd always have an image of a heroic figure sitting behind the beast's neck, with his shining armor, weapon and saddle! No one ever told Harp that he could make it someday... And no one ever told him he'd be carried suspended to a claw like a sandbag either!

The serious flight of the dragon was insane, and he was almost completely blinded by the wind, only able to see trees and roads flash by far below. Without the dragon's calm spell and his natural fiery heat, Harp would also have frozen to death despite his fur. High-altitude high-speed flight let the strange duo cover the distance from the Tree to Pilgrim Woods in barely half a day, and the town came in sight at dusk.

On Harp's recommendation, Nidhögrn landed close to the Blood family's estate and reverted to his human-ish form, abusing wind magic for a smooth landing from a thousand-meters drop. The panicked wolfman sprinted to meet Karj, who was preparing for the night, oblivious to the new headache coming his way.

Just as he finally got into bed, his door was slammed open and his head slammed by his emotions sensing blessing roaring panic at him. A stressed out guard came in unannounced with Harp in tow, dropped the wolfman there, and bolted out as quick as he came.

"Harp? What in Kali's name is going on? How are you back so soon? What happened?". Being at home was no excuse for the competent leader, and his mind switched back to business mode almost instantly, trying to understand the situation.

"Remember the undead affair a while ago? Well it's worse now." Harp wore a sad smile and shook his head, before falling back on a random chair in the room. It wasn't big, but still had two windows that let light get in nicely during the day, and enough space for Karj's bed, a desk and three chairs, and a basin in the corner.

"Undead? The God-Tree again? And worse? What's this all about?"

"Long story short, I need to know where mistress Thani went, or we get killed by an angry lazy dragon." Both men exchanged an incredulous gaze after the end of the sentence.

"..."

"..."

Knowing that the shock most probably had passed already, Harp broke the awkward silence and Karj's cramped face. "Alright, I'm as serious as when I wrote the report before. Whatever the little Oakbud is, there's a -very very- powerful dragon looking for it right now, that found me as a guide when I came back after verifying the God-Tree's death."

"Sigh... Then we're screwed, because I have no sure idea of where she went. Probaly to Ebb and its temple of the Three, I remember she spoke about it with the group about the little spirit... Do you have any idea on how to keep the dragon in a good mood just in case?" Tension seemed to evaporate from Karj, as he slumped back against his bed head.

Harp leaned forward and used his hand to muffle his next words, as he feared the dragon would hear them. "That dragon really seems...airheaded and full of himself. Do you have some good booze?"

At this moment, fate told him that the town's security was assured for the days to come.