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Be Brave

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They stood quietly at the entrance of the corridor that opened beyond what their eyes could see. Drinking everything in with her eyes, she had never seen anything like this except in her dreams. This place was whispering to her, even now. The air around her felt alive and excited to see her. Since she was six years old, she remembers dreaming of this place, of this very entrance, over and over again. The smell of cold dirt, clay and something else hung in the air, clinging to every molecule. She knew this place. It had been calling to her, her whole life.

“Tiya,” Jonathan whispered. “Tiya, this is amazing.”

Tiya Monfrey was just an administration assistant back home, she could have been more, but she was always skittish and distracted. As an only child, her parents died a few years ago while on vacation. It was just her, and her best friend Jonathan Asuyt, she had known him since they were teenagers. The stone walls were within touching distance, and she could smell and see this place before her eyes but at the same time, it all felt so unreal. “Be brave,” she whispered to herself as she propelled herself forward. The walls, floors and ceiling were older than she could tell. It felt older than time, it felt older than Ancient Egyptian. Yet so familiar, how could she have dreamt about this place all her life? How? What did it mean?

“So where are we headed?” Jonathan asked, breaking the silence. His words echoed off the walls. He noticed a thick layer of dust everywhere. This place was untouched by humans for a very long time. They were probably going to get arrested if they got caught. How could they not get caught?

“This way,” she half turned to him and nodded in the right direction. He followed.

She came out of the corridor and into a great hall that was breathtaking. Wide and tall, the room was enormous. She had never seen anything like it. As if in a trance she kept moving forward and crossed through the large hall. On the other side of the hall, she came to a doorway that was open. Large arch made of stones was completely impressive and breathtaking. Pausing at the doorway she reached out and ran the tips of her fingers over the smooth surface, cool and stone.

Stepping through the doorway she went out to an enormous courtyard. Large white stone pillars lined the edge of the walkway. Walking over to edge she found stairs leading down into the courtyard. There were sections, mazes of lowered walls. Stepping down the stairs she felt the pull calling her. She had been here before, but only in her dreams, she hadn’t stepped on these stone walkways never in real life. How did she know where she was going? None of this made any sense but she couldn’t stop now. Something inside her was pushing her forward, urging her to continue and move on.

Jonathan was following closely behind her. He kept talking and asking her things, but she didn’t have the answers. She just had more questions of her own. Like what the hell was this place and how did she know how to get in it? How did she know how to get down to this lower level? In truth Tiya never hiked or went on walking tours. She kept more to herself and wasn’t very sociable. Yet here she was in a forbidden ancient underground labyrinth. She knew how to get into this place without dealing with the local guards, she seemed to know where she was going, even though she had never set foot in this place, not in real life. Just in dreams, she reminded herself. Maybe she was still dreaming or in a dream? Could that be possible? If she was dreaming this, whatever happens wouldn’t matter so much.

Jonathan was standing right behind her. His hand rested on her arm. Turning around to look at him. He stared down at her in awe.

“This is crazy Ti, like crazy. How, how are you knowing where to go?”

“I dreamt about this place since I was kid.” Many times, over the years she almost told him about the dreams, but something made her keep it to herself. As if afraid of telling someone that maybe the dreams would stop. That they would disappear.

“How?” he looked around, then his eyes came back to her. “How?”

“I don’t know.”

“Ti I’m a little scared.”

“Me too.” She admitted. She felt goosebumps on her arms.

“Maybe we should go back to the hotel. I didn’t know this is what you had in mind when you asked to go site seeing.”

She gave a short laugh, “I didn’t know either. A part of me didn’t think the entrance to here existed. I didn’t know we would get this far. I thought it was just a dream.”

His hand held her arm a little tighter. “I don’t think we are supposed to be in here.”

She looked up at him then around the open courtyard. “I don’t think so either, but I know this place.” She reached out and grabbed his hand, lacing her fingers through his.

Leaning down next to her ear, “I don’t know if this place likes us walking around in it.”

She turned and they were nose to nose. Tiya kissed him. He looked surprised. It confirmed that it wasn’t a dream. She never would have the nerve to do that. Somehow, she just felt braver in this moment. Then he kissed her back. “Ti lets go back to the hotel please.” He gave her hand a little squeeze then tugged at her.

She shook her head no, “I can’t Jon. You can turn around and go back if you like but I need to keep going. I can’t explain it, but something is calling to me.”

“Well,” he heaved a huge sigh, “Fine, if you are going to have a run in with an angry ancient god, I’m going to be there with you. No one is pushing my girl around.”

She gave his hand a little squeeze. Then she turned and tugged him along with her. Using the flashlight, she knew she could keep going in the dark and find what she was looking for. They entered a long and winding hallway. That led down to the bottom chamber and through a couple of hallways that were equally as large as the first one they had found themselves in when they had entered this place. They had walked past a succession of coffins that lined a wall that had alligator heads. On the other side of the hall, the wall was decorated in hieroglyphs, telling tales of stories she recognized from another life. She felt strongly that she had walked these hallways more than once. They were once considered home to her. None of it made any sense. At the end of the great hall, she found another room. The walls were covered from top to bottom in hieroglyphs, in the center there was platform that had stairs leading up to it. She let go of Jon’s hand and stood there in awe. She had been here before in another life. It was like coming home from a long trip. Tears welled up in her eyes. She never thought she would ever see this place, ever in this life. She slowly walked towards the stairs and felt Jonathan following her closely. It was like walking through the rain and time. Stepping up onto the platform, it was like the old her taking over. The one that lived here a long time ago. The large metal ring that towered in front of her enticed and invited her to touch it. She walked over to it, and as she reached out, putting her hand through the ring. It hummed and came to life. A light blue light wall filled the ring.

“TI!” Jonathan grabbed her shoulder.

The walls lit up and the room came to life. There was energy in the air that clung to every molecule. The place came to life! Welcoming her home.

She stood in front of the ring. Jonathan had pulled her back and was holding her, with an arm around her chest as he held her close to his body.

“Tiya what are we doing here?” he whispered in her ear.

“It’s calling me home, Jon.”

“This isn’t natural Ti, this isn’t natural.”

She could hear the fear in his voice.

Tilting her head up she looked at him, “Do you trust me?”

“With my life.”

“Trust me,” she shrugged out of his embrace, and grabbed his hand. “Trust me Jon, please.”

“What do you want to do?”

She reached up and laced her fingers around his neck. This man had been her best friend since they were teenagers, and she had loved him since then. She pulled his head down and kissed him. Looking him in the eyes, she whispered, “Please trust me.”

He nodded and cleared his throat. He looked like he wanted to say something but couldn’t form the words. She held his hand tight and pulled him with her. They stepped through the ring. Expecting to come out on the other side of the ring in the same room they were in, but nope. They stood on a platform that had a layer of pink sand under their feet. Tall pillars of trees surrounded them. Two statues, half dogs and half humans, were guarding the ring on this side. They reminded him of the Anubis. They turned towards them and thumped the long staff in their

hands against the platform. Then they began talking to them in another language. To Jonathan they looked threatening like they were going to attack them.

Tiya nodded and said, “I heard you calling me.”

They said something else, she shook her head no. They told her it wasn’t them who had called her home. Tiya didn’t know how she knew what they were saying but she did.

A woman in a long golden and white gauzing gown appeared before them. “It was I who called you home. It took you long enough to get here. You have always been my stubborn daughter. Who is this?”

Tiya turned to Jonathan and introduced him to the woman. The woman smiled. “Welcome home brave ones.” She then came over and gave them both hugs.