

An Elf Sister's Secret

By

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My long pastel-peach hair whips about as I pitch myself from a vine, and my vermilion eyes twinkle with excitement as I flip backward, hooting gleefully. I grab another tangle, swing and release, back flip again and grip another, over and over, descending from our village high in the trees, following my older sister to the forest floor far below, under the canopy-filtered afternoon sunlight.

Drunken with joy, I giggle as I clumsily land beside Fayanna, and gnomes scuttle and pixies flutter from the surrounding underbrush as she keeps me from tumbling over with a steadying hand to my chest. Her bronzed skin is emphasized gorgeously beside my fair complexion.

Fayanna stands a foot taller than me, as she's almost eighteen-years-old, and is nearly fully developed. Her mint-green hair is short and tousled, and her watchful eyes are an enchanting shade of lavender. Her big bosoms pop out the top and bottom of her brown fur bandeau, and her matching breechcloth does little to cover her round rump. My bantam breasts and little bubble-butt pale in comparison. Even her ears are longer and pointier than mine. I'm envious of her facial features as well, which are sharp and angular rather than blunt and circular, even though everyone considers me adorable. I want to be viewed as stunning like Fayanna, not childishly cute and pinch worthy.

She whispers, "Rayna, *quiet* down. Just because we slipped passed the guards doesn't mean they aren't looking for us now."

The young are not permitted to leave the safety of the village. All manner of evil lurks about, hungry for the blood and flesh of elves untrained in the art of magick, such as ourselves.

I subdue my giggles just long enough to tease. "If a shiftling attacks, distract them with a gander at your overripe melons, and I'll club them in the back of the head with a branch."

She crosses her arms over her chest, and scoffs, "You're just jealous."

I slap my knee with an exaggerated fit of laughter. "*Jealous?! You're so top-heavy you walk in zigzags!*"

With a hyperbolic roll of her lavender eyes, she turns her back and marches away.

Suddenly aware of my own vulnerability, I hurry after her. "I'm just playing. Wait up."

When I catch up to her, she playfully elbows me in the shoulder. "You're probably right about my portion of the plan, but I'm not too sure your scrawny arms can swing a branch hard enough to do any damage."

I snort, "Pfft, just focus on swaying your humongous fruits without toppling, and I'll deal with the ravaging of foes."

Fayanna chuckles. "The only thing you're going to *ravage* are the wild blackberries if we ever find them."

"We will." I sniff theatrically. "I can smell them on the breeze."

She sniffs softly, then scrunches her nose. "All I smell is your *lack* of hygiene."

Now it's my turn to roll my eyes. "Har-har, *hilarious*."

She snickers with mock arrogance. "Thank you. Everyone says so."

We wonder along for awhile before I begin to hum a cheerful song, and Fayanna joins in, as it has been one of our favorites since I was a toddler.

It wasn't that long ago that we would merrily sing and dance together on a daily basis. We were always the best of friends. Things changed when she was betrothed to be married on her next birthday, which will require her departure. We knew that day would come, but still, I threw a tantrum at the announcement ceremony so hysterical I had to be physically restrained. Our prideful mother nearly died of shame, our stoic father shed a tear at my display of grief, and Fayanna's suffering was only magnified by my outburst. Between my guilt and her sorrow, we didn't speak to one another for a week. Our relationship has been tense ever since.

When I finally sight a patch of wild blackberries, I dart ahead, drop to my knees and pluck a berry. The instant I do, tendrils coil around my wrist and jerk me across the ground, dragging me through the underbrush.

Fayanna dashes forward, scoops up a jagged rock, and dives over me, bashing the stone on the vine. It breaks, releasing me, whirls and whips, then wraps around her throat. She thrashes desperately and claws at her neck. With violent tugs, it smashes her against trees, while drawing her away.

I sprint and spring through the wood, screaming urgently for help as I give chase.

The earth rumbles, yanking my feet from under me, and I crash to the ground, sliding through rotting leaves and catching a mouthful of dirt. I wipe filth from my eyes as a chunk of the forest floor rises up, revealing a dark tunnel below. A worm ridden creature, made up of roots and vines and thick mud, stands in the burrow, reeling Fayanna in.

I spit soil and clamber to my feet, shrieking in horror as the earth closes up, swallowing my sister whole. Crying and sobbing uncontrollably, I charge over and begin to dig with my hands, breaking my fingernails on a passage-concealing stone below the soft topsoil. I beat my fists on the rock and screech in a terrible frenzy of panic.

A deep voice, questions, "Princess Rayna, where is your sister?"

I look up to find myself surrounded by four royal guards. Miserably, I cry, "A plant golem dragged her underground!"

The commander orders, "Gelsey, deliver Rayna to safety and return with reinforcements."

Gelsey, the friendliest and most attractive of all the royal guards, replies with a stern nod. "Yes, sir."

She tosses me over her shoulder and leaps into the air. Clutching a vine, she climbs hand over hand at an impressive rate, as I weep like a blubbering child.

I watch through spilling tears as the commander blasts the concealing stone to bits with a bolt of arcane magick, then leads the other two guards into the passageway, lighting the way with his staff.

* * *

My heart explodes into a rapid pace when my baby sister, Rayna, is unexpectedly jerked away by a living vine.

Without thought, acting on sheer emotion, I dash forward, scoop up the first jagged rock I sight, dive over her flailing, slender body, and bash the stone on the vine. It breaks, whirls and whips as if in pain, and then coils around my throat.

I kick and writhe and tear at the strangling vine as I'm tossed about wildly, tugged through prickling underbrush and heavy mud, smacking into tree trunks until I take a sharp blow to the head...

I dream of a massive, pulsating tree erupting from a mountain ravine. The surrounding forest weeps in dismay as a black fog emulates from the colossal growth. The murk rolls through the wood, corrupting everything in its path. The flora oozes acidic lichens and wilts. The fauna turns rabid and mauls each other. The gnomes and pixies suffocate on the toxic haze. The rivers grow thick, drowning the merfolk. The elves and faeries turn on one another, massacring every tribe. Goblins, ogres and trolls take over the fae lands and strip mine all the ore and crystals from the earth.

...I awaken to the rending and crunching of a grimy gremlin gobbling down undines, plucked from a soiled bucket, sitting atop my cage of iron. Noticing I'm awake, it grimaces at me, its tiny black fangs dripping with blood. It clutches its shriveled olive-green member and pisses through the bars, spraying me with foul urine.

I cover my face and turn away, but cannot move from the filthy rug I'm sprawled upon, for the iron will sear my elven flesh.

The gremlin cackles riotously and bangs on the top of the cage where it sits, as it thoroughly douses me.

Judging by the stone walls and lack of windows, I appear to be in a cavern. The only illumination comes from an open fire at the center of the room. A sizable cauldron rests in the middle of the flames. The smoke escapes through a hole in the high ceiling.

It's bladder empty, the gremlin leaps off the cage and scurries out of the room.

A few minutes later, it returns, resting on the shoulder of an ogre. I've only seen them in drawings, but I know what it is immediately. Nine-foot-tall, dirty-brown hide, pug nose, large lower fangs, and thick horns that wrap around the side of its skull.

A goblin enters behind it. Six-foot-tall, dirty-green skin, bat-like ears, pointed nose, and needle-like teeth.

They're naked, and I can see they're well-endowed males. I notice that beyond all the filth, I'm naked as well.

My breathing and heartbeat quicken as the ogre crouches, opens the cage and snatches me out. Setting me on my knees, he pins my hands behind my back and palms the back of my head.

I sob as the goblin opens my mouth with a flick of his wand, and crams in his grubby phallus.

This is the end of the free preview.

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