

AUTUMN

Episode #6

"Astrology"

Written by

Madelyn Starr

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT

Windchimes are loud. The creepy sounds from episode 3 are back -- strange murmuring and whispering, heavy breathing.

Jade GASPS awake. She sees her sleep paralysis demon.

JADE

You--
You're here.

THE DYBBUK

Here I am.

JADE

You can talk?

The Dybbuk just laughs.

JADE (CONT'D)

I can't move.

THE DYBBUK

Easier that way, isn't it?

JADE

You're real?

THE DYBBUK

What is real, mayn sheyfele? Are you real?

JADE

Who are you?

THE DYBBUK

So many generations melt away and I watch in the shadows. I only try to help, but my daughters all think I am a thing of evil, a sign of madness. The curse they hope to escape with each new generation, not knowing I am fastened. Jade, Ethyl, Ida, Chaya, Devorah, on and on and on and on.

JADE

What are you then?

THE DYBBUK

A misunderstood thing. Aren't we all, little Jade? Aren't you a pretty little thing, attracting so many creatures to your side?

(MORE)

THE DYBBUK (CONT'D)

From dybbuk to progeny, you
surround yourself with us like
little collectible things.

JADE

I don't know what you mean.

THE DYBBUK

I am not your demon, Jade. I am
your inheritance. A gift from your
lineage, just like this.

There's a tapping sound, like a claw on rock.

THE DYBBUK (CONT'D)

The eye is not what threatens you
now, neshumele. This trinket cannot
protect you.

JADE

What can?

THE DYBBUK

Weave rowan berries into a chain.
Wear it against your throat and
your heart.

The windchimes burst loudly, like a huge gust just hit them.

THE DYBBUK (CONT'D)

Good luck, neshumele.

JADE

Wait, I have so many questions. Who
are you? What is threatening me?
Why are you here? Does it have to
do with what Autumn is doing?

The Dybbuk doesn't respond, only hums the theme song as she
fades away.

Jade gasps and the sheets finally rustle as she moves again.

JADE (CONT'D)

She's gone. What the hell just
happened?

THEME MUSIC PLAYS

JADE (CONT'D)

Autumn, episode 6. Astrology.

INT. JADE'S CAR

Driving sounds.

JADE

Do you have any idea how hard it is to find rowan berries? Not a rowan tree, just the berries. I called like ten nurseries and the only one who would sell me just the berries was nearly in Orange County. But I got them, and I brought a needle and thread so I could turn them into a necklace in the parking lot.

I thought I was dreaming last night. When I woke up this morning, I thought wow, that was different. My imagination is really going wild with everything.

But good thing Indigo told me to record. That really happened. My sleep paralysis demon spoke to me. She referenced dybbukim at one point, but that doesn't make sense to me. In Jewish folklore, a dybbuk is a lost soul that ends up possessing someone living. That's not what's happening here. Unless my lost memories are gaps from being possessed. But I don't think so. I got the feeling that she was trying to protect me. Almost like she's been looking out for me since she first appeared to me after Aunt Ethyl died.

Though, dybbukim have historically been blamed for women having mental health crises. So that part checks out.

Ugh, this traffic is taking forever. Autumn will be pissed if I'm late for the last day of recording, and I need to beat Indigo there.

I wish I could talk to someone about all of this. Besides Indigo, someone who knows me and can help me figure out what's real and what's completely crazy. And besides you, I guess. Whoever you are.

I thought about calling Fran again, but he would just think I'm crazy.

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

He would probably say that the stress of working for Autumn is making me crack. Which, yeah, fair, that is happening, except it's because there's something actually weird and supernatural going on. But he wouldn't believe me. I wouldn't believe me, to be fair. So here I am. Talking into my little recorder to my invisible friend. I guess it's not that different than what I do at work. But if someone is listening to this, please find me. Make sure I'm alright. Because I'm getting really scared.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

Jade closes the door.

AUTUMN

Good morning.

It's tense between them still.

JADE

Morning.

AUTUMN

How are you feeling?

JADE

Fine, and I wanted to thank you for taking a hiatus. I think you're right. I need it.

Autumn softens.

AUTUMN

You know I just want what's best for you, Jadey.

JADE

Yeah. I know.

AUTUMN

Good. When will your astrologer arrive?

JADE

She texted, she had a last minute client pop up. She should be here in an hour or so.

AUTUMN

Guess I can't complain since she's swooping in to rescue us. How did you meet her?

JADE

Oh, she has a shop down the street from me--

Jade's phone dings.

JADE (CONT'D)

Sorry, forgot to silence-- Oh, shit.

AUTUMN

What is it?

JADE

It's a news alert. I have one set for your name, to track any articles or reviews--

AUTUMN

You're so on top of it.

JADE

Thanks, but it's about a woman who's gone missing.

AUTUMN

Eliza?

JADE

No, a different woman. Her name is Tamera.

AUTUMN

What? Why is my name in that?

JADE

Because her disappearance sounds just like Eliza's. She walked out her front door to check the mail and never came back. And she has a two month old baby.

AUTUMN

How awful. I hope she's alright,
but I still don't understand--

JADE

Autumn, listen. "Police say it's unlikely to be connected to the recent disappearance of Eliza Reyes, which occurred under similar circumstances, despite other similarities between the two women. It appears that both were part of the same wellness community and took the same supplement, a powder known as 'Cosmic Dust,' sold by influencer Autumn Gandara."

AUTUMN

This other woman was also a listener?

JADE

I guess so. Let me search the email... Oh. She also sent us some complaints about Cosmic Dust.

AUTUMN

So she definitely took Cosmic Dust?

JADE

Yes. Why? Does that mean anything to you?

Autumn is silent for a beat.

AUTUMN

No, just an odd coincidence, don't you think? It's a bit spooky. Let's hope both women turn up safe and sound.

JADE

Should we say something on the show?

AUTUMN

No, no reason to cause a panic.

JADE

I think it maybe is a reason to panic. Their only similarity is Cosmic Dust?

AUTUMN

That's not their only similarity. They were both at massive periods of change. Maybe it was just too much for them.

JADE

You're saying they might have walked out on their families because the, what did you call it, liminal period got too much for them?

AUTUMN

It happens.

JADE

This is more than a coincidence, Autumn, I can feel it.

AUTUMN

Oh, well, if Jade can feel it. Don't push things here. The families don't want you in their business. The police won't care what you have to say. Besides, what's your theory? A serial killer is targeting women who take Cosmic Dust? Don't be ridiculous.

JADE

That's not fair--

AUTUMN

There's nothing for you to uncover here. We're not journalists, I am a lifestyle coach and you are my producer. And with your erratic behavior lately, you could do much more harm than good.

JADE

I really don't think--

AUTUMN

Exactly. You have no idea what you're dealing with here.

The moment grows tense and ominous, sounds in the background building, and then Autumn returns to her usual cheerful persona.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Should we talk hiatus posting plans while we wait?

JADE

If I'm not too erratic for you.

AUTUMN

Oh, Jade, don't be so sensitive. Okay, so I think a garden series could be fun. Perhaps we can post pictures of soothing plants and natural circles as garden inspo for my followers, a sort of homework project they can do while we're off the air...

Autumn fades out.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

The door creaks open.

JADE

Indigo! Hi, did you find the place okay?

INDIGO

Merry meet. Thanks for having me.

JADE

Thanks for coming on such short notice. This is Autumn.

AUTUMN

You're a lifesaver, Indigo. I'm so excited to hear your perspective. I find that no two astrologers are ever quite the same.

INDIGO

My pleasure. I've heard a lot about you, Autumn Gandara.

AUTUMN

Oh?

INDIGO

I'm a fan of the show.

AUTUMN

Oh, of course! So pleased to hear that.

JADE

Can we get you anything before we start?

INDIGO

I have my thermos. Mugwort & dandelion tea.

AUTUMN

A divination draught.

INDIGO

You know your herbs.

AUTUMN

I try. Shall we? Jade and I already did the intro so we don't waste your time, so we can jump right into your astrology reading.

INDIGO

Let's begin.

JADE

Great. You can just sit there. Here are the headphones, and your mic. Comfortable? Alright, we'll pause for room tone--

A tense pause.

JADE (CONT'D)

And we're ready. Five, four...

Silent three, two, one.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - AUTUMNAL VIBES RECORDING

SFX: Autumnal Vibes intro harp.

Autumn shifts into podcast voice.

AUTUMN

It's always useful, ducklings, to check in periodically on the current astrological forecast and how it might impact your personal star chart, as well as the world and society around us. And since we are in for a doozy of a forecast, we thought it would be great to check in with an expert.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Joining us today is local astrologer, herbalist, and witch Indigo Barnhill to share her expertise with us. Welcome, Indigo!

INDIGO

Thank you so much for having me. You're right, this is the perfect time for an astrological check in. We're about to step into a truly transformative period as Pluto enters Aquarius.

JADE

What does that mean exactly?

INDIGO

Thanks for asking, Jade. Pluto entering Aquarius means that there's about to be a period of great change. Revolution, social upheaval, major changes to the collective.

JADE

Seriously?

AUTUMN

Oh, hell yeah. You know when the last time Pluto was in Aquarius?

JADE

No?

AUTUMN

1777. Did any famous revolutions happen around then? Food for thought.

INDIGO

That's absolutely right. We will all be able to feel this time, and it's really an opportunity for us to step out of our little circles and think about the radical possibility of the collective.

JADE

So we should all be aware of this planetary shift?

INDIGO

Absolutely. It's going to impact everyone in massive ways.

AUTUMN

And to demonstrate the gravity of that to my listeners, I thought it might be fun for you to do our readings, Indigo.

JADE

Oh, I don't think we need that.

AUTUMN

I printed out our birth charts. Here you go.

Paper slides across the table.

INDIGO

I do love someone who's prepared.

AUTUMN

Well, that's me.

INDIGO

Let's see. Jade, you're a Virgo Sun, Scorpio Moon, and Pisces Rising.

JADE

Yeah.

INDIGO

And Autumn. Leo Sun, Leo Moon, and Aries Rising?

AUTUMN

Get your double Leo jokes in now.

INDIGO

What an interesting pair you are. Who shall I start with?

AUTUMN

Oh, do Jade first.

INDIGO

Alright.

She hums.

INDIGO (CONT'D)

Jade Adler. You are going to be embarking on a journey that is going to shake up the way you've settled into your life.

(MORE)

INDIGO (CONT'D)

It's going to take you into a massive period of self-transformation.

JADE

Good or bad?

INDIGO

We can hope good. It's going to bring you to a rebirth of sorts after a period of drastic unknowability.

JADE

Unknowability? Isn't the point of this to help know my future? Or at least guide it?

AUTUMN

There are some things that even the stars can't help us with, Jade.

INDIGO

Precisely. And that's important for all of us to remember. But you're about to enter one of those times, Jade. I've never seen a reading like this. The next couple weeks could decide the rest of your life.

JADE

What?

INDIGO

I don't really know what to make of this.

AUTUMN

The stars don't lie.

JADE

This is a little alarming.

INDIGO

But if you make the right choices, you will become the ultimate master of your destiny.

JADE

The chart isn't telling you what those choices are, is it?

INDIGO

Unfortunately, no.

AUTUMN

How exciting.

INDIGO

Now, Autumn. My double Leo and Aries Rising. What secrets might you have hidden away?

AUTUMN

Excuse me?

INDIGO

Pluto in Aquarius is going to force some things to the surface that you've repressed for far too long. You'll be forced to reckon with everything you've hidden and how it's impacted your relationships.

AUTUMN

I don't know what you mean.

INDIGO

We both know that isn't honest. Your true self is going to be revealed. And with it, your true friends and enemies. This could put you on a path of solitude for the rest of your life, or, if you're able to salvage whatever remains after your secrets are revealed, it could bring you further into the community you so desperately crave.

There's a long, tense moment as everyone waits for Autumn to respond.

Then she laughs, too shrilly to be believable.

AUTUMN

What an ominous prediction! But that's Pluto in Aquarius for you. Thank you so much for joining us today, Indigo. And ducklings, you can find your own astrological forecasts and star chart guides on our website. Along with, drumroll please.

She waits, but Jade doesn't give her a drumroll.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

You'll add that in post?

Autumn does her Cosmic Dust sales pitch. Jade tries to interject and interrupt multiple times, but Autumn doesn't give her the time or space, barreling through it.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

A Cosmic Dust cleanse! It's a brand new, freshly formulated way to take advantage of my wonderful supplement. It includes specially formulated juices that augment and heighten the healing powers of Cosmic Dust when the powder is mixed into them, allowing you to accelerate your healing and really flush your system of anything holding you back. Heavy metals, microplastics, pollutants, impurities, anything that doesn't belong but has found its way into your body as a symptom of modern life or diets will be flushed out so easily. Check it out on autumnalvibes.com. We'll be taking a short hiatus for a mental health break, but will be back with you so soon fresh and excited to continue talking wellness with our amazing community. I'm Autumn Gandara.

JADE

I'm Jade Adler.

AUTUMN

And thanks so much for sticking with us, ducklings. Being here, taking the time, being open to self-improvement, that's the first and hardest step. I see you and your sacrifices, and we're going to keep this wellness journey going very soon. This has been Autumnal Vibes. Catch ya later!

SFX: Autumnal Vibes harp outro

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

Jade, Autumn, and Indigo take off their headphones as they finish recording.

AUTUMN
(sickly sweet)
I really can't thank you enough for
rescuing us, Indigo.

JADE
Yeah, you saved us.

INDIGO
Anytime. I had a blast. And I'm
quite curious about that product
you mentioned, Cosmic Dust was it?

AUTUMN
Oh, it's just a run of the mill
supplement. We'll give you a call
if we need you again.

INDIGO
I'd love to try some--

JADE
Sure--

AUTUMN
We're not giving out samples at the
moment. Jade will walk you out.

INDIGO
Farewell, Autumn.

AUTUMN
(perplexed)
Farewell?

The door opens and closes.

EXT. AUTUMN'S GARDEN

Gravel crunches as Jade and Indigo walk out to the street.

JADE
Well?

INDIGO
My readings were all accurate,
Jade. You need to tread very
carefully. There's something not
right.

JADE
I know, the whole situation is so
complicated and messed up--

INDIGO

No, not the situation. Her. There's something not right about her, but she's done something to block my senses. I can't tell you what spells she used, but they're powerful.

JADE

Autumn used spells?

INDIGO

Be careful, Jade. There are many ill omens here. I'm not sure what to make of it all.

JADE

What can I do?

INDIGO

I'm not sure. I'll think on it, do some research. Blessed be.

JADE

Bye, thanks again Indigo.

Indigo gets in her car.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

AUTUMN

I don't know where you found her, but I do not want that witch back here.

JADE

What?

AUTUMN

She's a liar and a hack. Can you believe that reading?

JADE

Yes.

AUTUMN

Excuse me?

JADE

This is just like you. Someone challenges you a little and suddenly they're a liar and a hack.

AUTUMN

Are you telling me that you, my skeptic straightman, believed that nonsense?

JADE

Yes. I know that you've been hiding something from me. And it is time for you to tell the truth.

AUTUMN

There's nothing you need to know.

JADE

You still expect me to buy that? You've lost control, Autumn. Of the situation and of me. Tell me the truth.

AUTUMN

The truth? The truth is that I've tried to be understanding of whatever it is you're going through, but you're determined to make me your villain and I'm sick of it.

JADE

I'm not making you anything. I'm just finally seeing things for how they really are.

AUTUMN

No, you're blaming me for everything that's wrong in your life so you don't have to face up to the fact that it's your fault that you're lonely and directionless.

JADE

That won't work on me anymore. I'm done believing you when you try to cut me down.

AUTUMN

How nice for you. I'm the only reason you have any sort of purpose, so rather than admit that to yourself you've twisted your resentment for me into a crazy conspiracy.

JADE

Then why are you introducing a
cleanse?

AUTUMN

Oh my god. You're fixated! Because
it's a good way to move some
product, Jade. I'm running a
business here.

JADE

Why did I never see it. I defended
you. I always said you were
different. But you're just like
every other greedy wellness
grifter.

Autumn's voice turns dangerously calm.

AUTUMN

There is no one else like me, Jade.

Jade's anger melts away into sadness.

JADE

You really don't think that you owe
me anything. After everything I've
done for you.

AUTUMN

I never saw our relationship as
transactional, but I guess you're
showing your true colors.

JADE

Yeah, well, so are you.

AUTUMN

Maybe this won't just be a mental
health break. You're so paranoid
all the time now. It's infecting my
aura. I need to protect my own safe
space.

JADE

Of course, Autumn, keep making your
excuses. And it's not paranoia if--

There's a strange creaking sound from outside, and Autumn's
voice becomes tense and terse.

AUTUMN

Did you hear that?

JADE

The building's probably settling.
Don't try to change the subject--

The creaking sound is louder, closer.

AUTUMN

Shut up, Jade.

JADE

Don't talk to me like--

AUTUMN

For once, listen to me.

Autumn is scared, serious. Jade falls silent.

The door squeaks open and the creaking sound is in the room with them.

Jade gasps, scared.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

Lochlan's voice is just as sinister and captivating as in the second episode.

LOCHLAN

What an impolite greeting. No wonder you haven't been judged suitable at court.

AUTUMN

My rudeness is reserved for you.

LOCHLAN

If I didn't know better, I would call that a lie. Perhaps your pet will be more polite, though it didn't sound like she had much respect for you either. Hello, Jade.

Jade whimpers.

LOCHLAN (CONT'D)

Nothing? This is getting rather boring if she's going to react the same way every time I see her, Autumn.

AUTUMN

Leave her be.

JADE

Autumn?

AUTUMN

Not now, Jade.
Stop stalling, Lochlan. What are
you doing here?

LOCHLAN

You know why. They want more.

AUTUMN

They always want more.

LOCHLAN

Yes, and they always get what they
want.

AUTUMN

I'm working on it. I'm getting the
dust out in the world as fast as I
can, but there's lots of
competition. Sales have increased,
but it's not like I can just--

LOCHLAN

They don't want excuses. They don't
particularly care how you do it.
They just want you to uphold your
end of the deal and increase supply
when they say so.

AUTUMN

Then they need to honor our deal.
It's supposed to be temporary.
They've kept some.

LOCHLAN

There was never a specified time,
my dear. You know that temporary
means something different to the
Folk.

AUTUMN

That's--

LOCHLAN

The way it works. You should have
been more careful with your words.
But regardless, you made the deal
and you have to uphold it. More,
Autumn. Or I won't be so forgiving
to the lovely little Jade here the
next time she's so rude to me.

Jade whimpers.

AUTUMN
Fine. Get out.

LOCHLAN
Always a pleasure, ladies. Autumn,
you'll take care of her?

AUTUMN
Out!

The creaking sound starts, Lochlan closes the door.

JADE
What the hell was that, Autumn?
What was he talking about? What
even was he--

AUTUMN
I'm sorry about all of this, Jade.

JADE
You need to tell me everything now.
The truth this time. No more lies.

AUTUMN
I can't do that. And I'm sorry for
this too.

JADE
Autumn--

The sound of a jar opening.

AUTUMN
Memories, leave in peace.
Memories, release.

Autumn blows a powder, which makes Jade cough.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)
When I snap my fingers, you won't
remember anything of our visitor.
You will go home and awaken in
safety.

Autumn snaps her fingers. Jade breathes in easier.

JADE
I should get going. I still have to
edit this last episode.

AUTUMN

Yeah.

Autumn sounds sad and guilty. Jade sounds normal.

JADE

Call me if you need anything?

AUTUMN

You too, Jade. Get home safe.

JADE

See ya.

INT. JADE'S CAR

The door shuts.

JADE

The rowan berries worked.
I remember everything. And that
man, if you could call him a man.
He was handsome and ugly at the
same time, somehow young and
ancient. And he was stone. I don't
mean like stone cold or whatever.
Like literally, living, moving
stone. He's fae. He has to be. It's
all true. And Autumn has been
making me forget. Telling me that
I'm crazy. She should never have
underestimated me. Because now I
know what I'm dealing with. Now, I
can fix everything for her like I
always do.

CREDITS MUSIC

CREDITS

Autumn was created by Madelyn
Starr.
It was written and produced by
Madelyn Starr.
It was edited and produced by Evan
Moreland.
The cast of this episode is Leesa
Kim as Jade Adler and the Dybbuk.
Carolyn Vasko as Autumn Gandara.
Caroline Stevens as Indigo. David
Rogers as Lochlan.

(MORE)

CREDITS (CONT'D)

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show, visit autumnpodcast.com and
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END OF EPISODE 6