

The Changeling

by Shriya Inuzuka

Robin was born into the green world as Jack Dunraven to wealthy parents. His life would have been one of privilege. However, life many times has unexpected twists and turns which alters the direction of one's course. Sometimes for the better but many times for the worst. In Jack's case the twisted turn of events pulled him into an alternate reality where being human was not the norm and, in his case, could be very dangerous indeed.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dunraven owned the lumber mill along with thousands of acres in their small town of Oak Grove. Upon that land was the remnants of what had been the largest oak forest in the world, that is, until they started clear cutting it and selling the lumber, as well as parcels of land for farms and cattle. Unbeknownst to the Dunraven's it was an enchanted forest and the decimation of the forest had triggered an uprising in another reality. We call that reality Faeryland or Elvenland but humans have diminished that reality into what we refer to as fairytales. In other words, we do not believe that reality really exists. What humans do not understand is that these two physical realities are intertwined and mirror one another. The Fae are guardians and caretakers of nature but unfortunately, humans have not learned the lesson of stewardship and so are reckless with the natural world especially if they think they can make money from it.

The destruction of the forest ignited a feud within the Royal House of Seelie between Queen Tatiana and her sister Princess Majestic who was now known as Malignia ever since she went over to the Un-Seelie Court. The sisters dispute revolved around whether humans should be worked with and trusted to be good stewards of nature. Malignia was now a dark faery who was plotting against her sister to take the crown. Her anger towards humans was especially directed towards the family that was single handedly destroying the enchanted forest. Because of this, she had plotted with Lord Karnac the Goblin King to send his goblin minions through the faery gate into the green world to steal the Dunraven baby.

When a faery steals a human baby, they usually leave one of their own sickly babies in its place. This was the case with baby Jack. Dark and nefarious goblins entered the nursery whisking Jack into the cold October night. What was left in his crib was anything but human. This began the destruction of the Dunraven family as the goblin child would one day inherit their riches and the land they owned. In the years to follow this would have huge repercussions for the entire town and ultimately bring about war between faery and human.

Whatever nefarious plans that Malignia had for the baby was waylaid by Queen Tatiana who had been informed by the pixy sprites that a human baby had been stolen by the goblins. The queen believed Lord Karnac to be solely responsible and had no idea of her sister's involvement. Her elven warriors attacked the goblins and intercepted the exchange of the baby before Lord Karnac got his hands on it.

Queen Tatiana took the baby under her proverbial wing and found a childless elven couple to raise the baby. Tatiana became his faery godmother and kept him safe from the goblins. It is a known myth not to eat the food that is offered in faeryland. To do so, would keep the person inextricably connected to fairyland but if the baby were to survive, it needed nourishment. There are only two sources of magic that the faeries and elves feed from ... pixie dust and faery water. The faery cakes that were given to the child to eat was made from both the dust and the water. A very potent combination, and since the child was growing it affected its development as the magic was incorporated within the cells of the child's body. So, even though he was human he was also a magical creature that is part elven. A hybrid of sorts.

Queen Tatiana gifted him his own pixy sprite, Trixy, to be his companion and protector. Trixy was never far from his side and took her responsibility as his protector very seriously but since she and Jack grew up together, they also had endless days of play as they romped the meadows and forest exploring to their hearts content. They talked and laughed as best friends do telling one another their deepest secrets and heart felt plans.

As the child grew it became obvious to Tatiana that he had a special fascination and reverence of water. From this observation the queen declared that his training as a water warrior would commence. The water priestesses were responsible for his education in the deeper understanding of the nature of water. Since he had been adopted into the Forest Elven Clan, he would be trained by them in archery, swordsmanship and hand to hand combat to become a warrior and to protect springs, rivers, ponds and lakes. In other words, he was to protect natures supply of fresh water.

As the years progressed Jack went through a deep transformation not only physically but within his consciousness. His physical body looked more elf than human but since he was a hybrid, he still struggled with the part of his consciousness that was most decidedly human. This was the part of him that struggled with desire and ego.

Once he went through the water ritual, he was deemed a full fledge water warrior and was given a new name. He was now Robin, Chief Water Warrior of the Forest Clan. This gave him much respect from the Fae as no other human had made that transition successfully. His extended training with the water priestesses afforded him much knowledge that most water warriors did not possess but it was the water ritual that gave him hidden knowledge for it is water that holds the information of the history of the green world and its association with the world of faerie.

When the water ritual was completed, it was commemorated by him getting a tatoo that signified that he was now a water warrior. The tatoo was two blue wavy lines across his chest and on his arm. This was a right of passage for Robin. He was now a man. A man that would be forever young. The water ritual had shown him his destiny with the preservation of water. What he did not know was that destiny would someday lead him back again into the green world.