

THE BOY WHO SPOKE THUNDER



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Told by the Father Who Listened

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Part I: The Storm Inside

There once was a boy named Niko,
whose voice rumbled like a waking sky.

He didn't whisper. He didn't tiptoe.
His words came big and bright and loud
like lightning trying to become language.

When Niko laughed, the walls shook gently.
When he cried, the wind would stop to listen.
And when he screamed
even the mountains tilted their heads.

Niko wasn't trying to be noisy.
He was just full.
Full of feelings, and colors, and questions,
and a sound too big to keep inside.

But people didn't understand.

“Quiet, Niko.”

“Use your indoor voice.”

“Why do you always shout?”

So little by little,

Niko began to wonder if something was wrong with him.

Maybe his voice was broken.

Or maybe...

he was.



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Part II – The Silence Around

The more Niko tried to hold in his thunder,
the heavier his chest became.

He would sit in class and bite his tongue.
He would count to ten when he wanted to roar.
He would press his hands to his heart
just to keep the noise from escaping.

And the silence?
It didn't feel peaceful.
It felt like a cage made of clouds.

He watched the other children laugh softly,
like their joy knew how to stay small.
He didn't know how to do that.

So Niko began to drift
not away from people,
but away from himself.

His words stayed inside.

His feelings curled up tight.

And his voice?

It grew quieter... and sadder.

One night, Niko looked up at the stars and whispered,

“If my voice is too much for the world,

why did I get one at all?”

The stars didn’t answer.

But the forest beyond his window did.

It rustled.

It stirred.

It called.



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Part III – The Meeting in the Forest

That night, Niko followed the sound.

He tiptoed past sleeping doors,
through the moonlit field,
and into the whispering trees.

The forest didn't tell him to be quiet.
It welcomed every step.

As he walked, something strange happened.
The storm inside his chest began to hum
not in anger, but in recognition.
Like the trees already knew his name.

And then he saw it.

At the base of an ancient cedar,
there stood a creature he'd never seen before
part owl, part wind, part something older than time.

Its feathers shimmered like rain on stone.

Its eyes held stories.

And its voice, when it spoke,
was both thunder and whisper.

“Ah,” it said. “You’re the boy who speaks sky.”

Niko blinked. “I’m the boy who speaks too loud.”

The creature tilted its head.

“No. You are the boy who was never taught how to listen to his own thunder.”

“Isn’t it bad?” Niko asked. “To shake things when I speak?”

“Only if you shake them by accident,” the creature replied.

“But if you learn to aim your voice...

you can move more than air.

You can move hearts.”



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Part IV – The Turning Point

The creature motioned with a wing,
and the trees around them began to glow
not with light, but with sound.

“Speak,” it said.

Niko hesitated.

“What if I break the forest?”

“Then the forest will break open,
and show you what’s inside.”

So Niko opened his mouth.

Not to yell.

Not to cry.

Just to let the thunder inside him speak.

At first, it came out messy
a wobbling sound,
half-roar, half-song, full of feeling.

But the forest didn't flinch.

The trees leaned closer.

The ground hummed in harmony.

"Again," said the creature.

This time, Niko let the sound rise from his belly.

He let it roll through his ribs,

vibrate in his throat,

and fly from his mouth like a wave of weather.

It was loud

but not scary.

It was big

but not angry.

It was his voice,

clear and golden and whole.

The stars overhead flickered.

The cedar behind him shed a single glowing leaf.

And the creature smiled.

"That," it said, "was thunder that knows itself."



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Part V – The Return

When Niko walked out of the forest,
the sky was just beginning to change.

Not stormy.
Not silent.
Just... awake.

He carried no souvenirs,
no proof of the creature,
no magic feathers.

Only a knowing,
quietly pulsing in his chest.

The next day at school,
a kid dropped his books and whispered,
“Ugh, I’m so dumb.”

Niko felt the thunder rise
but this time, he didn’t explode.

He looked at the kid and said,
“That’s not true. You’re just learning.”

His voice was strong,
but kind.

It didn’t shake the windows.
It shook the air around the boy’s heart.

Later that week, his little brother tripped and cried.
And instead of telling him to stop,
Niko sat down beside him and sang
soft and low,
a song the forest taught him.

No one else knew what had changed.
But Niko did.

He still felt big feelings.
He still wanted to roar sometimes.
But now he had a secret:

His voice was not a problem.
It was a gift that needed learning.

And when the thunder rose again
as it would
Niko would listen to it first...
and speak it like a song.



Dedication Page

For Santiago, from your Papa.

I heard you then.

I hear you always.

