

THE
IRIS WARRIORS

NARRATION

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Darkness ruled the world, thriving in her cold and dreary isolation. She knew that as long as she covered the world in her dark embrace she would be safe, invincible, untouchable; the one and absolute ruler of her shadowy domain.

Then in an instant it all changed, her certainty blown apart, split asunder. There was something else, something strange had invaded her world.

There it was again, darting around, hurting her eyes. Light was tiny and fast, moved quickly as he twirled and flitted around her.

Despite herself, Darkness crept toward him. She wanted him. Wanted to possess him, to control him. She smiled.

Light smiled too – this was exactly what he wanted. Light revealed himself in all his brilliant white glory, then with his graceful steps and dazzling eyes he seduced her. After an eternity of loneliness, Darkness quickly surrendered to his charms, joined him as he danced his dance of seduction.

With Darkness unable to resist him, he was satisfied. He had done what he'd set out to do, was bored, ready to discover new places. Without warning Light vanished.

Darkness was sad and angry. She longed for Light, felt betrayed. But when she dreamt of revenge for his betrayal, she felt something stirring within her – Light had left her a gift.

Pain unimagined wracked Darkness. She fell to the ground, clutching at her stomach, plunged her fingers deep in the crevices of her icy cape, pulled her hand out, peered at her thin fingers – there was something in her hand, something pulsing, something alive, its brightness trying to escape. Intrigued, horrified, she opened her hand, but before she could see it properly, it escaped.

As she watched it, the object changed and grew into something bold, beautiful and brilliant. It made her heart beat fast in fear and excitement **as she** gazed upon her magnificent first-born child, marvelled at his beauty and brightness, named him Yellow.

Suddenly there was another sharp pain. She recoiled, collapsed in a heap on the cold ground as more colours burst forth from her in stunning profusion. Six more children followed: Red, Orange, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet.

She would never have to be alone again. She had her beautiful children - the Iris Warriors. The Iris Warriors were lively, energetic, full of passion for life. They laughed and roamed, spinning, swirling, sparkling, jumping and laughing, joyous from simply being alive.

Darkness was delighted. She tried to keep them close so she wouldn't lose them like she'd lost Light. But the more she smothered them the more they wanted to be free. They scattered like clouds before a strong wind, rejected Darkness's embrace, skipped, leaped and ran away from her clawing, grasping hands.

Once again, Darkness found herself betrayed by something beautiful. She felt ugly and unwanted, slow, cumbersome and dull compared with her exquisite children. Darkness vowed revenge on them, swore she would destroy beauty.

Oblivious to her torment, Yellow led his brothers and sisters around their world, leaving trails of their vibrant presence everywhere. Wherever they went they brought new, exciting things to life, imbuing the world with their colour and beauty, their fun and excitement.

Darkness watched them from afar, brooding in her isolation, a storm brewing within her, dark thoughts rolling and building, hatred stabbing away at her insides, bile poisoning her mind. She wanted to unleash her fury on her cruel children, punish them for their heartless, wanton betrayal.

A shimmering pool of water lay at her feet, bright fish swimming in it. She hated it! She plunged her hand into the pond to grab a fish and squeeze the life out of it, gasped in surprise! As her cold, sharp fingers slipped into the water, it immediately froze, went dark, her bitter energy destroying everything within it.

A thin evil smile crossed her face. She had power! Her children may have the power to create, but she too had power - power to destroy, power to avenge Light and the children he'd given her.

Mad laughter erupted from Darkness, filling the air with a pale, frigid fog. She swirled around rapidly, her brittle cloak whipped in the wind, her hard skirts flailing around her as she moved faster and faster, the fog around her building, growing, then suddenly shattering into angular splinters and spears. And from the frozen, shattered spears, the icy, broken shards, Shadows began to emerge. Small

versions of Darkness, the Shadows were hers, born of her wicked, dark mind, an army of wretches to do her bidding.

Darkness gathered up her Shadows, descended on an idyllic meadow of bright, colourful flowers – within seconds it was gone, wiped clean, replaced by the deep black chill of eternal night. Inspired by their success, Darkness and her Shadows began to cast themselves upon every beautiful thing they saw. The darker and colder and uglier the world became, the happier they became.

The Iris Warriors were too busy playing and having fun to notice Darkness and her black, impish Shadows as they wreaked havoc on their world. She stalked them, her Shadow army quickly smothering everything the Iris Warriors created – the second the warriors moved on, the Shadows swarmed in, darkening, destroying, desecrating.

Now Darkness wanted more – she wanted to weaken and imprison the Iris Warriors. Knowing her children's weaknesses, she came up with a plan to destroy them, using their own vices against them. With the help of her Shadows she would manipulate each of them, force them to abandon each other. They would all experience the bitter pain of betrayal, just as Darkness had.

And so the battle began...

Indigo was a greedy child who felt she deserved anything she wanted. The Shadows whispered suggestions to her, froze her heart, fed her **greed**. She gazed at Yellow, happily playing with a beautiful bird he had created. She demanded that he share it with her, but Yellow simply laughed at his sister and moved away. Indigo's greed festered and grew...

Yellow was easy prey. He loved nothing more than playing and merriment. When the Shadows approached him, he ignored them, he was too busy playing with his bird. When he sat down to rest they lulled him to sleep with a lullaby, stole his bird, devoured the bright beautiful world where he lived.

In the distance, Red watched Violet's graceful moves. They pleased him, were very different from his fiery moves and intensity. He lusted after her and wanted her for himself.

Fuelled and tempted further by the Shadows, Indigo worked with the Shadows to feed Red's lusty passions, encouraged him to claim Violet as his own.

Violet was combing her lustrous hair with her fingers when Indigo approached, whispered softly in her ear. When Violet heard that Red lusted for her she was proud to be the one this fiery Warrior had chosen. She flashed her beautiful eyes at Red, pranced, teased and tempted him. In return he strutted and posed, showing off, the two feeding each other's weaknesses, **lust** and pride. Intoxicated with each other, they decided to run away together.

But still Indigo was not satisfied. She whispered to Green, told her that Red lusted after Violet. Green was envious, wanted to be the object of everyone's desires.

As Red and Violet prepared to run off, Green stormed over to them, tried to lure Red to her. Violet simply laughed at her attempts, said they were pathetic. Consumed by lust, Red and Violet brushed Green aside, turning her **envy** into anger and pain.

Blue was angry and filled with **wrath!** He had watched the foolishness of his brothers and sisters, they not worthy of his time, his help. Nobody would listen to him. Why should he even be around the other Warriors? Blue stormed off.

Orange loved feasting, was happy indulging his gluttony among all the fruits, animals, and food that they had created.

Darkness whispered to her child, telling Orange that she had found a river that had the most beautiful fish, a meadow with the most delicious fruit, a place where the abundance would never run out. Greedy, eager, he gladly followed his mother, with eyes only for the food. Darkness smiled her wicked smile. Her work was almost complete.

The growing darkness wormed its way into Yellow's head. He shivered as he woke from his slumbers, saw the cold blackness around him, realized how foolish he had been.

Yellow jumped up, went to find his brothers and sisters. They were strong, bright and beautiful – they would help him. When he saw them he realised that they had all lost their lustre, their strength, their vitality. Instead of being strong and vibrant they

were like shrivelled frozen leaves clinging to a dying tree. One small breeze, a whisper from the Shadows, would send them all spiralling down to their death.

Yellow pleaded with each sibling, begged them to work together, to be strong, powerful, as they had once been, but they all feared Darkness, would not fight her.

Darkness watched her children and laughed with venomous malice. The Iris Warriors had dared to defy her and now they were paying the price!

Yellow felt the stinging chill of his mother's hatred. If he were to make a difference, he must act alone. He walked over to Darkness, stared at her, a bold flash of brilliant yellow light radiating out of him. He tried to force Darkness back, expel her from their world, but she did not move, and Yellow's light quickly dimmed.

Yellow did not give up. Again he tried to fight her, again his yellow light flared out, again he failed. One by one the other Warriors came over to watch their brother. What was he doing?

Yellow continued to fight with everything he had, but he was tiring, her icy breath sucking the life out of him. The other Iris Warriors looked on, horrified, as he fell back, his beautiful yellow light dimming. As he stumbled backwards, the Shadows swarmed in, surrounding him, picking and sniping at him, weakening him with each attack.

A scream escaped Green's lips as she suddenly hurled herself forward. Green lived to help others, to give of herself, and so she threw her beautiful light at her dark mother, defending her brother.

For a moment the others were frozen, then one by one they raced forward, determined to help Green and Yellow battle their dark mother.

Red, with his passionate loving nature, defending the others.

Orange, filled with energy and enthusiasm.

Blue, calm, measured, knowing that this was their moment.

Violet, filled with a love for her brothers and sisters that she had almost forgotten.

And Indigo, the force of harmony, uniting them all.

Darkness reared up, her dark icy cloak overshadowing all of them, certainty on her grim face. She smiled her cold smile, gathered the shards of her frozen cape around her, swooped down on the warriors with brutal certainty.

But as she tried to consume them, something changed – her darkness flickered, began to fade. The Iris Warriors had formed a tightly bonded circle of power, their colours combining into a dazzling bright light – not the individual colours, but the pure, brilliant white of their father, Light.

The light grew and grew, ever brighter, washing over Darkness, engulfing and enveloping her, lighting every dark corner of the world. The Shadows tried to hide behind her, wrap themselves in her brittle skirts, but the force of light was too strong, there was no escape.

Darkness could do nothing to save her Shadows as they were blown away like fog before a rising storm. As the Iris Warriors moved forward, Darkness slowly retreated. Each step backwards that Darkness took weakened her, until she could no longer move. Suddenly the circle the Iris Warriors had formed erupted in to a sphere of white flames, drowning all that was dark in brilliant clear Light. Darkness was vanquished.

The Iris Warriors were united, joined forever and shining down on the world. They called themselves the Sun and shone their bright yellow rays in honour of the Yellow Warrior's bravery and courage against Darkness.

Darkness still has her place, still creeps back each night, but she knows she can never triumph, that each day the Sun will rise, each day Light will bring us warmth, comfort, life.

And today and forever more, the Sun weeps at the memory of what happened that day. The sparkling silver droplets fall from the sky and kiss everything below. For a short, magical moment they bring to life all the Warriors' colours in a divine rainbow, a reminder of how the world was made beautiful and safe from Darkness and her shadows by the virtues and sacrifice of the Iris Warriors.

THE END