

LILYONE'S SEARCH

In a surreal world where you can find magic, witches, wizards, and creatures alike, there was a traveling musician, whose magic was deemed so powerful that bounty hunters would go looking for them on a daily basis, only to return with nothing on their hands and a single message: "Don't mess with them!"

It was said that this sorcerer could play any instrument known to man, and they used said instruments to conjure different spells. The townsfolk often told tales of the musician, saying how their name and face wasn't known, but all the good deeds they did with their magic were uncountable. Whenever there was trouble nearby, and you heard a lyre, violin, guitar, or even a piano, the problem was to be solved in no time. Some people loved them, but others feared them because of the power of their magic.

Lilyone had grown up listening to the tales about this great magician, and every time someone told her about them, a recurring thought echoed in her mind:

"I wish I was as feared and beloved as them, that way, I would never be considered weak again!"

Lilyone was a teenage witch, and even though her magic was both extraordinary and strong, she was often perceived as "weird" and "antisocial" by her classmates, but in reality, those who knew her closely knew she was in fact just shy. Unfortunately, Lilyone only had one friend who knew her for who she truly was, Calliene, whom she had known since childhood, and was the most extroverted person you could ever meet.

Calliene has always thought that those stories were nothing but children's stories, and because of this, she would get into debates with her friend quite often.

"I'm telling you, Callie, they're real! Didn't you watch the news last week? Another hunter came back from their search with bruises, claiming that they are the strongest sorcerer to ever live!" - Lilyone would say, pointing out to her friend every single reason she could find to argue that the magician existed.

"Yeah, about that. Have you ever thought that those so-called 'hunters' are just being paid to spread the rumor? No one has actually seen the musician face-to-face, yet everyone claims they're real! Doesn't it sound fishy to you?"

"Who knows, maybe they're just shy! They're famous but shy. I get it, / can relate."

"You sure? I'm pretty certain that only three people in the *whole* school recognise you." - Callie answered mockingly, knowing very well that her friend wasn't very well-known in class.

"Doesn't matter. What I'm trying to say is that they're real! I'm sure of it! Also, if I ever get the chance... I'll go find them, and meet them!"

"And what will you do once you meet them? Ask for their autograph or something?"

"No! Well, now that you mention it, I might consider that as well... But what I would actually *love* to do is ask them for advice!"

"Advice?" - Calliene looked at her friend with clear confusion on her face - "From *them*?"

"Yes!" - Lilyone said, unaware of how weird the statement was to her best friend - "Advice on how to be more confident! Maybe if I become someone noticeable, someone like them, I won't be ignored anymore!" - Lilyone had a little hope in her voice. After all, that was her one true wish.

"Lily, how many times have I told you, you don't have to change yourself just to fit in! You're awesome just the way you are. Besides, you have me! I don't care how confident or extroverted you are, I'll be your friend either way!"

"Awww, thanks Callie, but I have to do it. I just want to meet them, that's all!" - Lily hugged her best friend. "You know what? I'm gonna go find them tomorrow! Since we are entering summer vacation, and my parents aren't home because of work.... It can't be that hard, right?"

"Are you sure you want to do it? It might be dangerous...." Calliene sounded worried. She knew Lilyone was old enough to take care of herself, but at the same time, she couldn't help but wonder if she'd be safe.

"Don't worry about me, I'll be alright! I'll bring my phone with me, I promise that I'll talk to you every night!" - Lily said, reassuringly. "I better head home now. Got to prepare! Bye Callie!"

Then, Lilyone went home, as excited as ever. She was still going over her plan as she packed what she'd need; she would journey across the woods, where the bounty hunters used to go look for the musician. Then, if the trip lasted more than a day, she'd prepare a little camp with the things she could store in her bag. When she was sure of what she was going to do, she went to sleep.

When she woke up, she went straight to have breakfast, got dressed, and mentally reviewed her plan.

Then, when she knew she was ready, she left her house and went straight into the woods, to the place where they rumored the sorcerer to hide away.

Eventually, the vegetation at the woods started getting thicker and thicker, making it harder for the young witch to get through. She decided to use magic to cut some vines that made it nearly impossible for her to move on.

After a long while, Lilyone started questioning whether she was doing the right thing or just being delusional. Maybe Calliene was right, and the sorcerer was nothing but a hoax. But she didn't give up. She remembered how much they had inspired all her life, so she continued to move on through the forest.

Suddenly, she found herself in a place different from the rest. It was a fountain, surrounded by beautiful crystals, each one of a varying color. As Lily moved closer to these rocks, she noticed a piece of paper taped to a tree.

"If you wish to find me, you must first succeed in acquiring three of these crystals. The color does not matter, just grab the ones that feel right."

The witch read the note, and was left confused.

It sounded way too easy. If the musician was, as they said, super mysterious and powerful, wouldn't they leave a more challenging task, rather than just collecting rocks? Then, as Lilyone went on to grab her first crystal, a purple one which glowed in the moonlight, she was caught by surprise.

The crystal moved! She tried to get it again, only to be fooled by the rock once more. She thought that maybe, that specific crystal didn't want to be touched, and decided to go for a bright red one.

But it wasn't just the purple crystal. Every single one she tried to get moved, making it impossible for her to get her hands on even the tip of them.

Eventually, she thought to herself:

"Maybe, if I stop following the crystals, they'll come to me, instead of me having to go to them. Another choice could be to fool them, but I think that's more unreasonable."

And so, Lilyone sat on a rock and waited as the crystals slowly started getting settled. Then, she pretended to not care about what the crystals were doing. As time went by, she noticed how the crystals moved closer to her. Then, she tried to grab one, and to her surprise, the crystal didn't move! She then took three of them, the shining purple one, the bright red one, and a dark blue one.

As she put them inside her backpack, she noticed the ground shaking. Her first instinct was to run away, but she didn't manage to do it on time. Suddenly, she heard a voice behind her.

"Hello! I'm assuming you came here looking for me?"

She turned around, and couldn't believe her eyes. It was the musician. They had medium, light purple hair, and bright red eyes. They wore a dark blue blazer with black pants, and in their hands laid a cello with different carvings on its surface.

"You're- You're the musician! I knew it! You were real all along!" - Lilyone couldn't be happier. Actually, if it wasn't for her tiredness, she'd have probably jumped up and down for ten minutes straight.

"Huh. You don't look like a bounty hunter, and also, I think you're the only one so far that has managed to solve my riddle. Good job! Most people usually give up as soon as the crystals refuse to go with them. So, what brings you here, young witch?" - The mage smiled, as they grabbed the precious rocks that Lilyone had collected.

"Actually, I'm here because I'm looking for advice. You see, back home I'm often treated as an outcast. And ever since I've heard the stories about all the things you've done, I thought that maybe you could tell me how to be more self-assured?" - The witch remembered what her friend had told her about not needing to change herself in order to be liked. She wouldn't do that, she just needed a little confidence boost!

"So you want to trust yourself, you say? And why is that? Don't you realize what a great witch you are? You managed to solve my riddle, something that nobody ever did, and all because of your creative thinking. You thought outside the box, you are creative and I think that's something to be proud of. Your instinct told you what to do, and it was right. Maybe if you stopped doubting yourself, you'd reach your full potential." - The musician didn't really know what to say. They hadn't had a conversation like that with anyone in years, let alone with a witch they even didn't fully know.

"So you think I'm creative? Thank you so much! I know I should stop doubting myself, but it's just so hard sometimes, you know? But I'll try." - Lilyone looked at the sorcerer, someone she has admired for most of her life. She wondered if she'd ever be like them. But then, she decided that maybe, just maybe, it was too soon to start thinking about things like that, and decided to first focus on her problems, one step at a time.

"I better go home. My friend's waiting for me, you know? I don't want to make her worry."

"Wait. Before you go, one more question." - The wizard looked at Lilyone - "I saw how you used magic back at the forest, and I must say that you're a very talented young witch. Would you like to become my student? - They waited eagerly for the girl's response.

"Me, your student? For real???? Of course! Thank you so much!!" - Lilyone couldn't believe it. She was going to be taught musical magic by one of the most powerful magicians in the world. She was bursting with excitement, and for a brief moment, she seemed to forget how tired she was.

"Heh, it will be a pleasure teaching you, Miss...."

"Lilyone! Lilyone Windlash"

"Alright, and I'm Lux. Lux Winter."

"Do I have to come to the woods for each class, or is it somewhere else?" - Lily asked, quite unsure if she'd remember which route to take.

"That won't be necessary. We can discuss the location later. Go back home now, your friend is probably expecting you." -Lux winked at their student.

"Oh, that's right! I better get back to Callie! Goodbye!"

Then, the young witch started her journey back home. She couldn't wait to tell Callie everything that had happened.

The End.