

THE GIRL WHO LOVED THE MOON

By Ann Marie Oliva

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CHARACTERS

STARLA A young Aleut girl, 18, troubled and preoccupied. She has long dark hair, parted in the middle.

JERI STARLA'S college advisor.

TIME

The present.

SETTING

The advisor's classroom, or office.

PROPS

Props include: a desk, two chairs, some folders and papers, a backpack, notebook and pen.

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JERI sits at a desk working on some papers. STARLA enters quietly. JERI looks up to notice her.

JERI: I didn't hear you come in.

STARLA: I was trying to remember.

JERI: What time the appointment was?

STARLA: It's like it's on the tip of my tongue, but not really, because really it's on the tip of my mind, but every time I get close, it fades again.

JERI: Are you alright?

STARLA: This room is dark.

JERI: *(looking around)* It faces north.

STARLA: I like it dark.

(JERI sees that STARLA isn't going to sit. SHE comes around from her desk.)

JERI: I'm glad you're here.

STARLA: Really?

JERI: Yes. I've been trying to think of how I would . . . want some water or something?

STARLA: It doesn't last.

JERI: What doesn't?

STARLA: Not like at home.

JERI: Starla, I'm concerned about you.

STARLA: At home, the stars last, the snow lasts, and the moon, the moon lasts.

JERI: *(sighing)* You had a great start. You were adjusting to all your classes, earning A's and B's. I told you if there was anything, anything, you needed, just come to me.

STARLA: Here, nothing much lasts.

JERI: You scared Erin. She didn't know what to make of you after a while. That's why she requested another roommate.

(A beat)

She's worried about you. That's why she came to see me.

STARLA: I keep trying to remember.

JERI: Sit down, please.

THE GIRL WHO LOVED THE MOON – Page 4

STARLA: Why?

(JERI walks to the chair, and motions to STARLA to sit, which SHE does absently.)

JERI: I know it's not easy . . .

(STARLA goes into her back pack and takes out a notebook and starts to write in it feverishly, then stops.)

STARLA: It's gone. I had it, right here *(motioning to her head)* for just a moment, but now I can't remember.

JERI: *(opening a file folder)* You were doing alright until Parents Weekend. Do you remember what happened then? I know you didn't have anyone visit. You told me your aunt and uncle couldn't make the long trip.

STARLA: Parents Weekend?

JERI: You stopped going to class after that. I heard from all your professors. They were afraid you'd dropped out.

STARLA: *(more animated, remembers something)* There was a story.

JERI: What story?

STARLA: A myth, a fairy tale, a legend, an allegory, a fable, a parable, a folk tale, a . . .

JERI: Starla.

STARLA: The story. The story she told me over and over because I would beg her to.

JERI: She?

STARLA: The young woman.

JERI: When you were a child?

STARLA: At home.

JERI: Who was she?

STARLA: Dark hair.

(JERI waits for more of a reply.)

JERI: Do you remember anything else about her?

STARLA: Dark eyes.

JERI: Anything else?

STARLA: When the story was over, we would laugh together.

JERI: So, it was a funny story?

STARLA: I don't know.

JERI: *(looks at the folder again)* These scholarships are precious.

THE GIRL WHO LOVED THE MOON – Page 5

STARLA: Maybe she was funny? Maybe I was funny . . . yeah, yeah . . . I think I was funny. A funny, skinny, girl with stick legs and hair down her back, and teeth too big for her little face.

JERI: We only have a few of them available every year.

STARLA: It's like I'm looking at a movie and I see myself as a little girl, and the young woman, and we're laughing.

JERI: You were our first choice.

STARLA: I'm looking down and I see the pages of a book, opened . . .

JERI: You have so much promise. We don't want to lose you.

STARLA: She's pointing to something on the page.

JERI: What is it?

STARLA: The page is dark, but there are white spots . . . stars! That's it! Every time we get to that page she points to the stars and says that's how I got my name.

JERI: That's when you would laugh?

STARLA: No, the book wasn't finished.

JERI: And?

STARLA: (*puts her hand to her head*) Something about, the stars and the, moon, I think, something about the moon.

JERI: A child's book about the stars and the moon?

STARLA: Not a child's book, my book, my book.

JERI: Your book.

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