

Faerie Feast

A Tale in Arvos

by Cerine Hero

Cerine covered her muzzle with a handkerchief and parted the curtain with an elbow as she stepped into the back room of the clinic. It wasn't a clinic in the traditional sense, at least from before the Veiled Way took over. The place used to be a fishmonger's warehouse. There was still the tang of salt and fish in the air, and the air was very dry. But overpowering that was a rotten smell that burned the inside of the vixen's nostrils.

There were cots arranged in the warehouse, and people were stretched out on them or sitting on them. Nurses and attendants fluttered about the area, treating people as best they could with cold compresses or sweeping up fallen fur. The patients sat in the dim light from candles and alchemical lamps, because the windows had all been covered by sheets of cheesecloth. In the gloom, Cerine could see patches of fur falling out of coats, and her ears were filled with the intense coughs of the patients.

These sick folk were forced into this squalor and dark by the Veiled Way. With their iron grip, they had made healing a commodity, and while “unsanctioned” medicine was harder to detect, it was as forcefully regulated as calling upon magic from the old gods. Cerine sighed.

“So what is it?” she asked through her handkerchief to her companion. “Furblight?”

Beside her, a white-furred goat shook her head. Her hair was naturally gray and parted in front of her ears. She wore a long robe around a full-figured frame, with her hands knitted in front of her stomach. “It seems like furblight, but none of the usual remedies are working. It could be a resistant strain, so we need something more potent. But it's...”

Cerine nodded, wrapping her tail around her legs to keep it from dragging on the ground. “Just tell me what you need.”

Evelyn looked to her, her brow creased with worry. “There's none in the city. We've already searched.”

“That's not a problem.”

“Well, then... we need sunset daisy. It's a flower that-”

Cerine held up a paw. “It grows in the Vermilion Wood, I know. I've harvested some of it before. Red petals, yellow center. How much do you need?”

The unguil healer looked out across her clinic and shook her head. “I don't know. As much as you can collect safely. We need to be able to strain it into a brew for the patients. Though we'll need to procure equipment as well...”

“I can worry about that, too,” Cerine offered. She reached a paw out to reassuringly touch Evelyn's shoulder, but then thought better of it and dropped her arm back down to her side.

“I hate to ask too much of you.”

Cerine shook her head. “No. We're going to help. That's why I was sent here.”

The goat nodded and quickly walked over to a desk with a lantern. She scribbled some notes onto a loose sheet of paper and then folded it up neatly. Cerine reached out to take it with the paw holding her handkerchief. The vixen wrapped the paper up in the cloth and then tucked it into a pouch at her belt. As she did, her shirt lifted slightly, exposing a spare wheel of soft flesh that softly squished around her paw. Cerine tugged her top back down.

“I'll be back as soon as I can,” Cerine told her. “So just hang tight til then. I'll be taking an extra pair of paws, too, so that'll help things.”

“A new bodyguard?”

The vixen tilted her head, her white hair spilling across her shoulders. She shrugged. “Not sure yet. I like her, though. She wants to help.”

Evelyn nodded while Cerine turned to leave. “Be well, Cerine. Oh – and one last thing.” The goat looked the fox's figure over from chest to hips from behind. “Are you gaining weight?”

Cerine stopped in her tracks and blushed. She had. She'd gone up ten pounds in a week since starting her new "diet." Grinning awkwardly over her shoulder, the fox said, "Yeah.. Sarelma is overfeeding me to help me, er... put on muscle. Trust me, it'll be all biceps and quads in a month."

"Cerine, dear, you have to actually work out for that to happen. Or else you'll just get fat."

The fox scrunched her muzzle and pushed back the curtain in the warehouse again, feeling her soft belly ripple underneath her tunic with every step.

Mito held the alchemical lantern and looked it over while she waited for Cerine to finish changing. She, the fox, and Zaress were standing in a forgotten and disused part of the waterways below the city. It had been a long, winding path to get here, too confusing for the marten to remember, but apparently Cerine and Zaress had it memorized.

She watched through the dim light from the lantern as Cerine stripped off her townclothes and reached into a pack for an outfit more suitable for adventuring. The marten grinned playfully as the vixen knelt down, making her starter belly pooch out obviously. For the past week, Cerine had been fed increasingly large meals by their home cook, Sarelma. Mito had been, too, at first. But while Cerine had plumped up from it, Mito remained as whip-thin as ever. Sarelma decided she did believe Mito's story about returning to normal, or at least she didn't want to keep cooking extras for her. That meant more for Cerine, who was carried to her room every night with a tummyache, and the others took turns keeping her company.

Mito's gaze traveled along the fox's curvy figure, and a grin split her pale-furred face. But before she could get into any particular thoughts, a hand cuffed the back of her head.

"Quit staring," Zaress scolded.

The marten rubbed her head and tugged her ponytail tight again. "Um, ow! You're stupid strong, you know. And you're staring, too. You can see in the dark."

"I sure can."

Cerine looked up from what she was doing, holding a garment across her bare breasts. "Wait, what?" She squinted against the bright light from the lantern and glared at them both. "Can I get a little bit of privacy? By Koleo's beard..."

Zaress grunted and turned around, grabbing Mito and slinging her over her shoulder. The marten sighed and hung limp over the drake's broad shoulder, idly fiddling with the alchemical lantern in her paws.

"Alright, I'm done." Cerine stepped back into the full reach of the light. She'd replaced her townclothes for a sleeveless, blue-gray leather jerkin that fit her perfectly a few pounds ago. Brown trousers fit snug to her thighs, as well, and a thin strip of excess tummy bulged through the gap between them. She had her alchemy satchel on her right hip, her silver ring on her left paw, and some toeless shoes around her feet. "It still fits, mostly."

Zaress poked a finger into the doughnut roll of fox fat peeking out of her clothes. "Close enough." Cerine flailed her paws and the drake pulled her arm back, chuckling to herself.

"So where to now?" Mito asked, wriggling out of Zaress grip and dropping to the floor. She adjusted her crop top and jacket and gave Cerine a playful smile. The plump fox smiled back, looking down at her, and then she pointed to the blank brickwork at the end of the tunnel they'd been standing in.

"Right here, she explained. As she gestured towards it, Zaress walked over to the wall and knelt down. The brown-scaled drake wriggled her claws into a crack along the floor and began to lift. Even the powerful drake's arms and shoulders strained from the effort, her muscles tensing and swelling underneath her skin and scales. But with a grate of stone against stone, the entire wall shifted upwards, raising up one unsteady foot at a time.

Warm light flooded into the tunnel as the wall was raised, and Mito had to cover her face against the brilliance. She'd gotten used to the gloom in the tunnels and the low glow of the alchemical

lantern. Peeking between her fingers, she beheld a vast, open expanse of green countryside, trees, farmland, and mountains in the far distance. Her jaw dropped open as she scampered underneath Zaress's legs.

Cerine tried to grasp her tail. "Mito! Wait- oh, she's already through."

"Go on ahead," Zaress grunted, shouldering the wall and bracing her feet. Cerine nodded and ducked underneath the raised wall, stepping out into the eroded remaining bit of waterway on the far side. It opened out onto a slanted hill just outside the city, with ropes coiled at the end of the stones so they could use them to help descend and climb back up the hill.

The Veiled Way held on tight to the main entrances and exits of the city, controlling traffic in and out and searching everyone at the crossings. That was no good for a band of adventurers who couldn't consistently justify their comings and goings, so they used the old waterways down on the disused levels. The city was old, and had been built up over time. There were untold things lost – and living – in the underground, so even with Zaress around for protection, they didn't poke around too curiously. But the Veiled Way was young and didn't know the old paths in and out of the city, so Cerine, Zaress, and Mito took the calculated risk.

Cerine stepped beside Mito at the edge of the broken waterway, looking out over the sun-drenched landscape. They were facing west here, and it was still early, so the sun shined from behind the city above them to light the countryside. Woodlands dotted the plains and rounded green mountains just barely peeked above the horizon far in the distance. Mito's pale-furred face always gave her a look of constant shock, but her wide, mis-matched eyes and low-hanging tail showed that it was genuinely the case this time. Cerine touched her shoulder and the marten shivered away before realizing that it was the fox beside her.

"Sorry," she said, blushing and wrinkling her nose. "Jumpy."

"Have you been outside the city before?" Cerine asked.

"I've looked out from the tower," Mito explained, "but it wasn't like seeing it like this. There's... so much of it. Where are we going, again?"

Cerine pointed with her full arm so Mito could follow the line of it. Her dark fingertip hovered over a patch of red-orange forest. "There. The Vermilion Wood. We need to get some herbs to help knock down a plague before it gets too much out of control."

"Why?" Mito asked. When Cerine turned a quizzical look to her, she held up a paw and corrected herself. "We do *we* have to do it? There are healers, right? Priests? The canins at the temple, they'd help people who were sick. I'm just asking, isn't this their job?"

The vixen sighed and shook her head. "They would, but they can't. When the arbitrators threw down the old faiths, they also created a magical 'net' around the city. It detects the use of divine magic anywhere in the city. Anything 'unsanctioned,' that is, from anyone other than the abusively expensive services from the Veiled Way's own clergy, is dangerous. If we had Gray heal you before, when we brought you to the guildhouse, we'd have been—"

"-up to our tits in arbitrators," Zaress finished. She punctuated her statement by dropping the sliding wall behind her with a bone-crunching slam. Dust clogged the air around the secret door before the breeze blew it away. "Or at least you would be."

Mito squinted, looking from the muscular drake to the wall behind her. "If we need you to open the door, then how will we get back in if you get hurt?"

"Easy," Zaress said, walking past Mito. She grabbed the ropes and tossed both of them down the muddy hill. "Don't let me get hurt."

"Sure, I'll keep that in mind," Mito replied, watching as Zaress grabbed one rope and began to climb down the hill.

Cerine rolled her eyes and shook her head. "Everything should be fine. We're not going anywhere dangerous. And then on the off chance something *does* happen—" she opened her alchemy satchel and showed the marten a thick vial with blood-red liquid swirling in it "—I've got one of these."

“What is it?”

“Elixir of vigor.” Cerine squeezed one of Mito's arms playfully. “You'd be her size.” Mito's eyes sparkled at the thought, but Cerine put the potion away and grabbed the rope. “Here. You can climb down on my line. I'll go first, just do as I do.”

“I can manage a rope...”

The three of them reached the bottom easily, leaving the pair of ropes dangling on the hillside to use later. They cut across abandoned farmland for a while before venturing towards the poorly-maintained road once they were far out of sight from the city. The Veiled Way cared for nothing outside the walls of the city, leaving the road to fall into disrepair. Rain had washed out some of it, and weeds and roots were growing along the edges. In a few more years, the road would be overgrown completely and lost. The only thing keeping it from happening now was the scattering of traffic that still came in and out of the city. Mito looked out over the fallow farmland, wondering what they were like in their prime. Animals grazed on the wild grasses in the fields, and bolted as the companions came too close.

“Are there people at the Vermilion Forest?” Mito asked, looking to Cerine and ignoring Zaress.

The vixen tilted her head, her hair spilling over her shoulder. “Uh... sort of. It's not like the city, and they're not, uh, people. So to speak. If you mean towns, then no, there aren't any this close to the city. Hedgerow is two days' walk to the west, but it's been badly hurt by the Veiled Way taking over the city. It used to thrive on traders coming and going, but with the Way closing the city off, no one is coming through anymore.”

“I had no idea,” Mito whispered.

It was a few hours of walking to reach the edges of the Vermilion Wood. High trees loomed overhead, and the inside of the forest seemed to glow a vibrant red from the light passing down through the crimson canopy. The green grass and underbrush looked dark and foreboding in the red light, darkening the forest floor anywhere there wasn't bare dirt or white flowers. Mito was awestruck as they walked across the threshold of the forest. It was like entering a completely different world for the urbanite marten. Long vines hung down from the branches overhead or looped from tree to tree, sprouting flowers along their lengths. Mito peeked closely at one of them, inspecting the flowers.

“Are these it?” she asked, waving towards Cerine. The vixen came over, but she was shaking her head before she even got a good look.

“No,” she said, pointing her finger at the petals. “The colors are right, red with a yellow center, but the petals are wrong. And they grow in patches on the ground, further inside the boundaries of the wood. So that's where we'll be looking.”

Mito puffed out her chest. Winking at the bored-looking drake, the marten retrieved her staff from her jacket and extended it so use as a walking stick. She was brimming with excitement at the thrill of exploring and the chance to prove herself to Cerine. “Then let's go!” she chirped, dashing into the deep woods and almost instantly out of sight.

“Mito! Seriously,” Cerine gasped, jogging forward a bit but losing the slender mustelo in just a few moments. Zaress followed at a languid pace, picking her steps over stones and roots carefully. The vixen sighed pointedly at her. “She's going to get herself hurt.”

“Quit coddling her,” Zaress replied. “It's weird.”

Cerine huffed and pulled her jerkin down over her exposed belly fat and love handles. Zaress came over and slid the jerkin back up, playfully patting the vixen's exposed tummy. Cerine leaned her weight against the drake and let her play.

“You could stand to be a little nicer,” Cerine told her, trailing her claws along Zaress's muscular arm. The drake flexed her bicep and pressed it gently into Cerine's breast as she wrapped her arms around her.

“I'll try. She's just annoying.” Zaress peered into the woods before nuzzling into the fox's softer neck. “You promise to make her stand on her own feet, though. Quit trying to be her sister *and* her playmate.”

“I-”

“No. She gets hurt, tell her it's her own fault and she'll be fine tomorrow. You don't have to keep an eye out for her.”

Cerine sighed, running her paw along Zaress's cheek. “Do as you say, not as you do, huh?”

“Heh... maybe. It's my job to watch out for my fuzzies. But I promise, as annoying as she is, I'll try to be a little more-”

“More what?”

Zaress and Cerine snapped their heads upwards. Mito was laying spread out across a tree branch over the top of them both, watching as they flirted in the middle of the red-tinted woods. She winked her green eye at them as they separated, flustered. Holding an orange, smooth-skinned fruit, the marten took another bite from it.

Cerine stamped a foot. “Mito, what are you eating?”

“Dammit, Ceri.”

Mito looked at the fruit. “Iunno. It's good, though. I'd say try it, but it might be poisonous.” She took another bite and then tossed it into the forest over her shoulder. With exceptional agility and poise, the slender marten scampered down the tree and slid along a branch, using her staff as a cross-bar to hold while she descended to the ground. She landed and rolled to her feet right in front of the others, beaming broadly. “I think I found some. It's this way.”

The marten took the lead, going slower so the pot-bellied fox and broad-shouldered drake could follow. She led them over a creek, hopping from stone to stone without a care. Cerine had to admit to herself that she probably was being too protective. Mito was foolhardy, but she was handling herself well. The plump fox took Mito's paw and together they strode over to where the marten had found some flowers beside the fallen trunk of a tree. She knelt by them and pointed them out to Cerine.

“This is sunset daisy,” the vixen told her, smiling. She fetched a small knife from a pocket on her satchel and started to harvest. “I'll get these. Look and see if there's any more.”

Mito flashed her teeth in a big smile and leapt over the log. Grass crunched beneath her feet in the clearing as she searched around, crouching low and looking for more flowers. She pushed vines away with her staff as she wandered into a thicket. Something caught her foot and she almost stumbled. Kneeling down, she picked up a piece of smoothed wood. It looked like a table or chair leg. Mito furrowed her brow. Weird thing to find in the middle of the woods, she thought. But it was laying in another patch of sunset daisy. Mito began to reach to pull them up and take them to Cerine, but she remembered the knife the fox had gotten out to cut the stems. Instead, she hopped up and jogged back to where she'd left the pink vixen.

She was gone. Mito climbed over the fallen log and looked to where she'd last seen Cerine. Most of the daisies in the patch were cut and missing, but the fox's knife was laying abandoned in the grass. The marten stood up on the log and peered all around, but couldn't see her anywhere. She had no idea where Zaress was, either. In fact, she hadn't seen her since they crossed the creek.

“Cerine?” she called, wandering up and down the fallen trunk. “...Zaress? Where'd you go?”

The wind changed and brought whispers to the marten's ears. Brushing back her unkempt hair, Mito turned and listened to the voices at the edge of hearing. She couldn't make out any words, but they were coming from deeper in the woods, along the creek. Jumping down, she made her way along the shore of the creek, where it got darker and redder and more choked with vines as she traveled into the heart of the wood. The voices were getting louder, and Mito crouched down as she saw light up ahead.

There was another small open space in the woods, where it was so dark that small, wispy lanterns were hung all around the area. They were attached to tree branches or hooked over a criss-crossing canopy of vines overhead. Mito squinted to try to see better in the gloom. It was practically no brighter than candlelight. There was a long, wooden dining table in the middle of the open space, its ornate feet resting directly on the earth below it. A luxurious feast was set on the table, from a roast fowl to every bit of trimmings imaginable. The marten's mouth watered, even as her thoughts buzzed

with how incredulous this was.

Motion caught her eyes and Mito flattened herself to the grass. Several small, winged insects were buzzing over the feast, their wings glimmering in the lanternlight. They were awfully big, and Mito could hear voices.

“We have a beautiful new guest, sisters!” the first creature chirped. “It has been so long since we had someone to share our company with, hasn't it?”

“Indeed it has!” another replied, spinning circles in the air. “And now we have someone to pamper and delight once again.”

A third insect buzzed into view. “What a cute one she is, too. What do they call these? A canin? A fox? Oh, but not like any fox we've ever seen, no! Hair like snow and fur of carnation, how lovely.”

“And so plump, too, sisters,” the first creature added. “Look at that belly grow as she eats, she is enjoying our food so nicely!”

Mito lunged from the brush and trees, slamming her staff down into the earth in front of her. The insects immediately scattered into the branches above, out of the reach of the light. Turning, Mito looked at the chair that had been facing away from her. Cerine sat in it, with vines constricting her wrists, ankles, and neck. Food stained her muzzle and her tummy bulged out from underneath her jerkin as she panted.

“Cerine!” Mito gasped, dropping her staff and trying to pull on the vines around the fox's neck. “What happened?”

The fox looked at her and blinked twice, as if she was shaking sense back into her head. “I don't know... I heard voices. I thought you or Zaress were calling me. Then everything got fuzzy. I found this table and someone told me to sit down. I did, and the food was so delicious, and then you're here. What... where am I?”

“I'm gonna get you loose!” the marten replied, putting all her weight behind the vines. She tried to tip over the chair to no avail, either. “Where the hell is Zaress?”

The insects descended from the branches and surrounded Mito. One of them landed on the back of Cerine's chair. Up close, she could see that the little insects were actually small people, though they were still very insectoid in shape. They had ant-like heads and antennae, and four rainbow-shaded wings that spread from their backs. The creature on top of the chair put its hands on its hips and leaned in towards Mito.

“Rude mustelo!” it chirped. “You were not invited to this party, no!”

“We are enjoying a nice meal with our fox friend,” another said. “And she has so much more to eat.” With a wave of the insect's hand, a piece of food rose from the table, surrounded by a reddish glow. It floated to Cerine's mouth and the vixen gobbled it up without thinking. Cerine groaned and her belly bulged outward another inch, filling her lap. Mito covered her face as she gasped.

“She's had enough to eat!” the marten told them, swatting the air with her paws. The buzzing creatures avoided her swings easily. “You'll hurt her if you keep that up!”

The creatures shared a confused glance, as if they didn't understand what Mito was saying. “Nonsense,” the third one replied. “Food never hurt anyone. Watch.” The creature raised a hand and a red glow surrounded Cerine. In an instant, the vixen's overstuffed belly dissolved into plush, hefty fat. The rest of her body expanded to match, her breasts and face growing rounder and heavier. “There! Now she is not so full, and she can continue to eat. Are you happy?”

Mito recoiled in shock. They were going to feed and fatten Cerine until she was massive! Looking at all the food on the table, the marten wondered what she could do. As she hesitated, the insect creatures fed the fox more, making her belly bulge again. Mito's ears went up as she turned and looked at another chair at the table.

“Hey, feed me, too!” she said, waving to get the creatures' attention. “I'm starving!”

“Did you not hear, mustelo?” a creature told her. “You are not invited! How very rude!”

Mito shook her head. “But I'll actually like your food. Cerine doesn't actually like it at all. Not

one bit. She's just pretending to be polite.”

Everything stopped. All of the insects turned to face the marten as one. “And how do you know this?” they asked, their voices overlapping. “Oh, we cannot abide lies or deceptions.”

“I’m afraid she just told me,” Mito explained, “a moment ago, when you were up in the branches.”

The creatures spun around one another, chattering. “She lied! Oh, how like a fox! How shall we punish her, sisters? Maybe we should cover her in warts like a toad, and turn that pretty fur green! Then everyone will know how she's a liar.”

Mito sat down in the empty seat, squeezing the armrests. This chair wobbled, missing a leg. A stone had been placed underneath it to keep it upright. “Don't worry about her! I'm hungry now. You can punish her later, once I've enjoyed all of your delicious cooking.”

“We thought the mustelo rude, sisters,” one insect said, “but she is delightful! And quite nicer than the mean, lying fox, too! Come now, let's not waste, our new guest is famished!”

Magical energy surrounded the food in front of Mito. As eggs and sweets flew towards her mouth, she opened her muzzle to gobble down everything the insects sent her way. Everything she ate was one less thing they could feed to Cerine, or so she hoped. The marten gulped down a mouthful and felt it bloat in her tummy immediately like a full meal. Her stomach swelled and she felt her skin stretch tight around just her first few bites. Brown fur bulged out in front of her. She placed her paws on her tummy and rubbed it as she continued eating. Surprisingly, the creatures didn't tie her down with vines. Maybe it was because she was willing? They used some kind of hypnosis on Cerine.

Across from Mito, the fox began to wake out of her confusion. She struggled at her restraints, her half-bared belly jiggling on her lap. Cerine panted from the effort, and looked down past her disheveled hair at her bigger breasts and the belly bulging past them. She glanced up, confused, and her eyes settled on Mito at the other end of the table. The insects were taking turns feeding and fattening the marten, all while Mito encouraged them to do more, distracting them from the fox. Her slender figure exploded with flab, overhanging the armrests of her chair. The marten's clothes tightened around her fatter body, with her chest escaping her half-shirt and her arms overflowing her sleeves. A insect creature zapped her once more with energy, converting her oversized meal to more fat. Mito jiggled and grew, becoming immensely obese and mostly nude.

Cerine tried to shake her chair. She had things in her potion bag, if she could just get them. But she couldn't budge. The vines had her too tight. But hands reached around her from behind, grasping the vines and ripping them away. Cerine craned her neck back and saw Zaress looming over her. The drake continued tearing and tugging at the vines, but they grew back almost as quickly.

“Help Mito!” the fox hissed.

“She's saving you, you dork,” Zaress replied.

The insect creatures heard the voices and turned from their obese guest. When they saw Zaress, every one of them, all at once, gasped in horror.

“Dragon!”

“No, it is one of their hateful spawn, sisters.”

“Foul monster! Unnatural thing! Kill it!”

The insects gathered as one, leaving Mito, and sent a burst of red energy into the vines above them. The vines shivered, dropping the lanterns to the ground. Twisting over one another, the vines descended from the canopy and knotted together into a vague shape of a four-legged creature. Thorns grew for teeth and the four flowers bloomed in place of eyes. It looked right at Zaress and charged.

Zaress put all her strength into tearing off the vine holding down Cerine's left paw before she was bowled over by the vine-wolf. She tumbled backwards into the creek, wrestling and roaring at the monster that was trying to bite and claw her.

Cerine flexed her freed paw, thrusting it down into her alchemy satchel to see what she had that was useful. With Zaress tied up fighting the tangle of vines, the insects had gone back to feeding Mito,

who was looking comically too wide and fat for her chair now. Rolls of blubber spilled everywhere out of her clothes. Cerine fished among the glass bottles in her satchel until she grasped one with a unique shape. She pulled it out and looked at it. A blood-red solution swirled around inside the bottle. It was her elixir of vigor.

Tugging the cork loose with her teeth, Cerine drank the entire bottle in one go. The liquid rolled down her throat and was absorbed quickly, speeding through her blood to her muscles. Within seconds, it felt like every inch of her body was aflame. A shiver went through her body, and her muscles began to bulge and swell. Cerine felt her heartbeat in her ears as she doubled in muscle mass, her chubby figure transforming into a hulking, muscular one. Shoulders widened and flexing thighs ripped through her trousers. Gritting her fangs, the enormous vixen ripped her way out of the vines, freeing her other paw and then her head. Her jerkin split across her chest and back, but held strong, stretched tight across her bulging muscles. Straining her corded, muscular legs, she ripped the vines from her ankles and stumbled free from the chair.

Cerine caught herself on the edge of the table. She grasped a silver plate of finger sandwiches and dumped them on the ground. Hefting the plate over her head, she put her now considerable strength behind a sweep of the platter, slapping a few of the insects from the air.

“Let her go!” she roared, her voice deep and booming. All eyes were on her now, and the insects recoiled from the escaped, hulking fox. Mito licked her muzzle clean and gasped, seeing how big Cerine had grown. The marten was at least three times as heavy, but she didn't seem to notice.

“Fox is friends with dragonspawn!” the creatures hissed, buzzing about. “And marten, too! All liars! Rude! Terrible guests! Friends with dragons are not welcome! Begone from the wood!”

The insects fluttered their wings and disappeared again, vanishing into the darkness of the canopy overhead. Cerine exhaled, feeling like they were finally gone. She looked down at Mito, who was staring at her with wide eyes.

“You look amazing,” the marten breathed, but she couldn't quite finish her statement before a burp cut her off.

Cerine snickered and pointed at Mito's blubber. “Have you seen yourself? You're a whale... oh, shit, I need to check on Zaress...”

She turned around in time to see Zaress walking back into the reach of the the lanterns on the ground and in the tree branches. She carried the limp bundle of vines that had once been trying to attack her in one hand. The drake tossed it down in the clearing and inspected her arm, where a number of needle-sized marks decorated her skin.

“Ceri?” she asked. “Do you have an antivenom?”

“I do, actually.” Cerine provided the drake with an antivenom and a small vial of regeneration poison to help the bites clear up quicker. Zaress took them, sliding her hand up the fox's arm to feel her swollen bicep with a smirk. Blushing, Cerine took out a dose of fission from her pouch, too, but she looked back at the gigantic mound of marten pudding behind her and thought better of it. They'd still need the strength.

“Won't get far with her like that,” Zaress said.

“Totally worth it,” Mito replied, patting her paws on top of her belly.

Cerine smirked. “We should be able to get her outside the woods together, then we can make camp until morning.”

Zaress ignited another campfire with her breath and settled back on her rear. Her muscles ached from carrying Mito through the woods. Despite her immense size, she wasn't too heavy for the drake to lift, but her soft, pudgy body was hard to grip and maneuver, even with Cerine helping. The fox had taken her fission and slimmed back down, and was now fussing over the enormously obese marten's fur, brushing burrs and twigs from her coat.

“What were those things?” Mito asked. She tried to sit up, but her belly was too big. Giving up,

the mostly-nude marten flopped back onto her back. Fat sloshed up and down her body for several moments afterwards, and a playful smirk spread across the marten's muzzle.

“Faeries,” Zaress grumbled. She was still stinging from being referred to as a dragon earlier. “How many flowers did we get?” she asked, laying back and looking up at the stars.

Cerine checked her satchel. “Not as many as I had hoped, but it should be plenty.” She adjusted her split and stretched clothes over her once-again plump figure. “I’ll brew what they need when we’re back at the guildhouse and then make the delivery.” She yawned and then leaned her cheek and chest into Mito’s bulk. The marten wobbled on the ground and wrapped an arm around her. “Zaress, can you do first watch?”

“Sure,” she replied. Her arm itched where the regeneration potion was healing her bites and scratches, and she had to force herself to leave it alone.

It was a while before she heard anything more, but then Mito got her attention. The blob of marten wobbled lightly as she tried to turn to face Zaress without disturbing the sleeping fox. “Hey,” she asked. “Uhm... where were you before? You disappeared at the creek.”

Zaress glanced towards Mito with her slitted eyes. Frowning, she said, “I was... fishing. I figured everything would be fine for a few minutes while you were getting the flowers. I messed up.” She sighed hard and looked at the pink fox, nestled into a fold of Mito’s fat. Looking up at the marten, she said, “You did good, stray.”

Mito blushed and smiled.

Cerine placed the ceramic jug in Evelyn’s hands. “There you go. I hope that’s enough to really get this under control.”

“You made all this?” Evelyn asked. The white-furred goat was astonished, and called over some of her nurses at the clinic to take the jug and begin filling bowls for the patients. “This will be a lifesaver. If nothing else, we’ll certainly be able to keep the sickness contained. Thank you, Cerine.”

The vixen waved her paw in the air. “No. What you’re doing is worth thanks. My friends and I just cut some flowers.”

Evelyn nodded. “Nevertheless, I appreciate your help. Now, you should probably be going. I don’t want you to be exposed.” Cerine turned to leave, but the goat called out to her once more. “And Cerine, you really need to be getting a handle on your weight. You’re getting huge.”

The pink fox cupped her paws around her fatter belly and blushed. She’d been hoping the goat wouldn’t notice, but she was easily twenty pounds heavier than when she came here last. “Aha... yeah... I’m gonna try. I’ll just have to avoid any more faerie feasts...”

* * * * *

A big thank you to all my Patreon subscribers! You guys are making this possible!
Evelyn belongs to Mrben277! Thank you for being a Foxyfriend!

Bronze Supporters

A Yjay Cobalt Dilly Elana Shuly
ElCid Fatthingsareneat Fenris Freere Firefang
Foxel Gideon Gyro-furry Havenchaser HerrFleischer
mikefoxtrot Nedak Peppermint RMDIII Sapphire Yamamoto
Spreeuzaki Teres TheWickerMan zanelia

Silver Supporters

Ghost Fox Gonkulous JT

Foxyfriends

Indigo Jack Mrben277