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There is a story that all who live upon the back of our world know. None of our kind were there to serve as witness, yet we know as surely as we know that eyes see and lungs breathe. It is as much of a Truth. Over the years, our ancestors perfected this story, this knowledge, and translated it from the realm of untamed thought into words. I have studied long and hard to hear our Truth, and I shall recite it to you.

Long, long ago, five sisters lived in the heart of our sun. It was not a scarlet hue, as it is now, but a radiant gold, and its light was warm rather than angry. It was young and bright and new, and it made the perfect home for young women full of life.

The sisters were called the Wayfarers, which, back then, had no meaning. It was just a name, their name, and we were the ones who made it a word.

The eldest of the sisters was called Neptune. She carried herself with an air of grace and rarely spoke, preferring instead to stare out into the void of space. Indeed, she was the one who had enchanted the Sun to hold its light in at certain points, to darken its fiery glory into windows so that she could see the Stars.

Her twin, Uranus, was also calm in movement, but she lacked the grace of Neptune. Constantly ill, Uranus could hardly go a day without overheating from the Sun's warmth.

The next eldest, Jupiter, was boisterous and filled each room she entered. She was loud and in the possession of a fiery temper, but she spent most of her time trying to fill the silence that fell over the Sun. It was an extremely large home, for a family of five, and sometimes the girls would go centuries wandering around in its depths before they saw another face.

Saturn, though in truth younger than Jupiter, held a certain maturity about her such that her sisters—who had known her for millennia—often forgot that she was so young. Saturn was beautiful, though she had hardly any reference to which she could compare herself, nor anyone who knew enough to tell her so. The world seemed to orbit around her as she drew in all those who were around her.

The youngest of the sisters was named Pluto, forever trailing after the others, begging them to let her take part in their conversations or games. While Saturn or Jupiter occasionally indulged her, Uranus and Neptune sat apart, aloof, and refused to condescend to play with their younger sister.

For thousands upon thousands upon thousands of years, the sisters five lived in the Sun, until one day they joined Neptune at one of her dark windows. It was a solemn moment, and something strange hung in the air—something *new*. All the sisters had the good sense to remain quiet. That is, for a few moments, after which Jupiter fell prey to her insatiable urge to fill up the emptiness.

“What is it that disturbs you, Neptune?” asked Jupiter, leaning against the dark window.

Neptune gave no response.

“You always spend so very long looking at the Stars,” Jupiter continued. “Why? You know that you shall never reach them.”

The silence persisted.

“Come, sister, we are family. We should speak of our worries, or else they shall consume us in the empty halls of the Sun.”

Finally, Neptune spoke, unable to tear her gaze away from the window. “Do you ever think about the Stars?” she asked.

The other sisters frowned, unable to understand.

“I think about them!” Pluto piped up. “Their lights are so bright and strong, that I think they must be other Suns, like our own.”

Uranus laughed scornfully, then stumbled against the wall as her face blanched from the toll on her body. “That is a truly preposterous notion.” She nodded with the assurance that the words gave her.

Pluto crossed her arms. “Well, it is what *I* think.”

“I believe they are lanterns,” Saturn said, tossing her multicolored hair.

“Do they not seem like they are calling us?” Neptune whispered. “Beckoning? Asking us if, perhaps, there is other life out there in the cold nothingness?” The other sisters were impressed, if not by her poetic wording. This was the most that Neptune had spoken in perhaps a millennium.

“Well, I know what will improve your mood,” said Jupiter. “We ought to play—”

“I have an idea!” announced Pluto, smiling proudly.

Uranus sighed. “Please, Pluto. I know you have the best of intentions, but—”

“Just listen,” said Pluto. “I say we ought to visit them.”

“Visit them?” Saturn asked in confusion. “Would that not mean that we must leave the Sun? That could never be! How would we find our way through the void?”

“Does your limitless well of ideas hold a response to *that*?” scoffed Uranus.

“It does,” began Pluto. “If we can—”

“Actually,” interrupted Jupiter, “I think that shall not be a problem.” She ignored Pluto’s sulking and continued. “If we only heed our destination...”

“*That* is why they are lanterns!” proclaimed Uranus. “They are there so that we can find our way to the others out there.”

“This sounds an excellent idea!” Saturn agreed. “Let us prepare for our journey and then travel out to the lanterns that we call Stars.”

Pluto beamed.

Jupiter shook her head. “No, Pluto, you cannot come.”

“Indeed,” said Uranus. “You are too small, and will only slow us down on our journey.”

“But—”

“Pluto, someone must make sure that Sun continues in our absence,” said Saturn. “You must stay.”

“No,” said Pluto petulantly, crossing her arms. “I do not think I will. I want to be there, and I am a Wayfarer sister just as much as any of you.”

Uranus shook her head, but Neptune was already speaking. “She may come.” It was, thus, decided. True, Neptune rarely spoke, but when she did, her word was law.

A year later, the five sisters set off upon their quest. None of the elder sisters carried anything on their persons—what use of ordinary objects had sisters of the Sun? Yet, Pluto wrapped her hand around a tendril of the Sun’s golden fire and drew it forth, winding the light around her wrist like a shimmering bracelet.

“Why are you doing this, sister?” asked Jupiter.

“I am borrowing a piece of the Sun,” said Pluto, “to keep me warm.”

Saturn laughed. “It is alright to miss home, Pluto. You are young. There is no need to hide it, though I still think it is folly for you to come so far from the Sun.”

Pluto narrowed her eyes at Saturn, but the group set off into the void, towards the tiny pinpricks of light. They walked on a bridge of darkness, a bridge which connects everything in the universe if a traveler knows how to see it.

Jupiter was the first to weaken. Unable to bear being so far from the Sun’s light, she began to shiver violently with each step the group took. “Come, Jupiter,” said Uranus. “We have not millennia to while away. The stars change sometimes, and perhaps by the time we reach them they shall have been gone for years.”

Jupiter nodded, but as she continued, her movements became sluggish until she could move no more.

“What shall we do?” asked Saturn.

“We must abandon our quest,” said Uranus, “and return Jupiter to the Sun where she may grow warm again.”

“Yes,” said Pluto. “I think we ought to turn back.”

“No,” said Neptune. Wordlessly, she waved a single hand. Suddenly, the darkness morphed into light, and then refracted into a hundred rainbows. They streamed towards Jupiter, enveloping her in thick clouds of multicolored gas, which then settled into a sphere. It was yellow and orange and crimson, colors which the sisters seemed to think represented Jupiter perfectly. Her atmosphere roiled with a storm, churning clouds of gas at high speeds. She was beautiful. “A cloak,” Neptune added simply.

“A cloak?” wondered Saturn.

Pluto nodded. “It will keep her warm, do you see? Until we return.”

“And return we shall,” agreed Uranus. “With the most entertaining stories. I do believe Jupiter shall die of jealousy.”

The sisters continued on into the darkness, but before long Uranus became chilled. She coughed and coughed, as if striving desperately to expel something from her body. “I have become so very tired,” she admitted. “Perhaps...perhaps we could rest a bit. Only a moment, really.”

Pluto observed her sister’s pale face and trembling limbs, but shook her head. “We mustn’t stop. If we stop, sisters, we shan’t go further than this.”

“What—what d-d-do you kn-ow?” said Uranus, barely choking out the words yet managing the scornful tone rather well.

“Quite a lot, I think,” said Pluto, urging her sister forwards across the bridge. She rubbed her bracelet of Sunfire for warmth.

Uranus did not speak again. She slowed and slowed, until her pace was nothing at all. A dull, peaceful smile spread across her face. Once more, Neptune created a cloak. This was calm, pale turquoise, almost eerie in its light. Uranus’s cloak was smaller than that of Jupiter.

When Pluto voiced this sentiment, Neptune pointed back towards the Sun. “From there.”

The girls continued on their path. They shivered, but while Pluto drew the Sunfire bracelet closer towards her chest, Neptune had no such comfort.

“Are you cold, sister?” asked Pluto. “I could lend you some warmth from my bracelet. Then, perhaps we shall reach the Stars together.”

Neptune shook her head.

“It is so very cold out here,” said Pluto. “And so very lonely as well. I do not think that we ought to have come.”

Neptune pointed at the stars. “Lonely,” she whispered.

“Yes, I suppose they might be,” said Pluto, who felt the need deep within her to fill the silence and make it a little less frightening. “Yes, yes, I suppose. It surely must be lonely to be a Star, so far away from others. And perhaps they have sisters living in them too, and perhaps those sisters are in desperate need of company. When we get there, we shall see. Oh, I do hope there are other sisters out there in the darkness, living within Suns of their very own. Our Sun is so lonely sometimes, and so large. I suppose that it might be nice if we could all live in the same Sun, and fill it up with life. Yes, I think I should like that very much. The loneliness is so unbearable, sometimes. Do you believe we shall reach them, Neptune?”

Neptune did not respond, not with word or gesture. It was then that Pluto realized she had left Neptune a way’s back. There, she saw a royal blue light flowing into a sphere around Neptune, leaving a dark spot on its side—a window, so that Neptune could see the Stars.

Smiling softly, Pluto continued on her journey. The Sunfire guided her, farther and farther away from the light of its source. It was not enough. Pluto shivered, overcome by the cold and the dark. Her feet stumbled on the dark path. The Stars seemed to whirl around in circles, faster and faster until Pluto could not distinguish them.

Yet in their depths, she saw sisters and brothers and siblings. She saw parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles and cousins. She saw families living in Suns of their very own.

Look! she thought. There, there that one is adventurous. She travels far from her Sun's light, and makes herself a cloak as she lays herself down to sleep. Oh! And over there, oh, they are so small, yet so brave. Their cloak is of rock, because they have not enough strength for the clouds of light.

Pluto ceased her movement along the dark matter path and concentrated. Like the explorer of her vision, Pluto was a child, not fully grown, and thus could not draw herself a cloak of gas. Clumps of hard rock circled her and formed an armor. Before she was fully entombed, Pluto slipped her Sunfire bracelet off of her tiny wrist and fashioned it into a shield. She placed it around herself as protection, as a beacon. It was weaker than the Sun or the Stars, yet it drew in moons all the same. And it gave us light for our crops and warmth for our bodies.

Yet Pluto left us with more than a world. She left us with a purpose. Pluto was the sister to make it farthest from the Sun, with her circle of fire.

We lack the ability to reach the stars—whether they be lanterns or the other Sun-homes that our precursor claimed them to be—for now. But one day, when we have gathered the succulent fruit of this land many times over, when we have gathered the shining rock of this land many times over, and when we have gathered the hidden secrets of this land many times over, then we shall have the ability to travel upon Pluto's path and continue the story.

That is who we are and what we shall become. We are Wayfarers, and it is our duty to carry the Sunfire into the Stars.