

AUTUMN

Episode #8

"Plant Medicine"

Written by

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INT. RECORDING STUDIO - AUTUMNAL VIBES RECORDING

Fade in on the two women laughing together.

JADE

You just want to do some shrooms.

AUTUMN

Okay, yes. But that doesn't mean it doesn't have value! Medicine and healing doesn't always have to hurt or taste yucky. Sometimes the process can be fun and profound.

JADE

That was really wise.

AUTUMN

Don't sound so surprised, Jade. Maybe you should stick around after the show and join my healing practice.

JADE

That'll be a story for a future episode.

They laugh.

JADE (CONT'D)

Okay. So let's talk about what the value of plant medicines and psychedelics are.

AUTUMN

Absolutely. Anytime we partake we should remember that we're communing with the natural world. Our goal with it is really to open up our minds and bodily systems. Clear out anything blocking us from processing life properly, and allow us to step forward into a new sense of being.

JADE

Okay, and that should help work out trauma, right?

AUTUMN

Yes, but by addressing the real root cause of our illnesses, not treating the symptoms.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

By returning to the sacred medicine that the earth provides us with, we can heal the spiritual traumas that then cause mental and physical illnesses. It's a profound, magical thing, and really makes you think about how fascinated people have been with mushrooms for ages.

JADE

They can have really strong impacts on your health, and are definitely a powerful force.

AUTUMN

And it's a power that we can welcome into our lives to affect change and bring us into a new age of consciousness where we actually take into consideration the whole system around us.

There's a keyboard CLICK.

INT. JADE'S APARTMENT

Windchimes.

JADE

It's weird to listen back to how things used to be between Autumn and me. I just thought we were making harmless recommendations, but we had a whole episode about mushrooms and now I find out she's been using puffballs in her fairy dust. One person's plant medicine is another person's supernatural chloroform. I guess I was naive, and she took advantage of that. But I'm fixing things, starting now.

THEME MUSIC PLAYS

JADE (CONT'D)

Autumn, episode 8. Plant Medicine.

INT. JADE'S CAR

Jade drives and makes a call, her phone ringing.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Hey babe. Wasn't expecting to hear from you for a while.

JADE

Yeah, sorry for calling during the break.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

No! I'm glad, Jade. It's always nice to hear your voice, and you calling says to me that there aren't any hard feelings after our talk.

JADE

Yeah. Of course.

AUTUMN

So what's up? Anything come out of that little mystery project you were working on?

JADE

Oh, maybe. I'm not sure yet. But I think I left my amethyst in the studio. Can I swing by to pick it up?

Autumn gasps.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Ohmigod, of course. You cannot be without your amethyst. I'm so glad to hear you're using it, I was worried when I bought you those crystals. I'm home all afternoon.

JADE

Great, I'll see you later.

AUTUMN (ON PHONE)

Byeeeeeee.

The phone hangs up.

EXT. AUTUMN'S GARDEN

Usual nature and city sounds mixing.

Jade opens the gate, closes it.

She sighs, psyching herself up.

JADE
(sotto)
Here goes everything.

Gravel crunching as she walks across the yard.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO

AUTUMN
Hey, babe. How are you feeling?

JADE
Hi, Autumn.

AUTUMN
You know, I didn't see an amethyst
anywhere.

JADE
No? How odd.

AUTUMN
Did the soup help? It's tasty,
right?

JADE
No, it didn't help because I didn't
eat it.

AUTUMN
Oh. Ok. I won't take it personally--

JADE
I didn't eat it because when I put
salt in it, a puff of smoke came
out.

AUTUMN
Okay? Weird but it was probably
just steam. And I told you salt is
a preservative, you really should
avoid it. Listen, I had some ideas--

JADE
Stop it, Autumn.

AUTUMN
Stop what?

JADE
Just-- stop. Stop acting like
everything is normal.
(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

Stop interrupting me. Stop
pretending everything is fine
between us.

AUTUMN

But I thought we dealt with
everything--

JADE

No, we dealt with it on your terms.
Like we always do. And now, I want
you to let me talk and listen to me
for once in your life.

AUTUMN

Okay...

JADE

I know everything. You tried to
keep me in the dark and lie to me
and erase my memory, but I figured
it all out anyway.

AUTUMN

I thought we had moved past this--

JADE

Faeries.

There's a long pause.

AUTUMN

Faeries?

JADE

Or fae. Fair folk. Whatever you'd
rather call them. I know that you
are working with them.

AUTUMN

I am working with faeries?

JADE

Yes. You're grooming our listeners
for them, priming them to be
snatched and brought to the fae
world by that thing. That's why
Eliza and Tamera disappeared. They
took the fairy dust that's in
Cosmic Dust and were kidnapped.

AUTUMN

Jade, I'm getting really worried
about you now.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

You sound-- well, there's no kinder word for it. You sound crazy.

JADE

I know how it sounds, but we both know it's the truth.

AUTUMN

If I was helping faeries kidnap women, then how were Eliza and Tamera found this morning?

JADE

Because-- wait, what?

AUTUMN

Yeah. They both walked into their homes, a little dehydrated but otherwise safe, with no memory of what happened to them.

JADE

That's...

AUTUMN

You didn't know?

JADE

I need to fact check that.

AUTUMN

Go for it. I'm surprised your little alerts didn't tell you already.

Jade types on her phone.

JADE

Okay, they're back and safe, but that doesn't change anything. I heard you say to that man, that thing, Lochlan, that it was supposed to be temporary, so you just figured out some loophole.

AUTUMN

You heard what?

JADE

Yeah, that's right. I remember him. I remember him threatening both of us. I remember him calling me your little pet.

(MORE)

JADE (CONT'D)

And, oh yeah, I remember him being made out of STONE.

AUTUMN

How?

Rustling as Jade pulls something out of her shirt. Autumn laughs coldly.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Rowan berries. Smart, Jade. How'd you figure that out?

JADE

The dybbuk.

AUTUMN

The what? Isn't that a Jewish demon?

JADE

Yes, and apparently my sleep paralysis demon is one. Because nothing can just be normal anymore.

AUTUMN

Interesting.

JADE

Look, Autumn, I get it. You wanted success and influence and you made a deal with a faery to get it. Plenty of people have done worse to get a little power. But we can figure this out. Tell me what your deal is, and we can figure out a way to break it and free you from this trap and never have anything to do with another faery again.

Autumn just laughs.

AUTUMN

Jade, you're so smart. I really can't believe you figured so much out. You know, I was worried for a second when you started wearing your evil eye. That was a cute attempt at protection, but I never expected you to use rowan berries.

JADE

So you're admitting to it?

AUTUMN

Looks like I don't have a choice.
You're right that I never should
have underestimated you.

JADE

Good. Good, I'm glad Autumn. Let's
work on fixing--

AUTUMN

Oh, Jade. You're so close. But
there are a few key details that
you didn't uncover, despite your
very impressive efforts.

JADE

Like what?

There's a whooshing sound.

JADE (CONT'D)

Your ears...

AUTUMN

Nice, aren't they? I have to keep
them hidden since humans have such
tacky rounded ears.

JADE

You...

AUTUMN

There you go. Yes, Jade. I'm fae.
So you see, we are stuck having to
deal with faeries. Unfortunate. But
hopefully reassuring! You've known
me all these years and no harm ever
came to you. We're not inherently
scary.

JADE

I don't understand. I've met your
parents.

AUTUMN

You met my human, adoptive parents.
Not that they realize I'm adopted.
I'm a changeling, Jade. Do you know
what that is? Did you find that in
all of your impressive research?

JADE

You were swapped.

AUTUMN

So smart. Hiring you really was one of the smartest things I ever did, and that's saying something. My mother is a leanan sídhe, basically a beautiful muse to tortured artists, and she couldn't deal with a little fae-ling disrupting her perfect party lifestyle. So she found some suitable human parents, artsy and bohemian enough for her, and put me into the crib instead.

JADE

What happened to their real baby?

AUTUMN

No idea. Never wondered. But you are right that this deal got a little out of my control. But I'm working on it, so you can stop looking at me like I'm a monster, thank you very much. Eliza and Tamera returning home, that was me. I went to the Otherworld and got them.

JADE

Why? If you were priming them to be kidnapped, then why go rescue them?

AUTUMN

Because they were meant to be taken for a night at a time, not for weeks. I keep telling everyone and they all seem to forget, but I am running a business. My most loyal customers can't start disappearing. Besides, I never wanted to hurt anyone.

JADE

That doesn't change the fact that you did. Tamera has a newborn!

AUTUMN

No one was supposed to notice anything was wrong, just maybe a little extra tiredness that could be easily explained away. Everyone is tired all the time now anyways. Win win.

JADE

Not for the people you kidnapped.

AUTUMN

No, for me and for the Court. But the humans weren't meant to know anything anyway.

JADE

I was right all along. Cosmic Dust was making them sick, and you lied to me--

AUTUMN

I never ever lied to you, Jade. Twisted words, sure, but fae can't lie. Cosmic Dust didn't make them sick. It actually does have wellness benefits. I'm not cruel. But what it did do was make them forget when they returned home that they had spent the whole night working a Seelie Court revel. It's quite fun, from what I've heard. They do a little serving and then the music captures them and they dance the night away. You might like it. Loosen you up a bit.

JADE

If it's so fun, then why bother getting them back at all?

We can hear Autumn's eyeroll.

AUTUMN

Because I'm not a monster, Jade. I didn't want to steal them for good.

JADE

Just wanted to kidnap them for free labor that they wouldn't even remember.

AUTUMN

Essentially, yeah. That's how we've always done things and I'm sad to say that some fae are rather set in their ways. I grew up in the human world. I'm a little bit more flexible than some of the others, which means I can fit in better here.

(MORE)

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

They expect humans present for their revels, serving them, dancing for them. It's a source of entertainment as much as it is labor.

JADE

Why would you do that? If you grew up with us, why would you treat us like your playthings?

AUTUMN

Because that's what humans are to fae, Jade. Playthings. I couldn't change it if I wanted to.

JADE

And you don't want to.

AUTUMN

No. They already think I'm soft for sympathizing with your kind, never mind that's what makes me so good at my job. Besides--

Autumn's voice grows dangerous.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

We used to be worshipped. We used to be feared. Mothers used to hang iron scissors over cradles to protect their babies from us, from becoming changelings like me. Farmers used to leave fresh cream outside as an offering to appease us, to beg us to leave them and theirs alone. Humans understood the respect and awe we were owed. But now, everyone is too cynical and skeptical to give us our due. They think we're cute little woodland sprites, helpful little pixies who will help you fly if you just believe hard enough. So we're taking back what we deserve, using your silly human fears of mortality and aging and the world you've trapped yourselves in. You all need to believe in something. I'm providing that.

JADE

You said. You said that if people bought Cosmic Dust you would show them a world they couldn't imagine. You said that it was a *deal*.

AUTUMN

I did.

JADE

So everyone who bought Cosmic Dust made an unbreakable deal with you. The fairy dust just made them forget, but buying it was all it took for them to become marks.

AUTUMN

You make it sound so evil, Jade. But they're just serving wine and partying.

JADE

And being kept.

AUTUMN

Yes, well that was an unfortunate misunderstanding that I dealt with.

JADE

What about Fran?

AUTUMN

What about Fran?

JADE

He's missing now, and don't you dare tell me that's a coincidence. I know he would have never bought Cosmic Dust, so how could he have been taken?

AUTUMN

There are lots of other ways to make deals, babe.

JADE

But he hated you. He wouldn't have entertained a deal with you--

AUTUMN

Everyone would entertain a deal if they were desperate enough.

JADE

But--

AUTUMN

And he was always rather easy to manipulate. Never took much to convince him to do what I wanted, even while he thought he was so better than me.

JADE

What do you mean? What did you want?

AUTUMN

I wanted you to be less distracted. You're mine, Jadey, and the sooner you accept that the better.

Jade processes.

JADE

You don't have any control over me, Autumn. I figured out all your tricks, and I don't belong to you. And I'll expose you if you don't fix everything.

AUTUMN

You expose me? As a faery? Please do.

JADE

No, as a grifter. It's not a hard case to make, actually. A random pretty girl from the desert suddenly bursts on the wellness scene, rose unnaturally quickly through the ranks, is selling a wellness powder with dangerous side effects and refuses to take it off the market. I've got it all ready to go. I will make you the next wellness influencer scandal, the next dethroned golden girl the internet can pick apart.

AUTUMN

You wouldn't.

JADE

Try me.

AUTUMN

No, Jade, you physically can't. They're impressive threats, but remember that deal we made? We promised to always look out for each other, to protect each other? You made a deal with a fae, Jade. It's binding.

JADE

I am looking out for you and the business we built together. That's what I've always done. And that's the loophole, right? As long as I believe that what I'm doing is to help you in the long run, protecting you from yourself, then I'm all set.

Autumn stammers.

AUTUMN

You-- that's not--

JADE

You were only controlling me because you kept me in the dark. Now that it's an even playing field, I'm giving you everything back, Autumn.

They're interrupted by the strange creaking sound from episode 6. Autumn gasps.

AUTUMN

Oh no. Don't say anything.

Then the door BURSTS OPEN violently. Lochlan stomps into the room.

LOCHLAN

What did you do, Autumn?

AUTUMN

It's not a good time, Lochlan.

LOCHLAN

Oh, you'll make it a good time. The Seelie don't like to be toyed with, and when they grow fond of someone they don't let them slip out of their grip.

AUTUMN

There will be more human women they can entertain themselves with. And I'm hoping to get some men soon too. Add a little variety.

LOCHLAN

Oh, but they liked these ones. You were getting quite popular, providing such delicious favorites.

AUTUMN

The deal was for a temporary workforce. I just decided that those particular humans' period of work was over.

LOCHLAN

You don't get to decide that. You only provide. Where are they?

AUTUMN

Back home with their families. You can't take them back to the Otherworld.

LOCHLAN

And why, exactly, can't I do that?

AUTUMN

Um, well...

Autumn trails off. Jade speaks up, clearly frightened but finally standing up for herself.

JADE

It will draw too much attention.

LOCHLAN

Is that so, Jade?

JADE

Women don't disappear, reappear, and disappear again. That's how you operate, right? In the shadows, so no one suspects? Kidnapping someone who just returned home is a great big spotlight.

LOCHLAN

What is this, Autumn? Does your pet know what you are?

AUTUMN

She figured some things out. I'll take care of it, and I told her to be quiet.

LOCHLAN

You better. You've created quite a mess, my dear. You're lucky my orders aren't to drag you and your human to the court myself.

AUTUMN

What are your orders?

LOCHLAN

To get you in line. I've actually enjoyed working with you, Autumn. You're a breath of fresh air compared to the Folk I'm typically around. So consider this a friendly warning. Do not cross the court again. I will not hesitate to bring you to your knees if they demand it. And that human will be right there with you.

AUTUMN

I want to renegotiate the deal.

LOCHLAN

See, that's the fresh air I was talking about.

Autumn makes a choking sound as Lochlan grabs her neck. Jade gasps.

JADE

Let go of her.

LOCHLAN

Most would never even consider offending the gentry so.

JADE

Stop, stop please.

LOCHLAN

You look at our world differently. You look at it like a *human*.

He releases her and she gasps for air.

LOCHLAN (CONT'D)
I will be watching you. You both.
Goodbye, Autumn. Goodbye, Jade.

The creaking sound fades away as he leaves.

There's a taut moment where both women pant, gathering their wits again.

JADE
Are you-- are you alright?

Autumn's voice is hoarse.

AUTUMN
Like you even care.

JADE
I've always cared. That's been my problem.

There's a pause.

JADE (CONT'D)
You really did bring Eliza and Tamera back.

AUTUMN
I told you, Jade. I can't lie. And here's a nasty truth for you-- we're in deep shit now.

JADE
That fae-- he's a Spriggan, right?

Autumn laughs coldly.

AUTUMN
You did do your research. Yes, he's a Spriggan, and a particularly dangerous one. He'll be back and when he comes-- We're both in danger. You're in danger, because of me.

JADE
I can move back home, I--

AUTUMN
Not good enough. He knows your name, Jade. He can find you anywhere you go in the human realm.

JADE

Okay, but what if--

A whooshing sound cuts Jade off.

EXT. OTHERWORLD - CONTINUOUS

Jade gasps.

JADE

What just happened?

AUTUMN

I'm bound by our deal too, Jade. I have to protect you. So I'm going to keep you safe.

JADE

Autumn, where are we? Where did you bring me?

AUTUMN

Welcome to the Otherworld.

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. David Rogers as Lochlan.
If you want to learn more about the show, visit autumnpodcast.com and find us on social media @AutumnPodcast.

POST-CREDITS

Hi, this is Madelyn, the creator of Autumn. Thank you so much for listening to our first season. We hope you enjoyed listening to it as much as we enjoyed making it. And if you did like it and you want to continue supporting it, there are a few different ways you can. Recommend us to your friends who you think might also like it.

(MORE)

POST-CREDITS (CONT'D)

Word of mouth is something that is so important for a small, independent show like ours. You can also head to our website, autumnpodcast.com, for links to our merch store and our Ko-Fi tip jar. And lastly, connect with us. We have really enjoyed hearing from you throughout the season and your reactions and theories, and we definitely want to hear what you think of the cliffhanger we've left you on now. Thanks again for listening.

END OF SEASON 1