

Caramel had nearly forgotten the gear she had left on the floor from the sheer anticipation of what was to come next. After giving a quick determined nod to Hocus and Pocus, she quickly gathered up her things and placed it on her back once more before moving to head out.

“W-wait!” Pocus called out to Caramel, startling her. “D-don’t you want the details? This could be very dangerous! These companions have the potential to become hostile unless they’re tamed. At least let me tell you what you’d be looking for!”

Caramel drew a deep breath before turning to the worried duo and agreed to hear them out. After all, as exciting as adventure can be, it’s better to be safe about things. She’d listen intently while trying to jot down the details as Pocus spoke, wanting to be as informed as possible before leaving. After a few minutes and now instilled with a new confidence, Caramel finally headed out to search for the companions. Her first instinct was just to run and search wherever she could, but.. Come on, think! That would take too long! It was already late into the evening now and it wasn’t long until daylight poured over the realm once again. Deciding she’d probably go into the woods if she were the companions, she decided to head into the dark depths of the trees that were nearby.

What greeted her in the woods were the typical sounds of the nightlife that resided within. Caramel was used to the outdoors so instead of finding the sounds scary, she’d cheerfully hum along with them and speak softly to the nightlife as she searched. What would startle her, however, were the random rustling of leaves and bushes that would occasionally happen during her search. Each rustle of the surrounding foliage would cause her to jump and hunker low to the ground, expectant that something would jump out at her. What was interesting though is that whatever it was seemed to be following her closely, but not enough to where it could be seen. It seemed like every time she went to get close to the spot that was rustling, it would quickly move to the other side of her or further away.

‘Ugh I don’t have time to play hide and seek!’ Caramel called out in exasperation. ‘Just come on out already! I won’t hurt you!’ Her words were lost to the wind as the surrounding trees quivered. It was still chilly much like during the day but the cold now seemed to cut right through her.

The rustling of the surrounding bushes seemed to grow louder as if somehow having heard her words. Caramel’s eyes widened as she turned to face the increasingly aggressive rustling as she would begin walking backwards. Unable to speak another word a figure leaped out of the bushes directly to her, causing her to yelp and turn tail. She wasn’t able to discern what the creature was, but panic raced through her mind as she tried to find her way out of the woods. It wasn’t long until she reached the edge of the woods before she heard a loud ‘crrrrrooak’.

‘It was just a...a...frog...’ Caramel had now reached the clearing and sat down to rest. ‘I was scared of that?’ Laughing to herself, she’d then sigh before gazing at the rest of her surroundings. ‘I was unable to find them this time, but.. There are still plenty of (less scary) places to search! I’m not going to let a frog or fear stop me from this adventure!’ Filled with determination once more, Caramel resolved to continue her journey until its end.