



RESURGENCE

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PROLOGUE:

The sky so dark she thought her eyes were closed
And in between her fingers squeezing mulch,
The Girl imagined flowers when she rose,
And dreamt of water skipping through a gulch.
Instead, the Girl wakes up to falling ash
That rides the heavy air like gentle snow.
What once had em'rald sparkle looked of trash.
She can't say why, she only knows to go.
She stands, inhaling particles of smoke
She chokes on little ghosts of what once was—
What now are blistered bones of fir and oak.
She contemplates the things a hero does:
"How I would change this place back if I could!"
She thinks as she starts through a barren wood.



CHAPTER 1: FAERIES

Although her memories of the past are gone,
She does recall her gray dress once was green.
Oblivious, she nearly steps upon
The grayest Faeries she has ever seen!
“Apologies!” the Girl squeaks to the sprites.
“Oh, Giant Little Girl, are you the one
Who’s destined to bring moonlight to our nights
And green grove summers nourished by the sun?”
The Faerie family isn’t always gray,
They’re us’lly vibrant, flying through the trees.
“Oh, Giant Little Girl, we nightly pray
That you’ll return all our amenities—
A place for every goblin, troll, and gnome,
A place for us to call Forever Home!”

“I guess this could be true,” the Girl reflects.
And everyone knows Faeries cannot lie.
Could this be where our hero’s fate connects?
She smiles bright and promises, “I’ll try!”
The Faeries jump with manic pixie glee
And tell the Girl how oft they’ve tried to build
Forever Homes in skeletons of trees,
But homes that can’t sustain lay unfulfilled.
“With zero flora Faerie homes decay,
But you could help us with this Seedling key!”

Now, take it to the Oldish One," they say,
"And she'll give you the second of the three.
Each key unlocks the pieces of a spell
To resurrect the place in which we dwell."

"A Seedling key... that unlocks a spell?"

"The Seedling keys unlock an incantation
Which sung in all will cause a transformation."

"So, the Seedling Spell is a song. Broken up into three parts that
must each be unlocked. But how can a song be locked?"

"A song sits locked inside most everything;
It's yours if you are brave enough to sing."

The Girl accepts the first key. And with it, the first piece:

*"In the darkness of the wood,
You'll find the brightest souls alive
They've been through so much sorrow
And somehow, they still survive
They deserve a place, a single space
That they can call their own
They've never known
A forever home*

*So come, return to us this night
We have been patient through the fight
Hear our song, we are calling, we are urging
We belong to the haven that's emerging
We've done no wrong, here we stand on the verge
Of a grand resurgence..."*



CHAPTER 2: OLDISH ONE

It wasn't how her greenish dress
Had caught a branch and tore.
It wasn't that the ashen mud
Might stain the boots she wore.
What stopped her was the fact
She wasn't wearing boots before.
The black and gray pathway she stayed
Unswerving to was wet.
This was the trail the Faeries gave
But soon she felt regret,
Because the mud grabbed hold
And then it dried and then it set!
Stuck in a muddy flytrap was
The Girl who couldn't kick.
She'd set out on a mission,
But her Pride turned into Sick.
And then, before a tear could fall,
Appeared a walking stick!

There stood the Oldish Woman
With a cloak of reddish moss.
"I'm here to help the Seedling!
Grab ahold and climb across!"
And then, the Girl was bootless,

Though she didn't feel a loss.
"I think you are the one I seek
Who holds a Seedling key.
I have the first; I heard you have
The second one—" "That's me!"
The Woman held the key
with ancient, rusted copper teeth.
"Who sent you on this quest,"
The Woman asked, "and to what ends?"
"Some Faeries want their home back
For their families and friends."
The Woman raised a brow, "The Faeries
Didn't make amends?"

They only
Sent you to restore what was
Exactly as before?"
The Girl's face crinkled, and the Woman
Led her to a door.
"When someone tells a story,
Don't forget, there's always more."
With that, the Woman walked her through
The door, which had been charmed.
"This is my private workshop,
There's no need to be alarmed.
The sprites care not for creatures
Who the Old World may have harmed."
The Oldish One explained that while
The Faeries always thrive,
It's Animals and others who must
Fight to stay alive.
"This place was made more like
A coliseum than a hive.
It's not my place to argue,
For this key is yours to hold.
And I'll supply you Tools to fight
The danger and the cold:

Some bread to keep you nourished
And a sword of green and gold.”

“Are you telling me that Faeries *do* lie?”

The Woman said a Faerie’s truth
May not be truth for others.
Kids ask permission from their dads
With vetoes from their mothers.
The Faeries would conduct all lives
If Faeries had their druthers.

“Where can I find the third and final key?”

The Woman goes quiet for a moment. She swallows,
And the leather of her voice rolls along the dense air.

“There’s a Bear at the northwest edge of the barren wood.
He guards the third and final key.”

The Girl holds the green and gold sword now understanding
what it’s for.

“The only way to hold that key is to slay the Bear.”

A moment of quiet.

“Where did my boots come from?” the Girl asks. “I wasn’t wearing
boots before.”

The Oldish One chuckles.

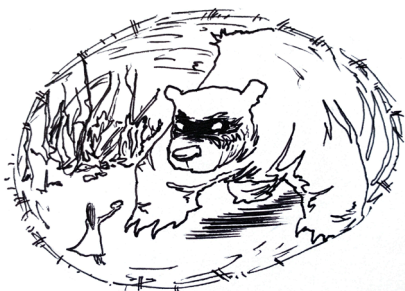
“I saw you coming. Knew you’d get stuck in the muck. Sent the
boots.”

The Girl accepts the second key, the second piece of song:

*“In the darkness of the wood,
You’ll find adversity and pride
With each portion of misfortune,
There’s a spark of hope inside
Take your sword and shield
And prepare to slay the beast*

*All heroes know
That's how we grow*

*So come, return to us with haste
We have been waiting in the waste
Hear our song, we are calling, we are urging
We belong to the haven that's emerging
We've done no wrong as we stand on the verge
Of a grand resurgence..."*



CHAPTER 3: BEAR

All mud and ash.
All dark charcoal and flecks of glowing embers.
Except the Girl's dress.
When she awoke and met the Faeries, her dress was gray, though
she had a vague memory of
A green dress.
When she met the Oldish Woman, her dress had more life,
And now,
It's green again, bright and green
Like a seedling in the middle of this desolate land.
Seedling, she remembers,
My mission: slay the Bear, take the third key, sing the Seedling
song,
Return the forest.
Return the forest
To what?
The Faeries say that goblins, trolls, and gnomes would have a
Forever Home when the forest
returns the exact way it was before.
The Oldish One said the Old World wasn't great for anyone who
wasn't a goblin, a troll, or a gnome. What had she meant?
The Girl thinks,
"Is there a way to make a Forever Home for Everyone?"
She eats some bread.

Focus:

Get the third key for the Seedling,
For the spell-song that will bring the resurgence of the forest.

A cave

At the northwest edge of the wood,

Just as the Oldish One said.

The Girl fills her lungs with volumes and hurls forth

The quietest yelp of “hello?”

The echo of her call bounces and chirps on nearby rocks, some
of which are left from the Old World, some are newly made from
whatever took the forest in the first place.

She thinks to herself, “Whoever’s in there couldn’t possibly have
heard that—”

“ W h a t . ”

The soil rumbles with the Bear’s low and gravelly voice.

The Girl is yards away but still takes a step backward, nearly
tripping over soot.

“I’ve—”

“ W h a t . ”

“I’ve come for the third Seedling key.”

“ S e e d l i n g . ”

“Yes.”

From the mouth of the cave comes a thunderous step,

A giant claw

That rocks the quarry.

The Bear’s head is enormous and feels miles high.

The Bear is a mountain crawling through dried mud and dust,

Every step a crater.

“ S o , y o u ’ v e c o m e t o s l a y m e . ”

The Bear is strong and tired.

“ . . . ”

She lifts the green and gold sword with some uncertainty and utters, “Yes.”

“You won’t slay me. You won’t hold the third key.”

The Girl looks at the giant Bear and she believes him.

She asks, “Why do you hate the forest Faeries so?”

“Why do you look to me and ask for reason?”

“Because I want to listen.”

The Bear looks down at the Girl. For the first time, she sees his eyes are

Warm yellow

Like two golden moons.

“That’s more of a chance than any Faerie has ever given me.”

“I am no Faerie.” She offers bread.

“No. You’re not.” He takes it.

The Bear tells her he’d been driven to the edge of the forest by the Faeries, goblins, trolls, and gnomes.

He was never given space to live.

“I will not give you the key because these keys create a song that heals a forest in which I was never welcome.”

The Girl puts her hand on the Bear’s massive claw.

The Bear feels it like a gnat on his fur.

The Bear feels it like a friend who finally understands.

“I won’t bring back the forest that cast you out. But I can’t leave the land like this.” She points at the jagged lines, the wooden graveyard, the aftermath.

“How can you change what’s here without the three keys?” the Bear asks.

The Girl considers. Each key so far is a piece of song.

“I could,” she starts, “finish the song myself. If I make the third piece of song, I can make the forest for all—not just the majority.”

The Bear's golden moon eyes are full. "Y o u c a n d o t h a t?"
The Girl thinks. "A song sits locked inside most everything; it's yours if you are brave enough to sing."

The Girl, without the third key, breathes in. Riding her exhale is a new piece of song:

*"But what if in the darkness lies the truth in our own hearts?
What if the whole will not suffice for all the parts?
Can we hold onto all the things that ring true
And build something new?"*

*All the water to nourish and feed
Everyone with everything they need
Here's our song, like a seedling, it is growing
We are strong, like a river ever flowing
The wait is long for change, we think we are deserving
But we've done wrong*

*We've done wrong, we are learning, we are earning
This purge
We will emerge*

Resurgence."



CHAPTER 4: RESURGENCE

A crack in the stone
A push beneath rotted soil
Something green appears

And more and more and
More leaves, grass, vines, trunks, branches
The earth looks like an

Elevator that
Goes down into paradise
The forest is back.

The Faeries, cautious, poke out from the husk
Of blackened tree fillets, their clumsy home.
It's morn; how had the shadows made it dusk?
And then they see the land, once monochrome
Is now a beauty – green and brown and blue!
The shadows come from canopy décor!
This haven seems too perfect to be true!
This isn't like the home they knew before.
This place is different, better, and yet how
Could that young Girl have done this overnight?
The Faeries see the Girl and think to bow,
Then their lost wings appear, and they take flight!

And they do not give thanks as Faeries should,
For they have their Forever Home; they good.

A hidden door ajar,
Out came a reddish mossy mound,
The ornamented cloak
The Oldish Woman wears around,
She saw the land and knew that
An alternative was found.
“I didn’t think it possible,
But I should never doubt,”
She said, “that one clever as you
Could work this riddle out!
Who knew with some encouragement
All this would come about!”

The Girl lit up, her face was flushed,
She knew not what to say.
She cleared her throat and mumbled,
“I guess life, uh, finds a way.”
The Oldish Woman marveled,
“Never knew I’d see this day.”

“It feels fuller. Bigger. More room now.”
The Girl smiles at the Bear.
“You like it then?”
“It’s a new world that’s made for all of us.”
The Oldish Woman hears this.
So do the Faeries.
For the first time, they’re listening.
“You saved us.”
“All of us.”
“All of us.”

The Girl, whose dress is not gray, or greenish gray, or bright
green but
Lavender,

Confesses, "I thought I might ruin the Seedling without the third key.

I thought I might ruin everything by making my own."

"Dear," the Odlish One steps forward. "You couldn't have ruined the Seedling."

"You are the Seedling."

"You sprouted,

You bloomed,

You stood tall

So we could."

The Faeries rejoice, their tiny shimmering voices floating on the breeze,

"And now you may be our queen! This forest is a queendom after all!"

The Bear looks to the Girl.

The Oldish One looks to her too.

"This place," the Girl speaks, "must not be ruled by a queen,

But tended to

And cherished by

A family.

Us. We will work together and care for this forest

And teach our children to do the same."

The Seedling spoke with wisdom of the ages.

And the forest listened and learned and changed.

And they would see more challenges and die and live and fail and triumph and hate and love.

And through it all, they remember the Seedling.

For even if the world begins to crack

The smallest seed can bring a forest back.