

Tasty or Toxic- Peach (Amelyanna) 2

Dark leaves covered the forest floor as the crunching of heavy feet echoed through the area, roots and fallen over trees covered in leaf litter provided homes for many of the creatures on the island. The plant life bloomed in the forest as the hot sun always reached them allowing the trees that were on the island for years to grow large and sturdy, most of the herbivores of the islands traveled through the thick forest as it provided cover from predators but it also provided a great food source for most. A large styracosaurus herd had been visiting this part of the forest for months to graze and eat the bark off the fallen trees, many of the members of the herd being adults but this month they had hatchlings that now were adolescents and learning the ways of what was safe to eat and what was not was always a challenge.

A large male painted like sty was at the back of the herd followed by a now older Peach who was pink in color. She was now an adolescent and learning the task of what was safe to eat was in order after the run in when she was much younger and the drool fest it caused for her, eating poisonous plants was not on the menu for Peach anymore it was time to learn. She awaited Salem to catch up to her as he was a bit behind making sure others weren't lagging behind, the herd was here to forage the large leaves that covered the ground were prime for eating.

"Come on Salem, I need to learn this stuff I don't want a repeat of what happened last time" she grumbled her blue eyes scanning the ground spotting large leaves and various mushroom patches. Before leaning down and sniffing them, hearing Salem come up behind her and snort "Don't eat those mushrooms they are toxic" he said before walking past her, this was going to be a rough lesson. There were so many different plants to remember but Peach had to learn for survival.

"I knew that... Salem" she said grumbling before catching up to Salem as she kept pace with the larger male, she met him when he was in his younger years and he was almost like a big brother to the young pink sty. A smile came across her beak "So you gonna teach me?" she said slamming into his side playfully.

"Well this is your first patch to look through and you tell me what looks forageable" he said snorting as he walked her towards a patch of green leaves that were surrounded by mushrooms and various other plants. Most were brightly colored but what stood out was a large green leaf that seemed to have fallen from the large overhanging trees, Peach standing there puzzled as she looked back at Salem who stood quiet waiting for her to take a guess. This was going to be a lot harder than she thought it was going to be and it seemed Salem wanted her to figure it out for herself.

Peach stood there her head tilted as she leaned down to sniff each plant, coming to the mushrooms that gave off an awful stench and were bright in color. She soon turned to the bright green leaves laying on the ground next to it which smelled juicy and fresh "uhhh I think these

are the bad ones, the mushrooms look bad anyways” Peach said turning back towards Salem who had his eyes raised a small smile on her beak as she awaited a answer.

Salem nodded and smiled before chuckling “Good job, the mushrooms are very toxic so don’t touch them” he added before stepping past Peach “come on there is more to learn , not just these two plants exist” the island had more plants then just these to forage and the variety was endless on every part of the island some including plants around the beaches and many other environments that it held so the young sty was just starting to learn a long list of them.

Peach sighed, taking a green leaf in her beak before chewing it “ there’s more!..” she said before snorting as she swallowed the harsh green plant as the texture was rough but it was really juicy in taste. “Wait for me!” she added after she swallowed the leaf, trotting to catch up to Salem who had walked ahead a bit before looking back waiting for Peach who had leaves hanging out of her beak from what she had eaten already. Once Peach had caught up to him he stood on his hind legs hitting a tree stump that knocked yellow fruit out of them, the thud of the fruit hitting the ground as he picked one up and handed it to her “These are fruit , very tasty and contain water so if you ever need some hydration they can provide some but just a little” before taking one in his mouth and chewing it, eyeing Peach as he watched what she was going to do with it “Go on try it” Salem said through chewing.

Peach stood there studying the yellow fruit that was large in size and brightly colored , it almost looked gold like as she looked up at the tree where it had fallen from. “It gives water?” she asked before leaning down and taking the fruit into her beak, crushing it as a burst of flavors hit the back of her throat, it was juicy and very tasty the young styracosaurus going to grab another after she had taken a big swallow to get it down chewing on the next one that entered her mouth. “These are amazing! Salem, this beats eating boring grass all day or poisonous stuff” Peach laughed slightly as she kept munching on more fruit watching Salem eating his own.

“How do you know so much about what is safe to eat Salem” Peach asked trotting over to him bringing more fruit with her in her beak, before putting it on the ground she was keen to know more about what was safe to eat and what wasn’t , he always knew what to watch out for and what was okay to eat.

Salem watched Peach as he got ready to answer her “Well I just have experience , I had run in’s with some toxic stuff and have eaten it like you did when you were younger” he said with a small chuckle. “You gonna eat all those , sure you got enough room?” he asked looking down at the pile of fruit by Peaches feet, Salem noticing the herd was looking to move on as he walked forwards to keep up with them nudging Peach to get going “Grab some and let’s keep up so we don’t get left behind” he said before looking forwards and following the herd it was time to go to newer foraging grounds.

Peach sighed more walking just to get to more food was always a task but now that she had the tasty fruit Salem had shown her, a snack for the road would make things a lot easier so it was

time to get more before she got left behind. Peach stood on her hind legs knocking at the tree more fruit falling down as she backed up landing on her feet rushing over to the fruit, as she leant down seeing a mushroom with the gross stench near her fruit "Bleh I can't believe I tried eating those before how dumb of me" she mumbled to herself before picking up her fruit as many as she could fit in.

Catching up to Salem, her face filled with fruit and a happy smirk across her face, tail up in the air behind her as she passed by Salem, sometimes dropping fruit behind her, she now had some good knowledge of what was good to eat and what looked toxic. Peach remembered thoroughly what happened when she had left the area of the adults and how eating something without having the knowledge was dangerous and overall not fun, the side effects being the worst and she would never do that again. Also finding out what fruit was a great new lesson for her to learn and coming from Salem he made sure to teach her stuff when he could due to being older than her.

"Careful Peach you're losing some you dummy" the large styracosaurus calling out to her as he watched her trot past him without a care in the world, a small smile coming across his beak him shaking his head "she will never learn that one" he added before running to catch up picking up the fallen fruit of the ground that she had dropped. Learning about the various plant life on the island was key for herbivores survival and sometimes learning the hard way was best for others but having the help of a larger friend could prove useful.