

The Humming Tree

# The Humming Tree

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A story of a newly-deaf girl who finds a friend in the least expected and learns to live again through a new perspective.

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The lost man brought her under a sky of green wisps, held together by only the slimmest of branches. The gestures he made to all that surrounded them held her attention, but the feelings that she had thought to have lost now emanated from the wisps, freeing her spirit.

The child sat in a cold, metal chair, her mind absent from where she was, her eyes fixated on the clean-shaven man dressed in crisp, white robes standing a few feet in front of her. He seemed to be speaking with a young woman who wore a face of premature age. With each response, the fine lines etched into her once-beautiful face moved to a sad dance, along with other sad, more deeply etched lines. The atmosphere of the uncomfortable, mint-painted room grew heavier and heavier. The girl slid her hands slowly up and down the chair's handles, observing how slick and shiny they were. A sudden, and dramatic, movement from the woman refocused her attention, once again, to the adults in the middle of the room.

"I'm sorry Ms. Bellevue, but there was nothing more we could do. We've tried our best, but there was no way to recover any of her hearing; however, the amnesia may be temporary," explained the doctor. *She's staring at me*, he unconsciously noted, spotting the deep, emerald eyes in the corner of his vision. The woman standing in front of him continued to quietly sob. He contemplated whether or not to try to console her, but was still distracted slightly by the young girl's prodding eyes.

"What happens if Kami doesn't get her memory back? And what if she does? How am I supposed to explain to my baby that she will never hear her mother's, let alone anyone's, voice again? Oh, God!" Ms. Bellevue began to sob louder. She covered her face with her hands and unconsciously thought to herself, *she's staring at me*, noticing her daughter's curious eyes scanning her actions.

"Ms. Bellevue, you do realize it could have been much worse. Kamille is lucky to have survived with the injuries she's suffered." The doctor reminded the mother once again.

Kamille adjusted her shoulder strap. She could tell that the woman had become offended by something, but what it was, she didn't know. The two were speaking a language that was familiar to some part of her mind, though inaudible to her ears. A headache began to take root as she tried to focus on who the people were and why she was here. Whenever she would get up, the man would turn to her and move his mouth, once again speaking that silent language, while gesturing towards the seat with his hands until she sat back down. Kamille was thirsty, she was hungry, and she was confused. *I just want to go home*, she systematically thought to herself before realizing that she didn't know where home was. Kamille tucked a part of the white, filmy gauze that was wrapped around her head back behind her ear after it had fallen in front of her eyes.

Minutes passed and, while Kamille fidgeted with a large bandage stuck to her arm, the line-etched woman bent slightly near her and gestured for her hand. Subtle feelings of trust caused the girl to react with a soft grip onto the woman. They walked together like this through the geometric doorframes, strange feelings, such as what had guided Kamille's hand, were tangible, but still hidden enough away in the blurry shadows of her memory to be pulled upon. The doctor followed, up until the glass doors that moved when approached. This had caught Kamille's glance as the wonder of such a reliable thing poked at her mind, just long enough for her to not notice the doctor giving the older woman a small, rectangular piece of paper.

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Ms. Bellevue placed the business card into a pocket within her purse and snapped it shut. She nodded to the man and softly spoke, "A good day to you, Dr. Claigh." With that, and several prescriptions, she left the mint building and was hit with the stale air of a windless, Californian afternoon. Daughter in hand and valuables slung on shoulder, Ms. Bellevue felt a little more in control as she walked towards her car, shining like new. She opened the door for her young one and waited so she could buckle her in.

Kamille's eyes gazed upon the passing smudges of what could be referred to as civilization, never focusing on one thing for long. The city she was in seemed to have, once, been slightly impressive, but now was in a sad and empty state. These dreary feelings seemed to be reflected in the people who roamed the streets, usually alone, who Kamille caught a glance of here and there. She was surrounded by clouds of metal and smoke, of flesh and dreams, and of concrete and glass, but still felt a creeping sensation of being stranded. Stranded in her mind and in a place that played no sound or passion, Kamille looked from car, to person, to building, searching for any others that were stranded. She looked to the woman in the mirror and met her eyes, recognizing that same sense of abandonment that Kamille felt. This woman was also stranded, but somewhere far from Kamille, in a place where she could never be.

Ms. Bellevue looked in the rearview mirror at the leaf-eyed girl staring back at her. A car honk from behind quickly snapped her attention from a memory and back to the road. Ms. Bellevue drove along the lines that were marked by only a faint layer of paint upon asphalt, a layer so thin and so easily unseen.

"It feels like it was only yesterday," Ms. Bellevue began before remembering who her audience was.  
"Damn you, Jak."

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