

YOU'LL NEVER BE READY FOR WAR

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PROLOGUE

PROPHECY OF THE TEY'MA

There once was a magical little Tey'ma girl who loved to explore. She would spend all day outside, frolicking in meadows full of our favorite flowers—vincas. The short blades of grass would tickle her feet as she danced to the sounds of birds chirping. She'd play in the fields all day until dusk with her old friend, the sun, who shone so brightly it warmed her deep within. And when the sun would set, she would chase her other old friend, the moon, playing tag with her other friends, the stars and meteors. They adored her, not just because she was joyful, but because she remembered them. Most children forget. But not her.

One day, sadness came, and with it, wandering.

Her village—once a beacon of light and peace—had fallen under threat. It had been invaded by Wan outsiders. A people from a far, cold land, driven by order without empathy. They built a society out of walls—around their cities, their minds, and their hearts. They revered obedience, feared mystery, and called feeling a flaw.

The Tey'ma, on the other hand, were a people of flow. Of songs and sacred healing rituals. Of leadership made up of wise elders chosen through intuition. A society where the young and the old were both teachers, where strength came not from force, but from depth. Where the unseen was as important as the visible.

The little girl's father was taken—sent away to fight in a war the Tey'ma didn't start. The village elders spoke in riddles, fearing what was to come. So, she ran—farther than she ever had before.

And there, the sky met her in grief.

The sun, moon, meteors, and stars met, not just as friends, but as ancestors. They sat with her while she cried, deciding it was time they told her the truth: She was born to receive their gifts. And in this moment, she needed to awaken them.

The moon said, "Take my intuition. It will help you know without reason. Knowledge will be yours without you even having to ask. Pierce through the lies the Wan have spun to keep your people afraid, young one."

The sun said, “Take my life force. It will give you strength—not just to destroy, but to illuminate. Become the light during this dark time, and lead others through the shadows with courage. They will need you now more than ever.”

The stars said, “Take our imagination. Let it be a gateway to dreams that will enlighten you to the truth of things. Heed their wisdom and warnings.”

The meteors said, “Take our ancient insight. The knowledge gathered from our time traveling between galaxies will help you hear what others cannot—the whispers between worlds, the universe’s divinely guided messages carried in silence. When all seems lost, listen closely . . . The answers will find you.”

And so, she did. She began to feel what they felt and it overwhelmed her. Joy. Power. Purpose. But most of all, love. For her people. For life. For the earth.

She asked if she could share these gifts. The sun laughed—softly, sweetly. “That is their purpose, and yours.”

The stars chimed in, “Anyone could have these gifts, but only those who choose love over fear, service over dominance, and protection over possession can fulfill their highest potential. The Wan have forgotten, but they, too, were once children of the sky. Perhaps, one day, they will remember.” They showed her the truth of her path—not just home, but forward. They showed her a future of death, rebirth, and healing. Of division and reunion. They revealed she would be the one to end the war. Not through force. But through helping the Wan remember the old ways.

She thanked her friends for their gifts and hurried back home, a place just beyond the mountains where tons of Tey’ma people lived together in peace. She sang all the way there, forever changed for the better. She was the bridge between two worlds. And one day, she would heal them both.