

Centam was afraid of being alone.

After getting kicked out of his home, he finally had to face it...

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“And don’t come back!”

These words hit the young boy with a jolt. The thought of being banished from his village had never been taken seriously by him, despite many warnings by his parents about the consequences of severe crimes. But now that his stealing had been found out, he faced the terrifying reality for the first time.

Trying desperately to keep from crying in fear, he turned to face the jungle. Trees loomed before him and shadows seemed to jump out at him. Mustering every ounce of courage he had, he stepped forward.

Little did he know, his life was about to change for the better.

The first few days were extremely difficult, as he struggled to find a safe place to set up his new home.

Picking a fruit from a low-hanging branch, he stared up into a tall tree, its top shrouded by mist.

“Well,” he said to himself as he appraised it. “It’s better than nothing.” He reached up and started to climb.

It took most of the day for Centam to reach the top, but it was worth it, for there he found an enormous nest that had been abandoned for quite some time. Testing the sturdiness with his foot, he made his way to the center, where he rigged up a temporary canopy and quickly fell asleep.

The next few weeks passed more slowly than he had ever known as he extended his new home to nearby trees, rigging up rope ladders and platforms with wood he harvested from the walls of the nest. After he had finished this project, he took up meditation. This skill had been taught to all the children by the elders of the village, and he was glad he had paid attention.

Through his meditation, as he looked at his past, he realized how close he had come to committing more serious crimes. If he had stayed in the village, his recklessness and his disobedience could have led to him getting in fights and maybe even killing someone. It was only the wisdom of the elders that had prevented this calamity.

After this revelation, Centam was the loneliest he had ever been, and that terrified him. He had not spoken a single word since his discovery of the tree in which he now lived.

He had to do something or he'd go insane.

So, he took up swordfighting. Brandishing a straight branch, he faced imaginary opponents, taunting them as he defeated every one, then moved to multiple enemies, one after another, only stopping when he collapsed from exhaustion.

When he tired of this, he began practicing his telekinesis at the forest floor, lifting larger and larger rocks until he could build a twenty-foot tower. He then turned to smaller items, until he could perfectly balance several small rocks on top of each other, even using twigs at times to add an extra challenge.

Anything to take his mind off of his circumstances.

Anything to forget that he was alone.