

Member Name: Endless Sea ~turmoil~
Theme: Visions
Word Count: 552
Name: Visions

She found Korlu huddled behind a boulder near the still-smoldering campfire, knees clutched to his chest, limbs thin and limp under discolored white armor, eyes and heartlight flickering with dim gold light. The face behind his Mask of Clairvoyance was tensed and quivering, the jaw hanging slack, the eyelids drooping.

He reminded Ihara of rumors she had heard about the first of her kind- about the terrible burden Helryx had been forced to shoulder when she forsook the Code, and what countless millennia of service to the Great Spirit had done to her body. The Toa of Lightning had often wondered what her kind would look like in such a withered state; looking at the present state of her comrade, she felt she had found out.

Dropping to one knee beside Korlu, she whispered, “Brother? Can you hear me?”

The Toa of Ice said nothing, but his head bobbed forward slightly.

Ihara closed her eyes, exhaled softly. “Korlu, do you remember what happened at the campfire this evening?”

Korlu didn’t respond.

“Korlu, you... We were talking about the Visorak tower that showed up in the south, remember? And you were in the middle of one of those visions your mask gives you, saying something about Kahgarak and Lohrak, and then you just fell over and had a seizure-”

“The visions help us,” Korlu croaked.

Ihara blinked. “What?”

“The visions help us,” he repeated.

Ihara stared at him. “...No, brother, they- they don’t. The visions *hurt*. They hurt *you*.” She reached for his hand. “They hurt *all* of us-“

Faster than she had believed possible, Korlu lashed out and grabbed her arm. “No. The visions help.”

Ihara gasped something that sounded halfway between a cough and a sob. Korlu let go, his fingers lingering on her arm for a moment before clutching at his knees again.

The Toa of Lightning didn't try anything after that at first, simply sitting down next to her comrade, not letting him escape her gaze. Korlu did nothing, his eyes firmly focused on the ground.

After a few minutes, Ihara reached over to Korlu again. "Brother?"

Korlu tilted his head slightly in her direction. When a moment passed and he didn't look away, Ihara, taking a deep breath, pulled off her Pakari.

Immediately, she felt like her lungs had been completely emptied, and with the waves of nausea and dizziness that quickly followed, she doubled over with her eyes closed and teeth gritted, clutching at her stomach. She couldn't remember the last time she'd gone without a Kanohi, and her body was reacting far worse than she'd expected.

Suddenly, she felt the mask in her hand being pulled towards her face, and she forced her head up to see Korlu kneeling over her, eyes wide behind his mask as he tried to reattach her Pakari.

"No," she gasped, and the Toa of Ice's grip suddenly grew far weaker, although his hand remained on her Kanohi. "Y-you take... My mask... I'll wear yours..." She attempted a reassuring smile. "One of us has to wear it... Right...?"

Korlu looked at her, looking much as he had when Ihara had found him, eyes half-closed, mouth half-open. Even when he reached around the back of his head and slowly peeled the Mask of Clairvoyance from his face, his eyes never left hers.