

## The Blind Warp

*The living moon, Mist...*

The first thing Will noticed when he woke up was that he was surrounded by green. "Trees!" he thought. Trees occupied every inch of the space around him. It was a strange thing. For a forest, Will didn't feel too uncomfortable at all. That was the instant the massive headache kicked in. Will let out a loud yell.

the sound echoed. "Odd," Will thought as his head ached again with angry pain. His head felt as if it had been split with an axe. He took several deep breaths and lay still for several minutes.

Sitting up, Will looked around. It appeared that he was in a deep ravine or valley as he was surrounded by hills on all sides. The delicate sound of flowing water could be heard from a short distance away. The ground was actually very soft as he picked up a handful of leaves and grass.

Up above the sky was a calm blue. the sun was almost directly overhead. In a distant part of his head, Will registered that he was no longer on The Grey World. The trees done were evidence of that. His world had scant few forests, at least on the continents he knew about.

Yet it was the sky that really mesmerized him. The clear, clean blue with puffy white clouds. Even though the sun was nearly blinding him, he enjoyed it's pristine openness. Open like a great wide endlessness.

It was several minutes before Will got up and looked for the stream. It was soft gurgling stream. When Will found it he took a few deep drinks. The cold, clear water took away most of his headache pangs.

"Did you have a long trip?" Asked a figure with salt-and-pepper hair and a dark red hat. As he approached he had a slight limp. Will reacted quickly in response to the voice. He grabbed his staff but the headache caused him to wince in pain.

"Hold there, my boy. I mean you no harm." The figure said in his slightly gravelly tones. The voice sounded sincere, so Will relaxed his guard as the steps came closer.

Will turned to look for the source of the voice, but was a bit shocked to see a man dressed in full robes like he had seen in the old history books.

Yet there were no insignias or signs of rank. In fact there was nothing very grand or special about them. he looked very much like a normal person except for the very sure sign that he too was a magi.

In his left hand, he carried what looked like a cross between a cane and a staff. However it was too long to be the former and too short to be the latter.

Will slowly got up. his joints weren't as sore as he expected. Thinking about it, his arcane skills had likely taken the brunt of the magical transaction. To be sure, he was fairly sure he'd done what no other magi on his world had ever done: teleported to some place on a different world.

The man walked closer. As he moved, Will noticed the man had a slight limp on his left leg. Perhaps the reason for his special staff. "How do you feel? A bit jarred, I suppose." The man said.

"yeah, my head really hurts. Where am I?"

“Well, as far as I know, this is the moon, [Mist](#), circling over the world of [Geb](#).”

Will had never heard of these places, but given that he only knew of the planets surrounding his own world, there was a good chance he'd been transported a fair distance across space.

“Where might you be from, if I may ask?” asked the man.

“I'm from Myra.”

“Hmmm, can't say I've heard of it, but I guess if you came from off planet that makes both of us outsiders here. I came from Geb, but somehow arrive here in a similar fashion as you.”

“Perhaps introductions are in order,” the man said with a lively flourish. “My name is [Hiram September](#). I am a Chromo-Magi, or a time wizard by layman terms. Who might you be?”

“My name is Will. I'm a third rank magi on my world.”

“What is a third rank? Do you belong to the army or something?”

*It would be short to say that both of these people had many questions to ask each other over the course of the next several moments. Neither having ever heard of where the other had come from, as well as the numerous differences in their cultures and backgrounds.*

For the next hour, both exchanged questions, answers and explanations about their home worlds. Will was feeling more relaxed by the minute as he learned about Hiram's past and was entranced to hear of a world where magi were able to live alongside their non-magical brethren.

“Well, I arrived here a while ago actually. I've lost track by now but by all observations this is a moon or world devoid of human life.” Hiram said. “In fact, you'll see soon enough that there are things that live here that are very different than you have seen before.”

Will looked around, but saw nothing. He could feel it though... somethings coming closer. Yet they felt like things smaller and more complex than his own arcane energies. He notice that the shadows were moving: stretching, folding, and enlarging as they spoke.

That was until one of them jumped onto his leg. It was a peculiar thing. A white shade, maybe bluish-green he thought as well. It changed shades effortlessly, while looking at Will with intense interest.

It's eyes had a look of sympathy as more came out of hiding into view. Will tried to place them, but the best description that came to mind was a cross between a dog like creature and a reptile.

“What are they?” Will finally asked. He didn't really feel any fear from them or any ill-intent. They actually conveyed a sort of curiosity more than any other feeling. “We call them monsters. Not to be confused with some of the more dangerous animals on Geb.” Hiram said.

Will knew monster meant something vile or harsh or dangerous, but these were not so.

“Below on Geb, there are Eight Sacred Monsters.” Hiram explained; Will was starting to understand that “monster” had a special significance on Geb. “These beings are the keepers of the other-side; the 'other' us. When a person passes away, they are reborn as a Monster to live again and protect the world they

loved. Where the monsters pass on to is not known to any living man...

"However there are long stories, old legends really, of a monster who was the first born. A 'monster of monsters'. Sadly those that live here know nothing more," Hiram ended. Will was wondering in the depths of his mind if there really was something about all this. What was Geb like? Did Geb really have a reincarnation cycle? Could worlds be so different?

The pain of travel was lessening the more he sat and relaxed. He took another drink from the stream and felt the pulsing angry headache dull to simply a light pulse. Will started to think it was nice that he didn't have to return to Myrah. He would never have to return if he didn't want to.

"Feeling better, Will?" Hiram seemed like a much nicer person than Will had ever met. So much so that Will almost didn't know if he could really be so sincere about everything. Will had never known a person who didn't put their own interests ahead of others. Will had always had to work extremely hard to fit into that kind of group, but this felt natural.

"Why are you helping me?" Will finally blurted out. Hiram didn't seem to take it personally, "I'm a guest here like you. I've always found it fascinating to meet people from different cultures anyway; and it's been awhile since I've seen any other human beings. Helping you is as nice for me as it is for you."

Will had never thought of generosity in that way. "So there isn't a ruling class of wizards on Geb? No high ministry that micromanages everything?" Will was intrigued about such a free world. How would anyone know what to do with themselves?

"Hmmm... you could say there are elites - you know, kings and lords or barons - but nothing so centralized. Geb is still a fairly unexplored world. Whole territories of vast land and water that are untouched by any human forces," Hiram said uneasily. "You may even call it a slightly dangerous world. There are creatures, not 'monsters' that do cause a fair amount of havoc on Geb. Not to mention the constant warring between fiefdoms, kingdoms, and territories."

"So if Myrahh and Geb are simply two different worlds, there may be countless other worlds?" Will thought aloud.

"There is a strong possibility. It all comes down to distance, which it seems you are capable of traversing," Hiram responded.

The rest of the day was spent talking and relaxing by the stream. Slowly it started to get darker. As night came, it wasn't like the usual night time where things turned a pitch blackness. Will had never seen or heard of night time with light, besides the light of the city.

That night was quite a show for Will. The sun set over the horizon in a mix of red and orange hues. He'd seen similar sunsets at home only when it happened to be clear, which was almost never.

That was really not what caught his eye, but the myriad stars that started to become visible as the sun light died away. All those distant lights crowding the sky; each like a sparkling diamond. The sun and light of another world perhaps.

It was harder to appreciate when your own world was drowned out in smog, clouds, dust, and shadows, but here on a clean, untainted, untouched world, things certainly appeared in a different way.

It seemed to Will that maybe different worlds created different people. Will liked talking to Hiram September, the lost magi. He seemed sincere; something that was so unusual on his own world, where everyone was trying to get themselves ahead.

They both laid back in the green soft grass and continued to talk about things into the night. Hiram it seems was just happy to have another person to talk to. The 'monsters' seemed to be able to communicate, but were not very good 'conversationalists', as Hiram noted.

Finally, Will slipped into the first real sleep in ages. A sleep with no worries, dead-lines, or pressures. It felt so perfect to not have to agonize over so many things... that was worlds away. Not even the grand ministers could reach him; never in all the days that separated Will from his "homeworld".

In his dreams, he could feel another being reaching out to him. Calling... yearning... Will wasn't sure what it was. Was it the stone again? The stone... the mysterious powers it had. Where did it come from? What was it?

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Last update: **2023/02/24 22:56**

