

Chapter 2

I still couldn't figure out what I was searching for. It was incredibly frustrating, and I couldn't clear my mind enough to focus. Akilina stayed by my side and gave me the support I needed. But the support wasn't enough. I kept my rage under control, because deep down, I knew that if I let my rage take over me, I would be unable to truly be "back to normal". I think Akilina knew how untamable my anger was. She introduced me to her other Guardian friends, Eshe, the lovely Guardian of Spring. She was wise, clever, and witty. She felt the power of the earth within her soul, she was supposedly friends with Mother Earth herself. She could make anything grow, even in the coldest and darkest places one could imagine.

Then there was Heath, the Guardian of Autumn. He was reckless, but he had a huge heart, he had this brotherly love feel to him, and I felt comfortable with him. Even though he was reckless, he knew how to have a good time. He showed me the beauty of the autumn season. The harvest he helped bring, and the array of colors that covered mountains and valleys for miles.

And Akilina? Her winds could carry any spirit anywhere in the world. She was very independent, feisty, and smart. She'd been a spirit for over 3,000 years, she'd seen more and felt more than the rest of us combined. They all shared their knowledge and wisdom with me, and they were amazed at how fast I had picked it up.

The knowledge that had been locked inside my brain when I first became a spirit was unleashed, but if there was one thing that kept me most fascinated with was the night sky. I always kept telling them that the belt of Orion was where my ancestors were. That was where the Gods were. And that was where I would've gone to if Man in Moon had not revived me. That's not to say I'm not unhappy Man in Moon gave me a second chance... But my ancestors were waiting in the stars for me...

On that cheerful note, I did work on controlling the fire powers I was given. I kind of found it fun to do so. I practiced next to a rock wall, so at least I didn't severely damage anything.

I eventually taught myself to form the fire to resemble fireworks, explosive, but sparkly. I felt it was a good representation of me.

Eshe had recommended that I practice every time I felt an angry or otherwise negative thought cross my mind. Therapy in a way, I remember being stubborn about it and just wanting to practice whenever I felt like it, being the moody, eternally 15-year old I am. But I eventually gave in and started following her advice; it did help.

Akilina, Heath, Eshe, and I all stuck together like a misfit group of siblings, and it helped me adjust to being a spirit. Can't say I'm still thrilled about it... I wish I had just gone to the afterlife with my family since it had been decades since the cavalry attack.

While the four of us moved around a lot, going anywhere in the world they wished, we met another spirit.

Stark white hair, intense blue eyes... Jack Frost.

I could vaguely remember when it got unusually cold in the desert during the winter months, white mothers would warn their children to bundle up, so "Jack Frost wouldn't nip at their nose". I always thought it was a ridiculous saying, but now I realized that Jack was a real being, every bit as playful as an energetic child. Can't say I got along with him very well. I said a simple "hello" and moved on.

I tried to separate myself from the others later on during the 20th century. I felt more secure being near my family's old village. And more often than not, I preferred being alone, doing my thing, entirely unbothered by the rest of the world. Though that didn't last very long. As more colonizers took over my homeland, more and more homes were being built, destroying sacred sites. My tribe and so many others had been here for thousands of years, we built our home, our culture, our very livelihood, and the sheer audacity of these horrible, white colonizers destroying everything in the name of their "God", filled me with so much more anger than I know how to handle.

And it didn't take long for colonizers to turn the Grand Canyon into a tourist destination. The disrespect. Lack of compassion.

And the worst part.

I couldn't do ANYTHING about it. I was invisible to them. A cruel case of irony. I often cursed the Man in the Moon for making me suffer and watch the decimation of my people and my homeland. It was the first time I had an emotional breakdown. I was shaky for days and my breathing irregular. Eshe and Akilina did everything they could to help calm me down, and of course, I did eventually, but it was painful and my anger was only fueled more.

I could not ignore watching other Indigenous people suffer. Even if they couldn't see me, I did what I could to express my support and standing by their side. Every time an indigenous woman went missing and was cruelly taken from this world, I took it upon myself to remain by her side, provide her comfort in her last moments before her soul left this world. It was the least I could do for fellow women, and it provided some form of comfort to my conscience.

Boy, if only there was real therapy for spirits.

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