

Storytime: Part 2

Today, we'll be looking at Part 2 of last week's blog post, Storytime.

I woke up to the most beautiful sunrise I had ever seen.

It was also probably the strangest.

There were three suns in this sky, and instead of the blue that my eyes were accustomed to, the space above our heads was a light green. I heard my brother stretch next to me, and as our eyes adjusted to the strange light, we heard a familiar muttering. We both glanced down at where it had come from, only to see the Muitap. The hermit crab, who had been oblivious for a few seconds of our curious staring, suddenly noticed that we were awake. "Oh, you two are up!. Let's get a move on! Come on, come on!! We don't have all day!"

We continued to stare, bewildered. For a few seconds there was an uncomfortable silence, before I spoke up. "Um...where are we going? And who exactly are you?"

The hermit crab looked surprised. "Okay, 1) we're going to the palace – obviously, and 2) Lord Shelldon Patrick Nemo Arthur Neptune IV, pleased to make your acquaintance." He extended a claw and both of us, shrugging at each other, gingerly shook it, using our thumb and index fingers.

"Can we call you Shelly?" Sandeep asked. We grinned at each other.

Shelly, looking appalled at such an idea, immediately cried, "Absolutely not!"

Our smiles only widened. "Whatever you want, Shelly," I replied.

He gave us an annoyed glare, but didn't argue, instead

changing the subject. "Okay, whatever, but we have to get going *now*. We don't have all day, and I don't wanna anger the mistress!" Out of nowhere, a dirt path appeared before us, winding through what looked like a meadow, except there were no flowers and the grass was...curly, like short pieces of macaroni. The crab crawled forward, and not knowing what else to do, we followed.

"Who's the mistress?" my brother asked.

"Why do you have a mistress?" I inquired.

"Where are we?" Sandeep asked.

"Why are we going to the palace with you?" I asked.

The hermit crab just shook his head and crawled harder.

In the next 15 minutes or so, we learned everything there was to know about Muitaps. We were told that Shelly was an advisor to his queen, Her Majesty Augusta Von Aria, and had been serving her for his entire lifetime of 3,567 Earthen years. He did so because he, like all Muitaps, was loyal to the beloved queen of his people. The Muitaps were naturally born with the abilities to shapeshift, time travel, and teleport, but only those who were dedicated to perfecting their skills had any real power. In his case, he had studied time travel and teleportation, but he wasn't very good at shapeshifting, and so most of the time, he was stuck as a hermit crab. The reason why we didn't just teleport to the palace was apparently because "even we Muitaps need some exercise". We were going with him back to the palace because, as he put it, we had been "unlucky enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time". He also informed us that the beauty of Mutia (the planet of the Muitaps) was something that no human had ever beheld before, so in a way, we were also quite lucky.



Finally, the curly-grass road came to a stop. Before us was a jagged hill with a small entrance hole, along with a crudely

painted stone sign which featured a single paw print. "We're here!" Shelldon exclaimed. He took one glance at our faces and sighed, realizing that yet another explanation was needed. "Oh...right. The queen is very skilled at all 3 of our species' gifts, but she prefers to keep the form of an Earthling lion, and her palace reflects that choice." Seeing the worry still written all over our faces, he added, "Don't worry, she's vegetarian." We both gave a sigh of relief. Then, we looked all around us, taking in the amazing scenery consisting of perfectly manicured hot pink bushes that didn't have a leaf out of place, floating wisps of what looked like yellow smoke but smelled like vanilla, and levitating bees without wings. Outside the queen's "palace" were rows of spaceships of all colors and sizes. Shelly explained that these belonged to the palace workers who couldn't teleport or time travel very well.

And with our curiosity satisfied, we followed Shelly into the lion's den.

When we came inside, a lioness sat before us, except she was wearing a dress and sitting upright. On her head was a small, unassuming circlet of what looked like rubies. She was surrounded by all kinds of animals, some that we could recognize, and others that looked bizarre. Most of them hovered near her, fanning her with blue leaves. She looked like something out a science fiction novel, but what surprised me the most wasn't how she looked, but really the next words she said.

"Welcome, little humans. I've been expecting you."

Psych! ( ) Since I wasn't able to finish this story in two blog posts, next week's post will (hopefully) be the last part of the story. Then, we will look into tall tale speeches and how they work. Thanks for reading!