

Tree of the Keeper.

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'It was a tree. Just a tree. No leaves, just branches. i fall...' A story of a girl plagued by dreams that are her destiny.

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0 - Prolouge

Ari.

It was a tree. No leaves, just branches. But it was special. Like I have been here before. Why am I here? The base has strange markings. 'She who climbs to the top becomes the Keeper.' Keeper of what? I start climbing. There are more markings. I can't figure these ones out. I put a foot wrong. I fall...

1 - Chap 1

Ari.

"AAAAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!!!" I wake up screaming.

"Ari, Honey, what's wrong?" Mum asked running into the room.

"Its OK. I just had another bad dream. I shook my head to clear it, but those symbols stuck in my head. Why couldn't I read them? More importantly, why could I read them? I better back up though. I am Ari Wood. Ever since I turned 15 two months ago, I get these weird dreams. Always the same.

"Well, its time to get up anyway." Mum said interrupting my thoughts.

"Yep" I said. I got up and read my book for a little while.

"Ari! It is twenty past seven! Get dressed or you'll be late." Mum said. I got up and grabbed my uniform. I got dressed, stuck my long, brown hair in a ponytail and put my shoes on. I looked at my clock.

"Ten to eight!" I said to my clock. "Grrrr." I sailed through to the kitchen, grabbed some toast and packed my lunch.

"I'm ready Mum." I yelled to her.

"Lets go." Mum and I went to the car. When I got to school, I saw my best friend Aliesha, waiting for me.

"Hey Liesh!" I called to her.

"Hey Ari." She called back. I got out of the car.

"Bye Mum." I said.

"Bye." she said back.

"What have you got today?" I asked Liesh.

"Um, English, math, sose, and art." She said.

"Oh, cool." I said back. "I've got to go. Talk to you later."

"Bye." Liesh said. After school I talked to Liesh for ages, because I dreaded going to sleep.

"Ari! Off the phone. You have school tomorrow." Mum said.

"Liesh? I gotta go. Bye." I hung up and went to bed. I read for a while, but I knew I would have to go to sleep eventually.

There was the tree. With no leaves, just branches. There were the markings. There was...Liesh? She nodded.

"Climb Keeper." She said.

"Keeper of what?" I asked.

"Climb Keeper." She repeated. I started climbing.

"Keeper of what!?" I called down frantically. But she was gone. "Liesh?" I asked. I looked down. I overbalanced. I fell.

"When I went in this morning, she didn't seem right, like the time we found her underneath a tree that she had fallen out of when she was little. She was unconscious." I vaguely heard Mum telling the doctor.

"This is very-ah! She is awake!" the doctor exclaimed.

"Hey, Honey. What happened last night?" Mum asked.

"I had a dream. But it was so real." I said confusedly. "I think it's about time you told me about these dreams." Mum said gently. I sat up a little in bed.

"Well, I start standing in front of this tree, with markings around the base. I start climbing. I get partway up. I fall." I said, trying to remember.

“A tree? When you were little we went camping and you said that you found a tree with strange markings on. Then one night we couldn’t find you. You’d gone to the tree. When we got there you were on the ground. You’d fallen. When you woke up you said something about being the ‘Keeper’.” Mum said slowly.

“Really?” I said “well in the last dream Liesh was there. She called me ‘Keeper’. I wonder what it means”

2 - Chap 2

"That's it. Were going to that tree!" Mum declared.

"Why?" I asked.

"To put a stop to all this... nonsense!" She left the room. The phone rang. Mum poked her head back in.

"Its Aliesha." She said "Do you wanna talk?"

"When don't I?" I joked.

"Oh my God! What happened!?" Liesh screamed in my ear.

"I don't know. But I had the weirdest dream. You were in it." I said.

"And a tree?" she asked.

"How did you know?" I said, astonished.

"Cos I had a dream just like it. You were up in the tree and I was just standing there, saying 'climb Keeper'. It was weird." She said.

"I gotta go. Bye." I said "Mum, Liesh needs to come to the tree with us. She had the same freaky dream I did."

"All right." Mum said as she thought it over.

On the road towards the campsite I started to worry about what I would find. Dad led us to the Tree. It was just a tree. No leaves, just branches. There were the markings. Just like my dream. Liesh went into a trance.

"Climb Keeper." She whispered. I climbed.

"No!" Mum yelled. Then Mum and Dad melted into the background. I climbed higher. I got halfway. There was a message: 'Many have tried. Many will fail. Only the Chosen will reach the top.' I looked up. I kept climbing. I reached the top. A glow came from the tip of the tree. I didn't know it at the time, but I changed. So did Liesh. But I was so absorbed with the glow that I fell. The trees branches reached out and caught me. Before I realized it, I was on the ground.

"Oh my God!" Mum yelled, flinging her arms around me. Liesh woke from her trance.

"Can we go?" I asked.

"What happened to you two?!" Mum exclaimed.

"What do you mean?" I asked. Mum pointed. I looked down. This morning I was wearing a shorts and my favorites shirt. Now I was wearing a green and white cat suit thing. Liesh was wearing a black and purple cat suit. Liesh blinked twice to clear her head, and her clothes became a purple top and black flares.

"Um, what the?" Liesh asked, her eyes wide. I tried blinking my eyes, to see if it would work for me. My cat suit changed to a pair of jeans, and a red top. I blinked again. Back to the cat suit. I sighed and went back to the jeans.

"I guess we will have to change at home." I said.

"And we are NEVER coming back here again!" Mum said hustling us to the car. I glanced at the tree. It sprouted a leaf, but it died almost instantly and fell to the ground. This tree was my past, my present and part of my future. I knew I would be back.

3 - Chap 3

When I got home I went to my cupboard to change but all of my clothes had turned red, blue white, or green, with a large yellow sun on them. I had to talk to Liesh.

“Ari? My clothes are now all back and purple. And they have a yellow sun with a G in the middle of it!”

Liesh said hurriedly

“Really? Mine are all red, white, green or blue.” I said.

“This is weird. Do you think we should tell someone?” Liesh asked.

“No! We need to keep this to ourselves.” I said “all I know is we have to go back to that tree. Tonight!”

I was at the top of the tree. It was glowing. I looked at it. There was a message: ‘

She is the Keeper of the Infinite Light. She has control over all of the elements. The wind, the water, the fire and the earth. She is all-powerful. She is Ari Wood.’

It went away. A new message appeared:

‘She is the Keepers Guardian. She must mentor the Keeper. She will go with the Keeper wherever she may go. She is Aliesha Williams.’

I was astonished. I got the tree to take me gently down. How, I don’t know. When I was on the ground I ran over to Liesh.

“How did you do that?” she yelled to me

“I know why you are involved in this!” I yelled back.

“Great. Why?”

“You are the ‘Keepers Guardian’. You must mentor me, the Keeper and go where I go.” I said.

“Why me?” she asked.

“Dunno. I’m just doing what the tree said. Oh, and get this. I am the Keeper of the Ultimate Light, and I control the elements! I guess that’s why my clothes are those colors.”

“So, that’s how you did the tree thing?”

“I guess.” I shrugged. “What time is it?”

“Its five-thirty. We’d better get going?” Liesh ran to the bikes.

“Hang on. I wanna try something. Hold on to me. I better grab the bikes.” I held onto the bikes and Liesh grabbed hold of my arm. I concentrated and we rose off the ground and flew towards home.

“This is so cool!” Liesh had to yell over the roar of the wind. We were home in no time.

“Remember, you can’t tell anyone.” I reminded Liesh.

“Um, who would believe me?” she asked. I smiled.

“See ya Keeper.” She said.

4 - Chap 4

I am sailing over the earth on the winds with Liesh clutching my arm. I don't know where we are going, but I will know when we get there. We have just come from the Tree. It told me that it is with me always. It told me I must complete a series of challenges. It told me that I must leave my family, and Liesh hers. It told me that it is my destiny

I woke, with tears streaming down my face. I knew what I had to do. I looked at my clock. Twelve-thirty. I crept out of bed and packed all of my clothes in a bag along with my teddy bear, and some food. I wrote a letter to my parents.

'Dear Mum and Dad. I'm sorry. I had to leave. Someday I might come back. It is not your fault. Since I am not here for you to laugh at me, I will tell you why. But you cannot tell anyone else. The Tree told me that I am the Keeper of the Infinite Light. I control all elements. Liesh is the Guardian of the Keeper. She will be going with me. Tell her parents. I have changed the number on my mobile so no one can get in touch with me. It is for your own good.

I'm sorry.

Ari.'

I snuck out of the house, and flew to Liesh's. I knew she kept her window open, so I went straight in. "Liesh. Liesh. Wake up Liesh!" I whispered urgently, because I saw she was crying in her sleep. She opened her eyes.

"So its true?" she whispered. I nodded. She dried her tears and started packing her bag. I sat on her bed.

"I wrote a letter to my parents explaining. I told them to tell your parents." I said.

"Ok. I will just write a note saying

'Mum, Dad. I had to go. I'm sorry. Ask Ari's parents for more info.'" Liesh said as she scribbled on a piece of paper. She went and put it on the kitchen bench. "Lets go." She said quietly. She grabbed my arm and I flew us out over the houses. About twenty minutes later I was struck by a vision. We careened out of control for a minute until I was better.

"What was that?" Liesh asked.

"I got a vision." I said

"What was it?" she asked.

"The first quest is in a little shack by the swamp." I said.

"Shack by the swamp, shack by the swamp? You don't mean that tourist attraction, Swamp Side, where there are tours of the shacks that the people used to live in...?" Liesh asked, realizing that's exactly where I meant.

"Where is it?" I asked excitedly.

"Um, near The Island." She said.

"Great!" I exclaimed. I took off. We arrived at Swamp Side as dawn broke.

"We just have to wait until it opens." I said. "Um, I just thought of something. Do we have to pay to get in?"

"Nup." she said, "you can control the wind or the air whatever right?"

"Yeah. So?" I asked.

"Can you see the wind?"

"No."

"So if you can control the wind, and the wind is invisible..." she said prodding me

"I can turn invisible?" I asked.

"Yep. Why do you think no one reports flying kids? We look and feel solid to each other, but while we're up there, we are the wind." she said.

"That's right. I remember. Cool." I said. The gates opened.

"Hey, put your cat suit on." Liesh said.

"Why?" I asked.

"I don't know. But there is something inside me telling me to do that."

"Ok." I said doubtfully. We changed to the cat suits and I rose up and over into the swamp.

"Ew." I said. There was only one shack, but there were heaps of huts.

"Lets go." I pointed to the shack. We crept inside. Inside it was set up like there were people living there. I tried to sense where the Quest Sheet was. The teddy on the bed started to jump.

"There." Liesh said. I went over and held up the teddy.

"The Quest you pursue,

Is hiding from you,

The quest you seek.

Won't you have something to eat?" the teddy squeaked out in a singsong voice.

"Great. A riddle." Liesh said.

"Is hiding from you? Liesh, start knocking on the walls to see if there are any secret hollow bits." I commanded.

"Yes ma'am." Liesh said with a salute. She started knocking on the walls.

"Hey, can you smell something?" she asked. She looked at me. "Oh my god. You need to calm down."

"I cant. This is so FRUSTRATING!" I yelled.

"Your hair's on fire." Liesh said. "You need to calm down." I grabbed a strand of hair.

"So it is." I said. I took a deep breath. The flames subsided, but didn't go away. I took another. The flames reduces themselves to smolders. One last breath and my normal hair was back.

"Ok. Lets keep looking." I said. I looked down and saw the fake food that was set out on the table.

"And on your left you will see the fabulous little 'Family Shack.'"

"Oh no. Tour!" I said. I grabbed Liesh and rose up into the air.

"They say, when the Miki's wanted to protect their secret belongings they would build little tunnels and then hide them along the way, but we haven't found any tunnels from this shack. Moving on." I looked at Liesh. We knew where the tunnel was. We didn't know how, but we did. The tour group filed out, and we came back down. I grabbed the teddy and stuck it into a little groove in the wall. A large trap door opened up in the floor.

"You first." Liesh said. I jumped in then made a little fire in my hand so we could see. I walked to the end of the passage and turned to face the left wall. I put out my fire and reached for the dirt. My hand closed over something. I yanked it out and the dirt started falling around us.

"RUN!" I yelled. We just closed the trapdoor when the path outside caved in.

"we better go." Liesh clutched my arm and I flew to where we were standing that morning. I looked at what was in my hand. It was a food item of some sort that had been preserved immaculately. I tore it in half and grabbed the roll of paper.

"It is time now for you to see

Quest one, of two, of three,

Of four.

Keeper now must search through book,
Careful now,
at how hard you look.

When you find it,
Be sure to know,

The next Quest you seek,

Will be in the snow.” I read out loud. “Any ideas?”

“What’s your favorite book?” Liesh asked.

“Elementals. Why?” I said. Liesh just looked at me.

“OH! Does it have to be my copy?” I asked the piece of paper. The word ‘no’ flashed up on the page.

“Right.” A copy of the book rose up out of the dirt, and then turned to paper. I started reading, writing down any words that jumped out at me. At the end of the book I had: this, my keeper is not the solution you need start to fight pollution.

“Pollution?” said Liesh.

“Yeah. The WWRC. World Wide Recycling Center” I said. I held onto Liesh and started flying. We stopped to sleep, and to eat, but then we were on the way again. When we got to the WWRC we went to the front desk.

“Hi, were here to help.” I said.

“Can’t you read? The clerk said. She pointed to a sign. It said that no visitors were allowed today. So we snuck in. We went down the hallway peeking into every room we passed. Near the middle of the hallway, there was a room with so much white, shredded paper it looked like snow.

“The next quest you seek will be in the snow.” I said.

“First, we have to start to fight pollution. C’mon.” Liesh said dragging me down the hallway. We ended up in a room with all these charts. As we walked in, one flashed.

For this quest, you must use your wind to fly all the rubbish into the air, then your fire to burn it.

I concentrated. I spread my arms wide, and lifted them. The winds rose, taking with them all of the rubbish on land. I flattened my hands then pushed the air. The rubbish all went to one place, over the sea, where no one would see. I pushed my hands together, and the rubbish spontaneously combusted, leaving only dust, that the wind blew away. I collapsed with the effort. The sign flashed.

Very good Keeper. You have almost mastered Wind and Fire. The rubbish is gone, and the snow is immanent.

Liesh looked at her watch.

“We need to get out. We’ve spent all day here.” Liesh said, “It will just have to be another Quest for another day.”

5 - Chap 5

Liesh.

We snuck back into the WWRC. We ran straight to the Shredding room. Backing up now. My name is Aliesha Williams, and I am the Guardian of the Keeper to the Ultimate Light. Mouthful. My friends just call me Liesh. It's easier. It all started when my best friend, Ari (said Keeper of the Ultimate Light) started having dreams, then I did, then we went to the Tree and we had to leave and now we are going on quests so that Ari can control her powers.

"Liesh. Earth to Liesh! Anyone home?" Ari said, waving her hand in front of my face, startling me from my thoughts.

"What?" I asked.

"Come on. We have to work out that stupid clue..." Ari stomped over to a big pile of shredded paper and plonked herself down.

"It is time now for you to see Quest one, of two, of three, of four. Keeper now must search through book, careful now at how hard you look. When you find it, be sure to know, the next Quest you seek, will be in the snow." I quoted.

"How did you remember that?" Ari said amazed.

"I am supposed to remember every clue for future reference. Its part of the job." I smiled. The wall across from us turned black.

Keeper, you must find the piece of paper you seek.

Was flashed up in white.

"Is it whole?" she asked it.

You will see.

It said.

"Great." I said. "You cant use fire or water for obvious reasons, so you have to use wind or earth."

"How would I use earth?" Ari asked, while one eyebrow rose.

"Shut up. Make a light breeze, and we'll grab all of the whole pieces of paper." I said.

"Right." She said. She raised her arms a little, and a breeze rang through the closed room. I searched the whirl. I spotted one. The only one. I ran through the paper-blizzard and grabbed it.

~You can stop it now~ I thought to Ari. She let the wind drop instantly.

"Did you just think to me?" she asked.

"Did I?" I asked racking my brain. I came to a realization. "Yes. We can mind-speak to each other while you are element controlling."

"Cool. I can mind-speak, and I get visions. I'm gonna try it now." Ari said.

~Testing, 1, 2. Testing ~ Ari had her eyes closed, and was swaying a little.

~Testing what? ~ I asked.

~WOOOOOOOOOOO~ Ari mind-shrieked.

"Ow." I said, rubbing my head.

"Sorry." she apologized.

"Oh my god. We were so exited about mind speak that I forgot to tell you that I might have found the

clue!" I held out the paper.

"Trying is nice, But you have to go Somewhere there is real ice." Ari read. "Great."

"I know. Can I have a look?" I asked. "Paper." The paper flew out of Ari's hands and into mine.

"What aren't you telling me?" Ari asked.

"I had just remembered that the Guardian is supposed to be telekinetic so I thought I would try it out." I said.

"Cool. Now, ice is everywhere. Where are we going to find 'real' ice?"

"Real ice, realice, realize, realise, Real Eyes!" I screamed.

"Oh my gosh. The next quest is with Real Eyes! Come on!" Ari said, then whirled around and grabbed me. We flew out over the WWRC, but hit a snag at the ocean.

"I want to try out my water." Ari said, preparing to call the water.

"Stop!" I said, remembering,

"The Keeper has the power to breathe underwater. When she submerges fully, she gets gills and something like a fish tail."

"So like a mermaid? Wait, what about the guardian?" Ari asked.

"The guardian does the same." I said. I looked at Ari. She looked back. We jumped in.

6 - Chap 6

Hours later we were swimming towards The Ridge where Real Eyes were performing lately. We rose out of the water and flew to the Ridge Arena.

"How can we get backstage?" Ari wondered.

"We use your earth powers." I said, in a matter-of-fact tone.

"You wanna run that by me again?" Ari said.

"Your earth powers allow you to disguise yourself as any animal that you need to. If you want me to as well, just hold my arm, then think of that animal." I said.

"What animal?" she asked.

"Umm..." I paused. "Aren't Real Eyes having a wildlife benefit concert tonight?"

"So they are." Ari said, looking sideways at me.

"Let's see, there will be lions, bears, and monkeys. Take your pick." I said.

"Lionesses." Ari said without hesitation. Big cats are her favorites.

"Wait, I just remembered. We only get three and a half hours as an animal." I said. Ari nodded. She took my arm and we started to turn into lionesses. When our transformation was complete, we ran backstage into an empty room. We were almost finished transforming back when the door opened. A guy about our age came in.

"Whoa. I'll go and let you finish getting changed." He said, and then rushed back out. We were still transforming.

~ Oh my god. He was cute. ~ Ari mind spoke to me.

~ What if he saw? ~ I worried.

~ He - aaah! ~ Ari yelled.

~What? ~ I asked. Ari didn't reply.

"Whoa." Ari said. We stood up.

"What?" I asked.

"I had a vision. The tree. It said the Third would be capable of things the Keeper is not. The Third is Gilbert Lemez." Ari said. There was a knock at the door.

"Are you changed yet?" a voice called.

"Yes. You can come in if you want." I called back. The door opened.

"Hey. I'm Liesh. This is Ari." I said.

"Hey. I'm Gill Lemez." Gill said. Ari and I looked at each other.

"Is it short for Gilbert?" Ari asked.

"Yeah. How'd you know?" he asked.

"Gill, we have something to tell you." I said. "And you may not like it."

7 - Chap 7

"What?" he asked. Ari sighed.

"Um, I don't know how to say this. You can't tell anyone." She said.

"Ok." Gill said.

"Long story short, I am the Keeper of the Ultimate Light, Liesh is my Guardian, and you apparently are our Third, who can do things I cant." Ari rushed a little.

"Ok. You are obviously crazy." Gill said soothingly.

"I am not!" Ari said forcefully.

"Don't make her mad." I warned.

"But its true. There is no such thing as a Keeper or an Ultimate Light." Gill scoffed.

"I AM NOT CRAZY!!!!" Ari screamed, while flames burst from every available piece of skin.

"I told you." I said to Gill, who had shrunk against the wall. I turned to Ari.

"You are on fire." Ari looked around.

"So I am." she said. "Can you pour some water on the floor?" I poured my bottle of water on the floor. She expanded it, and doused herself. She was still on fire.

"Deep breaths. That worked last time." I said.

"Last time?" Gill asked hysterically. Ari ignored him and continued to breathe deeply. "You're right. She's not crazy. I am." He giggled.

"No, you're not. You're our Third. And you have to help us find the clue to the Quest." I explained.

"Quest?" he asked, calming down a little.

"For Ari to master her powers, we have to go on Quests that the Tree set." I said.

"The Tree?" he asked.

"The Tree is what started it all. I started having dreams that Liesh was too. The Tree sent them. The Tree told us to leave our families. The Tree sends me my visions. The Tree is the Ultimate Light." Ari whispered.

"How do you know the Tree is the Ultimate Light?" I asked her.

"I only just figured it out. The Tree needs water, resists fire, is part of the earth, and loves having the wind rustling through its branches. Also, it glowed when I got to the top." She shrugged.

"So what does a Third do?" Gill asked.

"We don't know. You find that out along the way. Right now, we have to get that Quest sheet. Do you know where Real Eyes are most of the time?" I asked.

"Mostly they hang in their hotel room. Why?"

"That's where it is." Ari said.

"Lets go." I said. A few minutes later we were flying over The Ridge.

~ Is this cool or what? ~ I asked Gill. He whipped his head round looking for the person talking to him.

~ It's me. I'm mind speaking. We can do this while Ari is controlling an element. ~ I said

~ Really? ~ He asked.

~ You just did it. ~ I smiled.

~ I did to. By the way, yes, this is awesome. ~ He punched the air. We landed.

"How are we going to get up there?" Ari asked.

"I can get us in." Gill said.

"How?" I asked.

"Mums lead and dad and I travel with her." Gill shrugged. "No big."

"You're mum is Bliss, lead singer in Real Eyes?" Ari asked excitedly.

"Yeah" Gill looked a little embarrassed.

"Lets just go." I said. Gill shot me a grateful look.

"Follow me." Gill led the way up the stairs to the penthouse.

"Mum, I'm home. And I brought friends!" he called. Silence. "No ones home."

"Hey what's that?" I asked, pointing to the wall, where a painting of a large yellow sun hung.

"Just a pain..."Gill trailed off, noticing the same symbol on our shirts.

"Painting it is." He went over and grabbed the painting off the wall. On the back, barely noticeable was a piece of paper.

"Ha!" Ari exclaimed. I peeled the paper off. It said:

Well done on finding the Third of three. This Quest will require a tree, The powers of the Keeper, the Guardian and their Third. All must be touching the tree, while the Keeper uses her Earth powers to break the animals for Real Eyes's concert out, then she must fly them to the jungle. Third must concentrate on telling the animals what is happening. Guardian must use her telekinesis to post signs that the Real Eyes concert is canceled due to their Lack of concern for their animals.

"Ok. Will you be ok with ruining your mums concert?" Ari asked Gill.

"I hate to say it, but yes. I've seen how the band members treat those animals. Not nice." He shook his head. "Lets go find a tree."

8 - Chap 8

Gill.

We were gathered around the tree. Before I go on, I should tell you something. My name is Gill Lemez, and I might just be about to do the worst thing a guy can do to his mum. I am about to ruin her career. Maybe. Not in the usual way. Oh, no. That would be waaay to simple. We have to use magic. But I'm getting ahead of myself. It all started when I had to go into the one empty room to think. I ran into two girls. They were both pretty thin, but one looked kind of pretty, with short blond hair, but the other... she was beautiful. She had long brown hair, and the deepest blue-gray eyes. Anyway, the blonde one said her name was Liesh, and the other was Ari. But then they turned weird. They said Ari was the Keeper of the ultimate Light, and Liesh was her Guardian. And, oh yeah, I was their Third. I thought they were crazy...until Ari got so angry she burst into flames. So that's it.

"You sure you're ok?" Ari asked. She has a voice like silk.

"Yeah. Lets just do this." I said. Liesh nodded. Ari, Liesh and I grabbed the tree. I could see Ari using her earth Skills.

~ Tell them I am going to shake the earth to open the cages. ~ Ari mind-spoke to me.

~ You cant. The cages are locked. ~ I said.

~ You can lift the earth ~ Liesh said. ~Bring the cages here so you can see. ~

~ Great! ~Ari said, closing her eyes. I closed mine.

* You are about to be lifted up and moved. Do not worry. I am here. * I said to the animals. I could feel the ground shake as they were bought here. I opened my eyes. Ari was already shaping the earth like a key. I glanced at Liesh. I could see posters all over. Ari unlocked the cages. *

You will be taken to a place where you will be free. * I told the animals. Ari lifted her arms, dragging one hand along the tree trunk. The animals rose into the air. She pushed the tree slowly. The animals flew gently.

* Do not worry. You are almost there. * I could feel their terror. I placed my eyes in the lions, and saw the jungle was near.

~ They are almost there. ~ I mind spoke to Ari. I looked back through the lion's eyes. They landed.

* Here is your new home. You are free. *

~ They are in the jungle ~ I said. All three of us collapsed in a heap. Liesh grabbed the piece of paper the Quest was on.

Keeper, you have mastered wind, and almost mastered Earth. Guardian, you have mastered telekinesis. Third, you have mastered animal thought. Next, the Trio will be high and dry.

"What now?" I asked.

"You have to leave to come with us." Ari said. I nodded. Liesh got me paper and a pen. then, I started writing.

9 - Chap 9

I put the note on the counter, then grabbed my backpack and headed out.

"High and dry?" I asked. I looked at Ari. Liesh saw my look.

"I just remembered. I have to go do something." Liesh rushed off.

"Just us huh?" Ari said.

"Yep." I said. Ari and I sat down on a bench.

"I think 'high and dry' means the dessert. Where is a high dessert?" Ari asked, leaning over me to get the map. I gasped.

"You ok?" she asked, eyeing me.

"Fine." I squeaked out. I smacked myself on the head.

"Don't." Ari said, grabbing my hand. She blushed and let it go.

"Don't." I said softly, only just meeting her eyes.

"Don't what?"

"Stop. Get embarrassed. I don't know." This time I blushed. Ari took my hand, and lent over to show me the map. At the same time I leant over to say something. Our lips brushed.

"Did you just kiss me?" she asked.

"No. It was an accident." I said quickly.

"Oh." She looked away.

"Why?"

"Because I wanted you to." She said. I leant over and kissed her properly.

"Like that?" I asked.

"Yeah. Like that." Ari smiled. I noticed Liesh coming around the corner.

"Guys I might... what did I miss?" Liesh demanded.

"Nothing." Said Ari "so, what were you saying?"

"You're blushing."

"No I'm not."

"Anyway." I intervened.

"Anyway, I might know where high and dry means." Liesh said.

"Where?" Ari said eagerly.

"Monta Mountain. The Mountain of sand!" She exclaimed.

"Isn't that obvious?" I asked, doubtfully.

"Sometimes the Tree is so painfully obvious that you would never think to look there because it's too obvious." Ari said with a twinkle in her eye.

"Ah." I said.

"Hey, maybe now that I've mastered wind I can fly you two without touching you." Ari said, before she closed her eyes and lifted up. Moments later, I found myself lifting up over The Ridge.

~ I will never get used to this. ~ I said.

~ You will. ~ Liesh said. She checked her watch.

~ I hadn't noticed how late it was. We've only been flying for a few minutes. Ari, we better set up camp.

~ Ari let us down in a clearing.

"Were about a k from Monta Mountain. So up early, and we can get there for lunch."

"Up early? How early?" I asked suspiciously.

"What she means is we don't sleep in." Liesh said. "First one up wakes everyone else, then starts

breakfast. I'm going to get some firewood. I have a feeling it will be a cold night." She walked into the trees. As she disappeared, I walked over to where Ari was sitting and kissed her.

"What was that for?" she asked, smiling as she sat back down.

"Nothing." I said. I heard a rustling in the trees.

Liesh came running out. "Guys. We have a problem."

10 - Chap 10

"What?" I asked worriedly.

"Monta Mountain." Liesh said breathlessly "Its been demolished!"

"The Tree would have known that. The Tree knows everything." Ari said, getting up again.

"Maybe it was a ruse. Maybe the Tree wants us to go low and wet?" I said.

"Of course! The Tree would have wanted to confuse us." Liesh said. "The ocean. Its wet, that's obvious, and it's pretty deep."

"Yeah, one problem, which ocean?" I asked sarcastically. Liesh looked at me like I was dumb.

"Uh, hello? 'Indian to the core'? The core of the Indian Ocean. Duh." Liesh said slowly.

"I'm not dumb." I said hotly.

"Can we just get there before dark?" Ari intervened while Liesh and I were raised up in different directions.

~ Now will you two be nice? ~

~ Yes. ~ I said.

~ Yes. ~ Liesh said. Ari came up and we set off. When it was dark Ari found us a campsite, then started a fire. We sat around it, talking.

"Were only about halfway to the Indian." Liesh said seemingly forgiving me for earlier.

"So when will we get there?" I asked.

"By lunch tomorrow, if we start at day break." Ari said. I nodded then settled down to start sleeping. The next morning we started earlier than dawn, and got to the edge of the Indian Ocean by eleven.

"Um quick question. This is an ocean. How are we meant to find the Quest in here?" I asked, staring at the wide expanse of water.

"I was kind of thinking that myself. But I'm sure Liesh, with all of her past Guardian memories will know." Ari looked around for Liesh, who had disappeared. "You know, when she comes back."

"You know, I think she knows."

"Knows what?"

"That we're together. That's why she keeps rushing off."

"Maybe. But we're alone. And we're just talking?" Ari raised an eyebrow at me.

"You're right." I leant down and kissed her. We had been kissing for quite a while when Liesh walked in on us.

"Ahem." Ari and I looked up. Ari was blushing.

"We were going to tell you." She started.

"Just make sure I get an invite to the wedding." Liesh said with a smile, going and hugging Ari.

"Um, we were going to ask before you left how we find the Quest, but you disappeared, and we got um, distracted..." I trailed off, uncomfortable.

"Distracted? Is that what you call it?"

"Can you just tell us how to get the Quest?" I said blushing.

"Fine. With Ari's power to turn into a mermaid..."

"Hang on, a mermaid?" I interrupted.

"Yeah. Anyway, with that comes the ability to sense some things. For example, she would have a greater pull with the Quest sheets, because they are her destiny. But she can sense feelings, moods, and stuff like that. But she can only sense a few material objects."

"How come this only showed up now?" Ari asked. "Because your destiny is to be with the Third, so your

strong feelings for him would have done it. Either that, or his feelings for you.”

“My destiny was to be with Gill?”

“Yeah.”

“So how does she do it?” I asked.

“It will get stronger so that you can do it anytime, but for now you have to be in mermaid form, then you just let the feeling lead you.”

“All right.” Ari said, grabbing my hand. The next thing I knew, I was underwater and growing gills.

~ Um, why am I sprouting a tail too? ~

~ I grabbed you. So the same would happen to you. ~

~ Oh. ~ I said. Ari started swimming. Liesh and I followed. Ari came to what looked like a bottomless pit.

~ Down there. ~ She said pointing. ~ Come on. ~ We started swimming downwards. Almost a meter down, there was a thin crack in the wall. Just big enough for Ari to fit through.

~ There? ~ I asked. Ari nodded. ~ Good luck ~ Ari squeezed through the crack.

~ Found it! ~ Ari called faintly. ~ I can't get back through. Can you grab hold of my tail and pull? ~Liesh and I peered into the crack. We could see Ari's tail a little way up. We grabbed it.

~ One...two...three! ~ Liesh said as we yanked.

~ Owwww! ~ Ari groaned in pain as she was dragged out of the crack. All of her stomach and the sides of her arms were grazed.

~ Don't worry. They will go away when we transform back to human. ~ Liesh said.

~ Cool. Lets go. ~ Ari said as she swam back to the surface, clutching the Quest. Back on land, human again we sat on the beach.

“Read it.” I urged. Ari took a breath and unrolled the Quest.

“Keeper you are almost done,

You have completed Quests One and two

Of three of four.

Now Quest three,

to master the Earth and the Sea.

To complete this quest, You must go to the Great Barrier Reef,

You must keep it alive.

What is happening is affecting the sea and the earth.

You will use Water to knock the oil port out of the Reef.

You will use Earth to re-grow the Reef and block where the oil port was.

Guardian, you will use telekinesis to move the oil port to a safe location.”

“Wow. This is a big mission.” Liesh said.

“Yeah. Well, to Australia.” Ari said as we started flying.

11 - Chap 11

Ari

I am on my way back to Australia, to save the Great Barrier Reef.

~ No, I've known Ari longer. She couldn't like you as much. ~

~ But it was her feelings towards me that awakened her sensing ability. ~

~ Will you two shut up? ~ I interrupted. ~ I like you both the same. ~ We've been in the air for a couple of days so Liesh and Gill were getting on each other's nerves. We touched down.

"Ok, to the Great Barrier Reef." I said, pointing to the ocean.

"Again with the ocean" Gill commented. I gave him a look. We swam out to the reef and had no trouble finding the oil port.

~ All right. As soon as this port is out I need to block it quick or all of the oil will spill into the ocean. So can you get a hold on it now Liesh? ~

~ Got it. ~ She said. I started concentrating. A huge gush of water started pushing on the port. It moved a little. I pushed harder. It creaked and oil started leaking. I pushed so hard that my head started hurting, but it finally it came loose. I switched to Earth and started re-growing the reef. When the port was gone and the reef was back, I grabbed Liesh and Gill by the hands and started focusing. A force field started to shimmer above the reef.

~ Now no one else can get at the reef. ~ I said.

~ How did you do that? ~ Gill asked

~ Instinct. ~ I said. We swam back up to the surface and found a bottle floating towards us. I grabbed it and held onto it as we swam to shore. As we walked from the water I uncorked the bottle.

"Keeper.

You mastered Earth.

You have almost mastered Water.

Well done. Now you must be

In the drought ridden Queensland.

The Queensland that is stricken with fire." I read.

"So, what have we still got to do?" asked Gill, who was still pretty clueless. Then, I had Liesh's help from the beginning. He was still new to this. And someone was sad. It was either Gill or Liesh who were both walking close together in front of me.

"Ari still has to master water and fire." Liesh said, dropping back to walk with me. Gill was still in front of us. He was the one who was sad.

"Hey, can I have a minute with Gill?" I asked her.

"Yeah, what's up?"

"He's sad."

"He hasn't said anything. Your sense is getting stronger then?"

"Yeah. Cya." I walked a little faster and caught up with Gill.

"What's up?" I asked.

"Nothing."

"You're sad."

"No I'm not."

"My sense is getting stronger Gill. You're sad."

"Fine. I'm sad."

“Why?”

“I don’t know, I guess I’m missing my mum and dad.”

“Its ok. Liesh and I were homesick too.” I leant up and kissed him. A lady who was walking past gave us a disgusted look.

“Liesh,” I said, as Liesh rejoined us. “You got homesick didn’t you?”

“Yeah.” she nodded.

“And you got over it?”

“Yeah. Maybe quicker than you did, because it was then that I found all of my past Guardian memories.”

“What?” Gill intervened.

“I have all of them memories of the past Guardians, so I know most of what’s coming. But that was my last memory. I think Ari has gone further than any other Keeper. It’s a good thing to, because you don’t want to know what happens to the world if she fails. Ari is the Keeper of the Ultimate Light. Ultimate. The others were just Keepers of the Light. To put it simply If you fail, the earth is doomed.” Liesh explained.

“Wow. No pressure.” I said, a feeling of dread settling itself in my stomach.

“Don’t worry. “ Liesh said, “one more Quest, then its done. Now, lets go, we need to get to Queensland.”

“We are in Queensland.” I said.

“Well, to the droughts and fires.”We started off for the drought-ridden part of Queensland, riding on the wind.

~ I can feel it. It’s down there. ~ I pointed straight down, and we dropped into a tree.

“Ow.” Gill said, rubbing his knee.

“Sorry” I said. I started walking until I ran into a tree.

“Are you okay?” Gill said, rushing over.

“Oh-my-gosh!” Liesh squealed doing the same. They helped me up.

“I’m fine.” I said making all of the dirt that had landed on me jump off.

“Ok, so why did you walk into the tree?” Gill asked.

“Its in there, isn’t it?” Liesh asked quietly.

“No.” I said. Liesh looked surprised

“it is that.”

“It’s the tree?” she asked.

“What, after everything we’ve been through, you’re still disbelieving?”

“Point taken”I put my hand on the tree. A message appeared.

Keeper. You must use Water to create enough pure water to hydrate the drought stricken area. You must also put out any fires you come across, by back burning with Fire, then hydrate so that it doesn’t burn again.

“Specific.” Gill commented.

“I can’t believe I have to do this now. I’m really tired. I don’t know how much this will take out of me.” I worried.

“Don’t worry.” Liesh said, putting a comforting hand on my shoulder. “We’ll be beside you the whole time.”

“Yeah.” Agreed Gill, giving me a quick kiss. I walked out to the middle of a clearing, surrounded by trees and quiet. I sat cross-legged, and closed my eyes. I heard Gill and Liesh sit down too. I started to rise into the air.

12 - Chap 12

Liesh and Gill stayed on the ground.

~ Why are you up there? ~ Liesh asked.

~ I need to be able to see. ~

~ Shouldn't we be up there to? ~

~ No. I need to do this alone. ~ I opened my eyes and saw a fire to my left. I back burnt with a flick of my wrist, the started in on hydrating. I put my hands together, and then opened them so that only my wrists were touching. A water ball appeared in front of them. I sent that water ball down lower, and then expanded it so that I couldn't see anything but water. Then it rained. I was struggling to keep the amount of water raining down consistent. I could hear Liesh and Gill as they yelled in joy that I was doing it. Every so often I would Lift Gill or Liesh up so that they could give me some food, but eventually, something inside me told me that I was finished. I gently let up on the rain.

~ Why are you letting up? ~Gill asked.

~ I'm done. ~When it had stopped raining, I lowered myself into the clearing and collapsed.

It was the Tree. There was a woman standing there. She was reading the symbols. She looked up and saw me. She grinned evilly.

"Goodbye keeper." she snarled. She sliced his hand through the air. The Tree slid off its base and fell, with me still in. I scream and let go. I fall.

"GRABOWSKI!!" I screamed as I woke up. I looked around.

"How long was I up there?"

"Oh, you were up there for about a week. The Tree sent a message saying that you saved the world."

Liesh said. "Did you have a dream vision?"

"Yeah. Grabowski was going to cut down the Tree!" I said.

"Who is Grabowski?" Gill asked.

"I don't know." I said slowly, "But she didn't use a saw to cut down the Tree. She used her hand. Like this." I slashed my hand like I saw Grabowski do. The grass in front of me suddenly became half the height it used to be.

"I know who Grabowski is." Liesh said, her eyes down. "And she needs to be stopped."

"What can she do?" I asked.

"She has all of your powers. She was the only Keeper to ever finish all four Quests. Other than you. See, when a Keeper turns 15, they get Called, unless the previous Keeper is still alive." Liesh said quietly.

"Called?" I asked

"Yeah. The Tree starts sending them dreams. They then work on their Quests until they either turn 40, or they die."

"How do they die?" Gill asked.

"They use their powers too much. Mental exhaustion. But ever since Grabowski turned 40, she has been picking off the Keepers. If you kill a Keeper you become the Keeper until the next is Called." Liesh continued.

"Wait, you said you have the Guardians memories have no one finishing all four Quests." I said.

"Her Guardian died just after the third Quest."

“Oh.”

“Yeah. And if she cuts down the Tree, you will die. But, there will be no more Keepers of any kind anymore. Her powers will be revoked.”

“Does she know that?”

“No, the last Guardian found out. But don’t worry. you saved the world already. You can do this.”

I scarfed down some food and set off while the others were still eating. We flew to the Tree in record time. As we landed I looked around.

“I don’t see her. But I think we should stick together.”

“No need. She’s right here.” Grabowski snarled out of the shadows.

“Grabowski.” I said.

“Now now. We’re Keepers. We should be on a first name basis. Call me Villi.”

“Uh, no. Grabowski will do.” I said. Grabowski sauntered out of the shadows. I visibly recoiled. She looked so old that she could be pushed over with a feather.

“Um, you didn’t tell me she was that old!” I whispered to Liesh. “Hey, I have memories from like, ages ago. You saw her in your vision!”

“She looked younger then!”

“It’s impolite to keep secrets. Share with everyone please.”

“Fine. I was going to fight you, but I can’t hurt an old lady.” I said apologetically.

“OLD LADY!!!!!!” Grabowski screamed, exploding with fire. “I am not OLD!!!”

“Oh, so you do that to? Fine. What is your age?”

“NEVER ASK A WOMAN HER AGE!!!!!! Now,” she calmed down a little “will we talk or fight?”

“Fight. Liesh, Gill RUN!!!!” I turned to face Grabowski. She flicked her hands. A circle of fire surrounded me, then started to close in. I looked at it lazily.

“You must be old to not remember that I can fly,” I said, taking off and hitting a barrier of wind that was overhead. “What?”

“Oh, I remembered. And. I. AM. NOT. OLD!!!!” she screamed, the fire closing in faster. I started throwing fireballs at Grabowski. One hit her squarely in the chest. She staggered, and then doused herself. I put out the circle of fire, and then summoned all of the power inside me, from the Earth, the Wind, the Fire, The Water, the Tree, and most importantly, the Light. I grabbed Gill and Liesh’s hands just in time. A burst of power exploded so fast that I hardly saw it. And neither did Grabowski.

“Vignr! Kohui! Bavgry! Nvaz! LIEYIU!!!!” I screamed. The burst swept past Grabowski like a wave, tossing her like a doll. I broke away and ran to her.

“Are you okay?” I asked.

“Yes. But you won’t be!” Grabowski started to tighten the air around my neck.

“Lieyiu.” I choked out.

“What?” she asked.

“LIEYIU” I choked fiercely. And then the air around my throat lessened. Grabowski has fallen limply on her side. I strained to hear her breathing, but didn’t.

“I killed her.” I said shakily. Then suddenly I roared in pain.

“ARI!” I heard Gill shout in the distance. I felt Liesh shake my shoulder, then came back to reality.

“What happened?” Gill asked worriedly.

“I just had a vision.” I said, only just realising I hadn’t had a vision with Gill around. “It was the Tree. It needs me to chop it down, so that no one else is in danger.”

“But, you will die.” Liesh said quietly.

“I might. The tree doesn’t know. But I have to do it.” I walked to where the Tree stood. I looked away, and slashed.

13 - Chap 13

I blinked a couple of times. I didn't recognise where I was.

"Liesh? Gill?" I asked.

"Oh, my god. You're awake!" Liesh said. "Hang on." She ran out of the room. A few moments later my mum came running in and hugged me. She had tears streaming down her face.

"Don't worry, Aliesha told us everything. Don't ever run away again, ok? Not even to save the world." She smiled.

"Mum..." I said.

"Shush. You need rest. By the way, when were you going to mention Gill in the note?"

"I didn't know about him then."

"Well, I'll leave Liesh here with you." Mum said, leaving the room.

"Where am I?" I asked Liesh.

"The hospital. What were you shouting while we were fighting?"

"Oh, the words from the Tree. Vignr, Water. Kohui, Wind. Bavgry, Fire. Nvaz, Earth."

"And the last one?"

"The most important." I smiled. "Lieyiu, Light."

THE END!

14 - Characters & Pronunciation.

CHARACTERS:

ARI: Ari is the Keeper of the Ultimate Light. She has many different powers, and can manipulate fire, water, air and earth. See below for specific lists. Also gets visions.

LIESH: Liesh (full name Aliesha) is the Guardian to the Keeper. She is Ari's best friend, and is there for her through the whole story.

GILL: Gill is the Third. He comes in about halfway through the story, and is Ari's boyfriend.

GRABOWSKI: Grabowski is the bad guy. She is about 89 years old, and was the first Keeper to complete all four Quests. Wants to be the only Keeper.

POWERS:

Ari.

Water: can turn into a mermaid, can sense Quest sheets and peoples feelings.

Earth: can turn into any living animal.

Air: can fly on the winds.

Fire: whole body erupts with fire when angry.

Liesh.

Telekinesis.

Gill.

Can talk to animals.

PRONUNCIATION:

Vigr: Vig-nir

Kohui: ko-who-ee

Bavgry: Bav-gree

Nvaz: Nav-az

Lieyu: Lie-you