

## Decapoda goes to the Forest

*I came up with the tale of the lobster who finds her way into a forest - where she encounters a red-eyed monster and ends up saving a wolf from a horrifying fate - while I was working on Heidi Dahlsveen's metaverse project, "LRRH: The other side of the story."*

*My story is incomplete and is likely to remain that way since I would need to take many more photographs that depict how it unfolds. This I can no longer do since the enchanted forest that I set the tale in no longer exists in-world in SL. Who knows, I may one day rezz the stuff and do it, but for now, probably not.*

*I slowly concocted the story while I was building, and it came out of the visual material from which I had made the forest floor and the foliage, these being Ernst Haeckel's biological drawings. And, as it happened, I had previously used one of these drawings, Decapoda, to make an avatar costume. So, what was more natural than that when the time came to take some photographs of the forest I placed an avatar dressed up as Decapoda in the scenery. From there it was not much of an imaginative leap to get Decapoda to become the hero of the tale.*

*The villain however is LRRH herself, and to show how utterly horrifying she is, I dressed her up as a dark, robotic creature who is festooned with a huge collar of abstracted, transparent wolf cadavers that is coordinated with a dark red glowy carapace. But not only should her attire be scary. I also spent quite a bit of time giving her a face that is scary. Beautiful, yes. But also smug, supercilious, evil. And the red eyes certainly don't help much either.*



*"Decapoooooaaaa... Ssshhh, Decapoda... I'm over here..."*



*"Welcome to our forest Decapoda!"*

*As said, the story is incomplete. But, if it were to be told in full, what would happen is that Decapoda would stand up to the human monster, and ask her to release the wolf who has been impaled upon three arrows after his stomach was filled with rocks. Naturally, LRRH who as a human being has far more resources than a mere lobster, would proceed (and almost succeed) to kill her adversary: Not only is Decapoda a pain in the ass, nothing more than an ugly 'other,' but she is also of course very tasty when served as 'Lobster Thermidor.'*



*"A bit out of your way, isn't it, this place? (You being a lobster and all, I mean?)"*





*"And yes - I'm afraid things do get done away with around here... Lobsters too, by the way. Especially lobsters, one might even say. Verrry tasty I am sure you are, my dear... LOL"*

*But, just when things start looking really bad, Decapoda lets out her death whistle. The whistle is heard in all the oceans and her friends, an army of lobsters, move in to help. They pinch and maul LRRH to the point where she has to capitulate and lets the wolf go. And furthermore, she is handed over to Greenpeace, where she is serving a life sentence as an activist for animal rights onto this day. The wolf however is delivered into the safe-keeping of Mrs. Wolf, and we last see the happily reunited family as they depart into the depths of the forest - Mrs. Wolf in full steam about all the capers that her husband manages to get himself into the second that her back is turned! What was he thinking for God's sakes? And him with a family to support!*

*Although I do not have enough photographs to complete the tale, I nevertheless decided to make a flipbook out of the little that I do have. And, as I was putting the stuff together, I found that I was drawn to make an ornate, nostalgic sort of book. A bit like a Victorian fairy tale book. Also a bit scary, as Victorian children's books often are.*

*The reasons as to why in my version of the tale LRRH is a monster and the animals are the heroes are in the text of the flipbook. This text I wrote as a blog post while I was still building the forest, so, it can be read as a straightforward entry here, should you prefer to do so.*

*My tale can be critiqued in many ways: First off, it is incomplete. It is misanthropic and yet anthropomorphic. I do not take into account any of the many layers and levels of the original story. I completely bypass all the social and gender issues that are at its essence. In fact, I am very disrespectful to the tale of Little Red Riding Hood: I destroy it to make a completely different point to the one that is in the medieval story, or the one that Charles Perrault re-wrote to edify his Baroque audience. This is why I no longer call what I cobbled together "LRRH: The other side of the story" but instead there is now this new name that tells us that one fine day a nosy lobster ended up in an enchanted forest...*

