

The Medicine

I stand at the edge of the forest. Before me stretches a long line of trees, densely packed together. My feet rest on the grass. Behind me lies an empty, barren land of grass and stones. The wind blows, lifting strands of my hair. Suddenly, I see them, standing between the trees. Men and women. They form a long line at the forest's edge, their figures extending as far as my eyes can see. I try to catch their gaze, but none look at me. They stare straight ahead, their faces expressionless, making no sound. A chill of fear grips me. What is this? What is happening here?

Then, it dawns on me: these are my ancestors. But why won't they acknowledge me? I wave my arms, call out to them, and jump up and down. It doesn't matter. No matter what I do, not one of them stirs. They stand there. Slowly, panic begins to rise within me. What should I do? What is the meaning of this? I cry out to my ancestors:

"What do you want from me?"

My shout fades into the wind. Still, no one responds. Why don't they see me? I collapse to my knees, tears streaming down my face.

"What do you want from me? I don't know what to do," I sob softly, despair tightening its grip on me. My head hangs low, and I sit on the ground, helpless and defeated. After some time, one ancestor steps forward, onto the grass, out of the line of trees. I look up. He is a man with long black hair and earthy brown clothes. He begins to speak:

“You must enter the forest and find your way.”

Then he steps back, and the ancestors’ vision fades, leaving only the trees before me. Without hesitation, I rise and step into the forest.

Lost

After wandering for what feels like hours, I begin to question where I’m going. Which way should I turn? Which direction should I take? I stop and look around. No matter where I turn, I see rows of trees stretching endlessly. I feel lost. Alone in this dark forest, I have no idea where to go. Where is the North? From which direction did I come? Should I keep moving forward? Am I supposed to reach the centre of the forest? But which way is that? My natural sense of direction has abandoned me, and panic begins to run through my veins. How will I escape this maze? I start spinning in circles, shouting and crying out for help, hoping anyone will hear me or see me and come to my aid. But I am utterly alone. The air grows colder, the shadows darker. And then it hits me: the night is falling. I have no shelter, food, water, or way out. If I stay here, I will die. This realization consumes me. I weep and scream, my panic devouring me from the inside. Exhausted, I stop walking and collapse onto a bed of pine needles. The ground feels soft beneath me as I lie there, crying into the silence. It feels like an eternity, lying there, waiting for nothing. There is nothing left to do. Then, something stirs within me. Slowly, a sense of peace rises in my heart: a peace with my ending, my death, here in the forest, alone. Bit by bit, I feel myself surrendering to this quiet acceptance. If this is what life asks of me and how it must

end, then so be it. It is enough. I lay my ear to the ground, close my eyes, and allow myself to let go.

From far away, deep within the earth, I hear a faint rumble. It catches my attention. A whisper follows:

“Life is meant to be lived.”

The words take time to settle within me, but I sit upright with a start when they do. I am alive. This realization fills me with renewed strength, and I rise to my feet to keep moving forward. Not two hundred meters later, my courage falters again. I’m still hopelessly lost, with no idea how to navigate this endless forest. The flood of despair rises once more. Over and over, my thoughts repeat: I don’t know what to do. I don’t know where to go. I don’t know. Who or what could help me? That’s when I sense it... A presence among the trees. Not far from me stands a large black horse. She is calm, and I feel no fear. In my mind, I speak to her, pleading for help. I explain that I’m lost and don’t know how to proceed. She meets my gaze, her eyes seeming to look straight through me. Oh, how I long for her to carry me. Slowly, she steps closer, sniffs my hair, and allows me to touch her. A connection forms between us. I climb onto her back, and she begins to walk, guiding me deeper into the forest. Her steady pace rocks me gently to sleep.

I have no sense of how far or how long we travelled together. At some point, I slide off her back and find myself lying on soft ground. I look at her, but she glances at me and walks away. She has brought me this far and given me some rest. Filled with hope, I rise and continue my journey. But the forest is dark and heavy, and fear creeps back into my heart. How can I navigate this place? Images of migrating geese come to mind: how they traverse the globe using their inner compass. Could I do the