

Genetic Corps-Summer Morning Walk

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The fridge door closed, bottles inside the door shelf rattling slightly. An orange liquid poured out a red carton labelled "Carrot Juice" into a small glass. A woman shook the carton, hearing nothing but silence so she threw the carton at the full black bin bag. She picked up the glass, gently sipping on the cool juice looking at a small chalkboard pinned by magnets to the fridge. The chalkboard had a small list of various things to do with a few crossed out.

"Get A Job"

"Get A Flat"

"Get Healthy"

"Get Money Problems fixed"

"Clear college debts"

"Well at least you got some of those things done Amber old girl!" she chuckled to herself, "I'm just glad I started to drink healthy juices but that's not enough to get healthy."

She tapped her chin thoughtfully as she stared at the chalkboard.

"I know, there's that old stream on the edge of town. If I remember it runs from one side to the other side of town through a long woodland trail, I could walk that once or even twice a day."

Amber strolled into the hallway way, placing her partially full glass on the table. She slipped her feet into a pair of white trainers, tying the cyan laces up into bunny ears. She finished off her juice as she walked back to the kitchen, dropping her glass into the sink. She grabbed a small bottle of water from the fridge then returned to the hallway.

She placed the bottle into a small leather black and blue satchel as she took it off the coat rack, she grabbed her phone and keys, dropping them into her bag before slipping it over her shoulder.

The letterbox rattled as she opened her front door and stepped out into the sunshine, closing the door behind her. She walked up and out of her driveway, gently strolling her way through the town. She looked around, surprised at how quiet everything was, barely any traffic or people.

"Guess that's the bonus of lockdown!" she muttered, smiling a little, "Everything seems a lot more peaceful and relaxed."

After around ten minutes she reached the town's border, an arched bridge stood in the distance. The sound of the river rushing down under it filled her ears as she looked around, the leaves rustled as the summer morning breeze blew through them. She turned her heel, feeling her skin cooling as the shade of the trees, lines of sunlight crept through the gaps in the trees, birds tweeted, fluttering overhead. Bees flew into flowers of red and pink collecting nectar, the faint rush of water flowing down behind the treeline made the start of the trail feel tranquil and peaceful.

She walked up the winding trail, her feet carrying her across the cracked, dried mud. The trail went up a small gradient, the treeline thinning out as she reached the top, following the sharp curve round to a large wooden bridge with metal railings partially covered in dark green moss stood either side.

Amber exhaled deeply, stepping onto the bridge, leaning against the left railing looking down at the sparkling blue water flowing down over the various rocks hidden in the river. She could see the curved junction where the river split into a stream. The bridge creaked as she stepped off it following the straight path, the bank slanting downwards as the trees only ran along the right side of the trail, bushes and vines littered the bank alongside a various few white flowers.

Her eyes glanced down as the trail slope, the bank disappearing as the trail and stream ran side by side with each other a few fish could be seen briefly trying to swim upstream. Squirrels jumped from tree to tree as she made her way further along the trail.

After a few minutes, she found herself near to a small makeshift sloping quay. Her eyes glanced over at the fallen tree and red and green bottles with labelling reading "GC HYDRO!" She sighed, rolling her eyes muttering to herself about people ruining a perfect environment as she continued on her way.

Soon she reached a small T shaped junction with a slanted board with a map pinned to it protected by a plastic cover, moss clung to the wood of the board. Amber approached, her eyes scanning over the two various paths, one straight and level, not following the stream whilst the other followed the stream, curving up and through the deep woods reconnecting to the path on the other side of a large pond.

She decided to follow the curved path, the sunlight disappeared as the shade grew. She glanced under seeing the thick bushes of leaves overhead, Amber stopped slightly surprised at the beauty of a cluster of branches extending high above as if two trees were trying to reach out to each other. She carried on walking, following the path as it dipped down to allow the path to run side by side with the stream, small shallow pools formed in the bank.

"That looks pretty!" she gasped, seeing the emerald sparkling water as she walked along with the faint hint of blue mixed into the green from time to time.

She was so busy admiring the water that she didn't notice a tree branch poking out of the lower trunk. She winced feeling the branch scratching against her skin, slightly digging into her right leg, she sharply turned back and kicked hard at the branch, snapping it clean off in a fit of anger. Amber knelt down, checking her right leg all over.

"At least it's not bleeding," she sighed, looking down at the red crooked, curved scratch mark standing out against her light tan on her right thigh

Amber carried on as the path diverted away from the stream, her pace quickened slightly as the path sloped steeply downwards, levelling out at the bottom. She gave a small sigh closely followed by a disgruntled moan at the sight of torn clothes and shoes littered around seven trees rooted across the path.

"Do people seriously enjoy dumping litter everywhere?" Amber grumbled, her eyes scanning over the trees, bits of fabric hanging from the branches. Her eyes locked onto the arrangement of the small trees, noticing the path was blocked.

"Guess I'm heading back and taking the other path then," she said, shrugging as she looked back at the steep incline.

She slowly headed back up the incline, mumbling about how her footwear choices weren't making it any easier to climb as her trainers slipped a few times, kicking dirt backwards.

"It's not so easy....I can make it!"

Amber sighed, stretching her arms outwards as she deeply inhaled and exhaled, catching her breath as she looked around for somewhere to sit as her joints ached slightly. Her eyes met with a small tree stump that was partially sunk into the ground.

"That hills a right jerk!" she huffed, leaning back against the raised half a tree stump nearby.

Amber took off her bag, pulling out her water as she listened to the gentle hum of bees nearby. She slowly sipped on her water, looking around her as she did so, enjoying the beauty of the forest until her attention was drawn by a developing itch on her right thigh.

"Scabbing all ready?" Amber said, pondering as she looked at the scratch mark that was partially on the front of her thigh. The once red mark no longer stood out but a dark brown colour did.

She rubbed it curiously with her left thumb, raising an eyebrow at the odd roughness too. She ran her finger along the length of the scratch feeling the roughness on it. She winced pulling her hand away, "A splinter? But I'm not made of wood?"

Amber went to bring her finger up for a closer look but halted at the feeling of cramps spreading through her left hand as her fingers seized up. She watched, stunned and confused as her fingers slowly started to turn a lightish brown, her wrist felt and looked robotic as she turned her left hand over spotting the same colouring appearing on her palm. Her nails slowly disappeared under the brown whilst her fingers tips reshaped into points.

Her eyes widened staring at her hand as the skin started to take on a rough, rigid wooden appearance. She grunted at the sound of her legs creaking a little, a sharp ache spreading through her knees as she tried to move forwards. A startled gasp escaped her mouth at the sight of two points forming against her playsuit, the navy blue fabric stretching.

“HOLY MADONNA!” she shrieked, the fabric around her breasts started to like she was wearing a cone shaped bra underneath her clothes.

The brown bark covering her scratch mark, spread outwards consuming her thigh. Amber gritted her, grunting in pain as cramps surged through her feet, her trainer laces tightened alongside her trainers. One by one her laces snapped as leather fractured whilst her feet grew out of her shoes as they became larger and wider. Her heels began to pull towards each, her feet involuntarily moving so her toes pointed outwards. Amber began to windmill her arms to keep her balance as her calves started to fuse together as if her changes wanted to aid her twelve appendages grew out of the sides of her feet, creaking as they bent, growing longer, they pointed tips burrowing into the ground anchoring her to the ground

“What...I’m planted! How?” she cried out, watching the roots growing larger as they continued driving through the thick soil.

Her toes slowly swelled, moving apart from each other soon coming close together due too they size. Amber noticed something odd as the bark appeared on her deformed feet she found the feel fading from them, the ground beneath her feet disappearing, replaced by the odd tingle of her roots in the ground as if something was spread through them. She did, however, feel the ache and pressure building in her calves and thighs but she couldn’t see past her extending points in her playsuit but she knew, from the feeling alone, her skin was stretching.

Amber’s calves and thighs swelled, her knees drew closer together, steadily fusing. A faint tearing sound filled her ears as the seams around the short legs of her playsuit accompanied by the strained snapping of elastic and fabric. She felt the chill of the cool breeze brushing against her crotch region, her lower half groaned, creaking lightly as it stretched, growing longer and thicker, rounding out with near perfect curves. Her buttocks flattened as her crotch sealed over removing her hole. The feeling of the breeze slowly faded as a familiar brown barkiness spread down from the top of her lower trunk whilst it spread upwards from her base meeting in the middle.

“My legs! How can I walk! It feels so strong...my trunk..is this... no... I can't be turning into a tree?”

She grunted, staring from side to side as her arms started to move, everytime she looked at her right hand she noticed it becoming more and more like her left hand until there was no feeling alongside no movement. Amber watched as her upper arms straightened out, her elbows bending so her arms formed an L shaped.

Amber gritted her teeth as a heavy strain gradually began to pull at her shoulders as her arms steadily swelled. She grunted at the sound of wood creaking as her hands and finger grew thicker tearing through the short sleeves of her outfit. Her upper arms and forearms rounded out as they became longer. The wooden creaking intensified as her fingers started to lengthen with extra branches grew in the gaps between her fingers. She looked up to the left, finding it hard to shift her neck due to its stiffness, to see her ten branches creaking as they extended up towards the sky.

As bark spread down her thick branch like forearms, a slim cylinder-shaped piece of bark grew out of her elbows whilst two thin branches tore through the front of her playsuit. Navy blue flakes of her bra that clung desperately to it rested against her branches Amber moaned, staring at her thickening branches as a strange sinking sensation washed over her chest as her breasts retracted. She grunted at the pressure building in her chest and torso as the changes crept over her upper body.

Her chest and torso stretched, growing longer. Her playsuit rose up, tightening around her upper body. She could hear the fabric tearing alongside the pings of her bra's shoulder straps and clasp snapping against her widening frame. She moaned feeling pain below her collarbone as pieces of her clothing slid down her trunk landing around her base.

Bark creaked as her branch extensions of her elbows and front branches splintered, segmenting into multiple small branches that grew longer, curving upwards slightly. Her neck thickened and widened, seamlessly blending into her trunk as bark formed out of her skin.

“This....can't be..” she said, wheezing, her voice faint.

Her dark hair slowly changed to a dark green as it grew longer and stringy, growing right down to the ground. She whimpered finding her hearing becoming duller, she could feel the faint twinges of her ears stretching but with no way of seeing she just had to put up with it. Her ears sealed over as they grew longer, twisting and reshaping into a pair of thick branches that grew longer in unison with the branches growing out of her scalp.

Amber's nose flattened as bark started to sprout out of facial skin. Her teeth dropped out her mouth. She gave a muffled scream as the bark sealed over her mouth whilst fighting to keep

herself blinking, finding her eyes getting heavier like she wanted to close her eyes to sleep. Though her fight was in vain as her eyes closed forced shut under the bark that sealed them shut, removing any human defining features from the top of her trunk. Bark creaked as her changes crawled to a halt, Amber found though she had lost all touch, sight, sound and taste she could feel the gentle pulse within her body as she fed off of the natural ground beneath her. She sighed at least her mind and memories had survived the sudden changes to her body though she didn't know how or what had caused this but she had to guess she had a lot of time to come up with an idea of the cause.

Do you think she found the cause?