

Years ago, if you looked up to the night sky, you might have seen Star, she was only small, but she was bright and twinkly and she loved to shine.

She dreamed of one day becoming so bright that she could light up the whole sky.

She spent her nights twinkling and taught other little stars how to shine too. She shared her light with those who had lost their sparkle, and soon (in her little corner of the sky at least) it was brighter than ever.

But one day, something happened. Something dark. Something stars don't have words for.

And suddenly, out of nowhere, her light was gone.

Every little sparkle engulfed by darkness. She couldn't even see herself. It was impossible to tell where she ended and the night sky began. There was just empty, black nothingness where she used to be. And so she just hung there, (at least, she thought she did, it was hard to tell) suspended in the emptiness, trying to make sense of what had happened and where her light had gone.

It dawned on her just how much darkness there was all around. It was terrifying.

Had it always been this dark?

She had to get it back somehow, the light she had lost. But the sky is infinite, ever expanding. Searching for all the scattered pieces would take eternities and she did not have the strength.

But Star was not alone (no matter how alone she felt).

The stars around her sent warmth and light to the place she used to be, where she still was, even if she couldn't feel herself there anymore.

She wondered if she would ever shine again.

"Of course you will. *Of course.*" came a steady voice, a promise that felt strong and true, even in the darkness.

"But how?" she choked, in a voice she didn't recognise.

The moon didn't answer, it just shone, gentle and strong, sharing its light with her, just as she had done for so many others before.

And little by little (and much more slowly than she wanted) little sparks began to come back.

And the darkness that had swallowed her for so long was returned to the night.

It was never hers to begin with.

And so she began to shine again. Gentle and flickering.

But that wasn't enough for her. She wanted to shine just as she had before, just as strong and bright and powerful. She wanted to light up the whole sky.

"So this is it then? This is all I can be now?!" she shouted to the moon, her rage and disappointment and exhaustion filling the space where light used to be.

The moon shone, gentle and true.

“Of course not. *Of course not.* This is just the beginning.”

Another promise, a prophecy.

And it didn't happen all at once, far from it in fact, but the moon was right, and over time, her light grew brighter than it had ever been before the darkness.

Brighter than it ever could have been without it.

And when stars that had lost their own light saw her, something lit up inside of them; hope that maybe they could shine again too. Her light held within it a promise of brighter nights, if they could just hold on through the darkness.

So, little by little, spark by spark, they did.

And together, they lit up the whole sky.

