

Arom Story Quest Ch. 2 – The Ruby Famine

In the distance you see light. As you travel down the tunnel, you also begin feeling the vibrations of heavy machinery. The further you travel, the worse the vibrations become, oftentimes throwing you off-balance. Holding onto the wall for support, you finally make it to a vast cavern; above you are massive stalactites of all different colors and shapes, though most of them just remind you of a ceiling full of spikes. Far off in the distance is the hum of machines digging. Below you is a great city that glows with a reddish hue.

The city's color and warmth have an indescribable allure; it draws you in, mesmerizing you into walking down the path. Before you even realize it, you are halfway between the opening in the tunnel and the city itself.

As you get closer, you can feel the energy radiating from the place. Each step becomes more challenging because of the intensity. The heat becomes nearly unbearable. Eventually, you reach the edge of the city and are greeted by two older Rubites. Their skin is crimson red, like they just bathed in lava, and they emanate heat as though they are made of fire. Sensing your suffering, they take you into their home and get you some cold water. The water tastes spectacular and the coolness makes you feel far more comfortable. One of them hobbles upstairs and when it returns it hands you a red jacket. It claims that the jacket will help you withstand the intense heat of the city and that all Rubites wear them while they are children because their bodies have not yet adapted to the fiery depths of the underworld in which they live.

You thank them and immediately put on the jacket. Despite its thick, heavy material, it does its job well and you feel very comfortable even in the midst of the Rubites' body heat. They ask you if you are lost because very few people come down into the Rubite mine. You tell them no. You are actually here to ask them to stop cutting down the forest and that you need to reach the leaders of the city as soon as possible.

They laugh and tell you that they have always cut down the forest, but that in the past, they cut down only a few trees, which would be replaced quickly. It is only because of this horrible famine that they need to cut down more than can quickly be replaced.

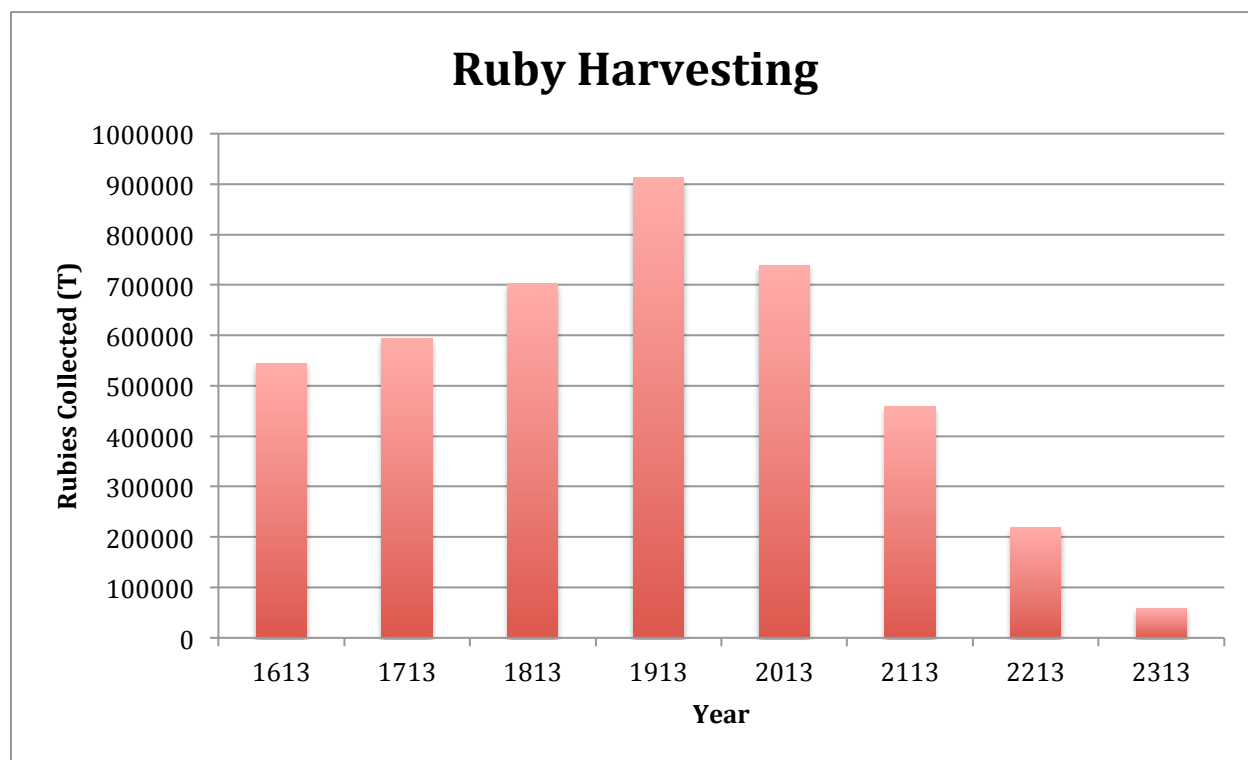
You ask them about the famine and they explain...

"My little friend, we are a race of creatures that rely on precious gemstones for our survival. We used to be able to eat any kind of stones: quartz, pyrite, amber, etc. But, once we got the taste of rubies, we just couldn't help ourselves. We became so used to the delicious flavor of the ruby that everything else tasted like dirt. In fact, our bodies have become so picky that we become ill if we eat anything other than our beloved rubies. For centuries we have mined for the rubies with no difficulty, but recently the veins have started running dry. We can no longer easily find them. Because of this, we need to dig deeper into the ground, but that requires more resources, like the trees of the Arom forest. We don't like to destroy the forest. We have worked with the Aromi in peace for centuries, but this famine gives us no choice."

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With no idea of where to go next, you decide to travel south through the cave...

Task: The Rubites have had a tough time recently getting enough food for themselves. Below is a bar chart demonstrating their harvests at specific 100-year intervals for the past few centuries. Answer the following questions using the chart.



- 1) This graph shows a few different trends. Please circle the word that best describes the following trends:
 - a. From 1613 to 1913, the number of rubies harvested (increased/decreased).
 - b. The (maximum/minimum) number of rubies was collected in 1913.
 - c. From 1913 to 2313, the number of rubies gathered (increased/decreased).
- 2) Approximate the number of rubies harvested in:
 - a. 1713
 - b. 1913
 - c. 2313
- 3) Approximately how many more rubies were collected in 1913 than in 2113?
- 4) What might happen to the Rubites if they don't change their diets?