

AUTUMN

Episode #5

"Aromatherapy"

Written by

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INT. JADE'S APARTMENT

Windchimes. Typing sounds.

A phone ringing. Jade pauses for responses occasionally.

JADE

Hi, I'm following up on my conversation with Detective Howard? It was about my concerns regarding Eliza Reyes, the customer of my company's supplement powder-- Mmhmm. Yeah. No, this isn't a joke. Um, Autumnal Vibes? I understand that she's missing, I wouldn't be calling if she wasn't. I think there is valuable information to help with the missing persons case-- Fine. Yes. Yes, this number is best for a call back.

She hangs up and groans.

JADE (CONT'D)

Thanks for nothing. I've been trying to track down anything about Eliza since she disappeared, and share what little I know that might be relevant. But no one wants to hear it. The police just laughed at me, and when I got in touch with her new husband, he, well, let's say he's not a fan of wellness influencers. I think his exact words were "attention seeking mosquitos trying to profit off my missing wife." He doesn't want my help. But I guess I should be honest with myself. I can't blame them. What help am I even offering? The delusions of a paranoid woman who can't even remember how she got home the other day? Yeah, real useful. I just can't shake the feeling that Eliza going missing isn't a coincidence. That there is something I can do to help. It's like there's something on the tip of my tongue, just on the edge of my understanding. But I can't figure out what it is.

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

So just another day in the life of Jade Adler, continuing to be aimless and useless. But I can't give up on Eliza. I can help her, I'm sure I can, I just need to keep it together long enough to figure out how.

THEME MUSIC PLAYS

JADE (CONT'D)

Autumn, episode 5. Aromatherapy.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT

Beeping sounds as Jade dials a number, then hangs up. Then does it again. The sounds continue in the background as she talks.

JADE

I'm seriously spiraling. I keep dialing Fran's number, but never press call -- I've memorized it now because I've typed it out so many times. Typing it, number by number, gives me more time to change my mind, to chicken out and cancel the call. If I just went into my contacts and hit his name, that's only one tap. One second to make a choice. One second to ruin four months of progress and getting over him -- oh shit, I hit call.

The phone RINGS, on speaker.

JADE (CONT'D)

Should I hang up? It's too late to pretend I didn't call, the notification will be on his phone. I could hang up and pretend it was a butt dial, just text him a quick sorry. I don't even know what to say to him.

The phone clicks as it's connected, but goes to voicemail.

FRAN (ON PHONE)

Hey, you've reached Fran. Leave me a message if you want me to get back to you. Otherwise we'll never speak again!

BEEP.

Jade is silent, taut, frozen.

Then she hangs it up.

JADE

I didn't know what to say. Maybe  
it's for the best. Oh, no, he's  
calling me back.

She answers the phone.

JADE (CONT'D)

Hello?

FRAN (ON PHONE)

Jade? Why did you call me?

JADE

Would you believe me if I said it  
was a butt dial?

FRAN (ON PHONE)

Not now that you asked like that.  
Is everything okay? You sound  
weird.

JADE

I know I shouldn't have called you  
but I feel like I'm going crazy  
because we're selling these new  
supplements and they seem normal  
but there's something in them that  
I can't figure out, and a listener  
is missing now, and I've been  
losing time, but I did a self-  
hypnosis ritual that didn't work  
and I'm afraid that something is  
seriously wrong with me but Autumn  
says it's just stress--

Fran groans.

FRAN (ON PHONE)

Jade, that's the problem. It's  
always "Autumn says."

JADE

It's different this time.

FRAN (ON PHONE)

This is the exact same shit as when  
we were dating.

(MORE)

FRAN (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
We're not even together anymore and  
you're still calling me freaking  
out about something Autumn said to  
you? Get over it. Get over her,  
Jade. She's not a healthy person to  
be around but she's sucked you into  
her web. Do you even know who you  
are without her anymore?

Jade is close to tears.

JADE  
That's why I called you, I'm  
finally listening--

FRAN (ON PHONE)  
How long will it take you to get  
that this is what she does? She  
burns you out and wraps you around  
her finger until all you care about  
is what she thinks. She wants to be  
your whole world, and you let her,  
so now you're in too deep. I'm not  
surprised you're having a  
breakdown, Jade.

JADE  
(unconvincing)  
I am not having a breakdown.

FRAN (ON PHONE)  
You know I'll always care about  
you, but I told you when we broke  
up. I can't keep enabling you. Call  
me if you ever quit your job. Until  
then, good luck.

JADE  
Fran--

He hangs up the phone.

She stammers, gathering herself.

JADE (CONT'D)  
I'm not having a breakdown. I'm not  
having a breakdown. I'm not having  
a breakdown. Right? Oh god. What  
sounds more like having a breakdown  
than insisting you're not? And I'm  
not even convincing myself.  
(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

I've been going deeper into the forums I found and what's crazy to me, what's really freaking me out about the whole thing, is that I'm not finding these people so crazy anymore. I do have symptoms consistent with alien abduction survivors. If the only answer that makes sense is crazy, does that make me crazy too?

The windchimes clink gently.

JADE (CONT'D)

He's right though. I can't keep doing this either.

The recording clicks off.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

Zen sounds. The door shuts gently as Jade enters.

JADE

Morning.

AUTUMN

Hey, babe. What's wrong?

Autumn sounds genuinely concerned. There's a moment where we're not sure if Jade is going to confide or not. Then--

JADE

Remember Eliza? The customer who was getting married?

AUTUMN

The Cosmic Dust one? I thought she was doing better.

JADE

No, we just hadn't heard from her.

AUTUMN

No news is good news! People only reach out to complain.

JADE

She's missing.

There's a long pause.

AUTUMN

How?

JADE

She just got back from her honeymoon. Her husband said she went into the backyard to check that her plants got enough water while they were gone, and she never came back inside.

AUTUMN

How long has she been gone?

JADE

A few days, close to a week at this point?

Autumn pauses again, processing and thinking.

AUTUMN

That's awful. I hope she's alright.

JADE

What should we do?

AUTUMN

Nothing?

JADE

She was our customer, our listener--

AUTUMN

And otherwise has nothing to do with us. The best thing we can do is leave her and her loved ones alone, and send good vibes and energies to her being found.

JADE

Thoughts and prayers.

AUTUMN

No, good energy. Manifestation. Useful things. Jade, we have no real connection with the woman.

JADE

She trusted you.

AUTUMN

And I hope that brought her healing and will continue to do so when she is found.

JADE

Fran was right about you.

AUTUMN

Excuse me?

JADE

I called him and he said--

AUTUMN

You called Fran? After months of crying to me about how hard your breakup has been--

JADE

I never said anything--

AUTUMN

You completely ruined any progress you made and called him, and now you're trusting him over our three year long working relationship, let alone our friendship?

JADE

It's not that simple.

AUTUMN

But it is Jade. You're believing that man over me, who has supported you and loved you through everything, even when you've questioned my integrity. I cannot believe you opened that door again.

There's a long pause as Jade gathers herself.

JADE

You're right. I'm sorry. I've been so lost and scattered lately.

AUTUMN

Maybe you should take some time off.

JADE

No, I-- I'm fine, Autumn. I promise. I'm sorry. We should record. Don't want to lose your energy while you have it, right?

AUTUMN

If you're sure. I can't have you being a liability.



JADE  
Of course not.

AUTUMN  
Let's get it over with then.

JADE  
Okay. Room tone.  
(beat)  
Five, four...

Silent three, two, one.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - AUTUMNAL VIBES RECORDING

SFX: Autumnal Vibes intro harp.

AUTUMN  
Welcome to Autumnal Vibes, where  
every season is right for wellness!

Autumn's podcast voice is a little tenser, a little angrier than usual. She and Jade can't fully pretend that there isn't still tension simmering between them.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)  
I'm Autumn Gandara, accompanied as  
always by my devoted producer Jade  
Adler. Say hi, Jade.

JADE  
Hi.

AUTUMN  
What a peach. Today we're  
discussing aromatherapy and the way  
something as simple as the humble  
essential oil can be used to cure  
and ease countless ailments. We've  
talked about them generally before  
and all their amazing benefits --  
something people have known since  
ancient times! -- but I thought it  
would be helpful to revisit, go  
back to the basics a bit, make sure  
our foundations are all equally  
sturdy and solid. And also it means  
I get to do a deep dive into a few  
of my favorite scents.

JADE

Which are of course included in our range of essential oils, which you can find on our website, autumnalvibes.com.

AUTUMN

Oh, yes, that's right. Thanks, Jade. I'm sure most of my listeners are familiar with the power of essential oils and what they are, but in case of any newcomers or just listeners looking for a refresher, we'll give you a quick reminder.

JADE

Gotta keep that knowledge fresh.

AUTUMN

Exactly. Of course, essential oils are exactly what they sound like. They're concentrated plant extracts that really pull out and heighten the wonderful properties of various plants, and they're essential for a comprehensive, holistic lifestyle or wellness practice. You can use them for all sorts of things, from spiritual to mental and even physical because of their vibrational frequencies. Jade, care to explain the science here?

JADE

Of course. The theory is that because everything transmits its own electrical frequency, you can use an essential oil with a complimentary frequency to gain certain healing effects on your body. Of course, this is a classic case of wellness co-opting scientific language in a way that doesn't really make sense, but there are still uses for oils that science recognizes--

AUTUMN

What Jade means is that this is a largely unproven theory, but just because the studies haven't been conducted doesn't mean it's not true. Right, Jade?

JADE

Sure.

AUTUMN

And even beyond that there are proven benefits.

JADE

Which is what I was getting at. Something like lavender is proven to help lower stress and anxiety. But maybe don't try to cure your cancer with it.

Autumn forces a laugh.

AUTUMN

Very true. As always, for serious ailments, do call your doctor. But what I wanted to do, now that we've had a little recap, is talk about what essential oils I think are essential right now. First is thyme. Yes, thyme, that lovely little herb you put in your French cooking. Not only does it perfectly season your favorite plant based chicken, it can also aid your sleep. Thyme can help settle your mind at night and ward off nightmares, allowing you to get a better night's sleep, which I know we all need right now. AND it boosts immune system function. Can't get much better than that. So pop that in a diffuser at bedtime and let it soothe you to proper rest.

JADE

That's--

Autumn doesn't give Jade space to talk now.

AUTUMN

Another absolute banger of an oil is lilac. Not only does it have proven anti-parasitic and anti-fungal properties, it's also so fantastic at soothing anxiety. It's what I'm diffusing right now in the studio. It's nice, isn't it, Jade?

JADE

Smells lovely, and--

AUTUMN

See? And lilac also has been credited with helping boost latent psychic abilities. Intriguing, no? So if you've always suspected you might have an active third eye, lilac could be for you. And last but not least is sandalwood. Sandalwood is one of the most powerful oils for spiritual uses. It's been used for millennia in religious rites and folk remedies, and is just as powerful and potent today. It's particularly useful in your everyday life as a way to aid your meditation and mindfulness practices, but can also be used for special occasions and rituals like a Solstice observance. It helps to ground and quiet the mind, and something that's been used in rituals for ages and by our ancestors carries a big significance that resonates across time and place.

JADE

I've got some questions about this.

AUTUMN

Great. I'm sure my listeners are wondering similar things.

JADE

I think -- and I know I've heard from listeners struggling with this too -- so many of us feel constantly fatigued with everything in the world lately. What would you recommend for that?

Autumn is pleasantly surprised that Jade is asking real questions.

AUTUMN

Peppermint for sure. Sweet orange can likely help as well, or even diffuse them both at once. You can mix and match and find the right combinations that work for you.

JADE

And such good scents too! What about bruising?

Autumn is getting suspicious now.

AUTUMN

Bruising?

JADE

Yeah. Like if you were to have an unexplained bruise on, say, your leg.

AUTUMN

Well, frankincense can help aid healing. I would put a few drops directly on the bruise, and hopefully that'll clear right up.

JADE

And what about memory loss?

AUTUMN

Can you be more specific?

JADE

Sure. For example, if someone were losing track of time and memories seemed to be disappearing. Like when you arrive somewhere and realize you don't remember the drive.

There's a tense moment between them.

AUTUMN

Well, like I said, lilac can soothe anxiety, which might help the feeling of the day just whizzing by. And sage and ginger have been found to aid memory and recall, so they could be worth testing out. And just general mindfulness can also help us all feel more present. Thanks for these questions, Jade, which just prove that there are limitless uses to essential oils in optimizing the human experience. Again, these are all available on my website, along with my wonderful healing supplement Cosmic Dust.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Head on over there for a special  
offer of a free sample of Cosmic  
Dust with any order of oils.

(to Jade)

Let's pause there.

JADE

Alright.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

Both of them take their headphones off. There's a pause as  
Autumn processes, her breathing angry, and Jade watches her.

JADE

What happened to not cutting during  
recording?

AUTUMN

Sometimes you must make exceptions.  
I think it would be beneficial for  
you to take a break.

JADE

We are, this won't be in the  
episode--

AUTUMN

I mean from the podcast, Jade.

JADE

What?

AUTUMN

You clearly cannot handle being on  
air right now with the way your  
personal life is going, and I want  
to give you the proper time and  
space and grace you need to heal.

JADE

That's not--

AUTUMN

I'm trying to be generous with you,  
Jade, but I have never been so  
angry with you. And I don't like  
feeling angry. It's bad for my  
skin.  
So we'll record the astrology  
episode as planned, and then we'll  
announce a brief hiatus.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

I want to focus on some other things for a beat anyway.

JADE

What other things?

AUTUMN

You have enough on your plate right now, babe. I think you've proven that. Why don't you go home and do some work on yourself?

JADE

Fine. Fine, Autumn. Banish me the one time I push back on you for something. Sorry I got tired of being your perfect unquestioning little lackey.

Jade angrily rips open the door.

EXT. AUTUMN'S GARDEN

Crunching on gravel.

AUTUMN

Wait, Jade.

JADE

What is it?

Jade sounds almost hopeful - despite everything, she still wants to be in Autumn's good graces and inner circle.

AUTUMN

Take this. Promise me you'll use it.

JADE

Rosemary oil?

AUTUMN

I think it will be helpful for you and your mental state right now.

JADE

I don't need it--

AUTUMN

Please, just promise me you'll use it. I'm genuinely concerned about you, as a friend, and this will make me feel better.

Jade sighs.

JADE  
Alright, Autumn.

AUTUMN  
Thanks. I'll check in with you  
about the next episode, okay?

JADE  
Okay.

Gravel sounds as Autumn walks away.

JADE (CONT'D)  
(sotto)  
Weird.

INT. JADE'S CAR

Jade's car door slams.

JADE  
I don't know what I'm doing  
anymore. I liked my job and now I'm  
sabotaging it. For what?

Her phone buzzes.

JADE (CONT'D)  
What now? It's Indigo, the freaking  
witch I hired because I haven't  
gone crazy enough.  
(into phone)  
Hello?

INDIGO (ON PHONE)  
Bright blessings, Jade.

JADE  
Right back atcha.

INDIGO (ON PHONE)  
I think you ought to come by my  
shop.

JADE  
Did you figure out what was in  
Cosmic Dust?

INDIGO (ON PHONE)  
Yes. It's quite the mystery  
ingredient.  
(MORE)



INDIGO (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
I think it best if I tell you in person. When are you available?

JADE  
Actually, my afternoon just opened up. I can come now?

INDIGO (ON PHONE)  
That's suitable. Come. I will await you.

The phone hangs up.

JADE  
That's something, I guess.

Jade's car starts.

JADE (CONT'D)  
Time to see a witch about a supplement.

She pulls away.

INT. INDIGO'S SHOP

The bell rings. She coughs again from the incense.

JADE  
Indigo?

Indigo comes out the bead curtain.

INDIGO  
Good, you're here. Sit, sit.

Sounds of stools being pulled up the counter.

JADE  
Are you alright?

INDIGO  
This is-- (laughs nervously) --I did not expect this when you called me, Jade. Normally I help people set up their full moon rituals, okay. Not this.

JADE  
It's been weird.

INDIGO

You're wearing your evil eye.  
That's good. Good.

JADE

So what is it?

INDIGO

Right. Jade, the mystery ingredient  
that all your scientists couldn't  
identify, it was ground dandelion  
and puffball mushroom.

There's a pause -- this is anti-climatic.

JADE

That doesn't sound so bad.

INDIGO

No, it doesn't. And if it was truly  
just that, then there would be  
nothing to worry about. But then  
science would have figured it out.  
The reason they couldn't, the  
reason I'm so concerned, is that  
when these two plants are mixed  
together by the right individual  
who can infuse them with magic,  
they become something much more  
worrying and even dangerous.

JADE

Dandelion and mushroom powder?  
Dangerous? What do they become.

Indigo pauses.

INDIGO

Fairy dust.

Jade laughs.

JADE

Fairy dust?

Her laugh stops when she realizes Indigo is dead serious.

INDIGO

Fae aren't friendly little pixies  
like in children's movies. They are  
dangerous, unknowable natural  
forces.

(MORE)

INDIGO (CONT'D)

I don't know what your Autumn has gotten both of you into, but you need to take steps further than that evil eye. Here, take some rosemary oil.

JADE

What?

INDIGO

Rosemary can be used to ward off malicious fae. Why are you looking at me like that?

JADE

Autumn gave me rosemary oil today. She practically begged me to use it.

INDIGO

So she's worried too. Jade, is there anything that you forgot to tell me about last week? Anything that might not seem connected but could maybe help me get a fuller picture?

JADE

I don't think so. I guess my sleep paralysis is getting worse, but I've had that since I was eight so I doubt it's connected.

INDIGO

Tell me about it.

JADE

Oh, well it happens nearly every night now. I see the same demon each time, a naked woman who strokes my hair. I know she's not real, but I can feel her.

INDIGO

That's interesting.

JADE

But like I said, it's happened for years, just now it's worse.

INDIGO

That doesn't mean it's not connected.

(MORE)

INDIGO (CONT'D)

It might not be, it might just be  
your mind playing tricks on you  
like you said. But it could just as  
easily be something.

JADE

Something? Like what?

INDIGO

A djinn comes to mind. I'm most  
concerned that you feel physical  
contact. Do you record while you  
sleep?

JADE

No. I don't.

INDIGO

I think you should start.

JADE

I can't believe this, I--

Jade's phone rings.

JADE (CONT'D)

Oh, it's Autumn.

INDIGO

Answer it.

INT. INDIGO'S SHOP - JADE'S PHONE CALL - CONTINUOUS

JADE

Hey.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Sorry to bother you, but we have a  
problem.

JADE

What is it?

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

My astrologist just cancelled. We  
need to find a new one for the next  
episode on short notice, and you  
know that they're all gonna be  
booked up with the planetary  
movements right now, and--

JADE

I'll take care of it.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Oh. Are you sure?

JADE

Of course. I'm still our producer, right?

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Always and forever. You're the best. Love ya, babe.

Autumn hangs up.

INT. INDIGO'S SHOP - CONTINUOUS

JADE

Huh. Indigo, would you be interested in doing an astrological reading on our podcast?

Indigo laughs.

INDIGO

That sounds delightful.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT

Windchimes.

JADE

It's been a few hours since I left Indigo's shop, and I needed to process what she told me. The fact that I'm really considering what she said is, well, bonkers. She actually said the words "fairy dust." She said them, and I'm considering them. I guess the fae are a slightly more reasonable explanation than aliens? Countless cultures have stories of forest folk, so maybe there could be something true to them, and I did think I saw a gnome in the garden the other day... But why would any fae take an interest in a mid-tier influencer's platform or supplement? But Autumn gave me rosemary and begged me to use it. That can't be a coincidence, right?

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

That would mean that Autumn is trying to protect me in her own way.  
And-- I can't believe I'm actually thinking through this.  
Hold on...

Typing sounds as Jade looks something up.

JADE (CONT'D)

This is really just a hunch, but I thought I'd check... And I was right. I looked up the three essential oils Autumn recommended on the podcast today, and turns out that lilac, thyme, and sandalwood are all known to attract fairies. What has Autumn gotten herself caught up in? What has she gotten me caught up in?

Jade's PHONE RINGS and she jumps.

JADE (CONT'D)

Oh, it's just my mom. Hello?

It's a one sided phone call.

JADE (CONT'D)

Yeah, I'm fine. Autumn is going on hiatus, so I'm actually going to have a few days off here.

(pause)

I actually wanted to ask you something. We did an episode about family histories and it got me wondering. What was wrong with Aunt Ethyl?

(pause)

Oh, wow. Do you know what she saw?

Jade listens and when she comes back, she sounds freaked out but she's trying to hide it from her mom.

JADE (CONT'D)

Did Ethyl ever say what she wanted?

(pause)

No, I'm just curious. That's all. One more thing -- when did Aunt Ethyl die again?

(pause)

Okay. Thanks Mom. I have to go.  
Yeah, I'll call soon. Love you.  
Bye.

She hangs up the phone.

JADE (CONT'D)

Turns out my great-aunt's psychosis manifested in a very specific way. She had visions in the middle of the night of a naked woman with long, thorn braided hair watching her as she slept. Ethyl always thought the woman wanted something, but she was never able to figure out what and everyone else thought she was crazy so no one tried to help.

Aunt Ethyl died when I was eight years old.

That's when my sleep paralysis first started and I started seeing visions of the same woman.

Whatever was haunting Ethyl, either in her mind or for real, is haunting me too.

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. Carolyn Vasko as Autumn Gandara. Caroline Stevens as Indigo. David Rogers as Fran.

If you want to learn more about the show, visit [autumnpodcast.com](http://autumnpodcast.com) and find us on social media @AutumnPodcast.

END OF EPISODE 5