

# Don Mee Choi

## Beech Forest From Ulleung Island To Rügen Island

Long ago a mountain spirit  
asked the villagers to plant  
100 chestnut trees on an island

Orchids, snowdrops  
wild garlic, hedgehog fungus  
knew the face of every migrant  
and their song 너도,너도밤나무((((you too are a chestnut tree))))

Pineneedleless to say, that's how small the island was

^ Mountain spirit counted and counted yet there were only 99 chestnut trees

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Trees quivered  
and buttercups  
( hic ( cup ( ped (

FOREST AFTER FOREST  
it snowed

\*f\*

a skinny little beech tree in moss overcoat said to the spirit ^

나도,나도밤나무((((I too am a chestnut tree))))

Note: Beech tree in Korean is 너도밤나무 or *neodobamnamu*, meaning *you-too-are-a-chestnut-tree*.  
Beech forests can still be found on Ulleung Island, east of mainland South Korea.  
The flora mentioned in the poem are from the beech forests of Rügen Island, Germany.