

There once was a girl who was made of stone. She lived inside a dark cave, and knew nothing of any sunlight. It was not an altogether unpleasant existence, for if you've never known a thing how could you possibly long for it? So she lived beneath the stone and assumed herself surrounded by family. Assumed, I say, because no one ever spoke to her. She knew the worms who lived inside the cave quite well, and tracked their daily lives eagerly. She also knew the spiders, beetles, and every other variety of creature who lived alongside her in the darkness, a place truly teeming with life. Every day she would find pleasure in the simple comings and goings of these creatures, and they felt to her as family, even as she imagined a true family living just out of reach through the stone. She could imagine a much larger cave teeming with life, just like this one, but instead of bugs, that life would be just like her, stone people enjoying each others' company and watching their own kind grow.

She imagined this wondrous life each day until the one when she saw the light. She didn't understand this brilliant intruder on her darkness, and was pained by its presence. It seemed a hostile alien, but she had to admit that she loved the warmth of it. Of course, the problem was that while the light was there, she found it difficult to see her bug friends. In time, that changed, and she slowly began to see once again, but this time in much greater detail. The light brought with it all manner of color, and she should see the patterns on her dear friends so intensely. She could also see a new friend. This new friend was much larger, and shaped like her, but didn't seem to be made of stone. This new friend also seemed to be very interested in her. The new friend tested the ground around her, ran a brush all over her stone surface, and took very careful measurements of the stone girl.

As time passed, the new friend paid greater and greater attention to the stone girl, and she began to like this attention. She began to lose track of her bug friends, focusing mainly on this new friend who gave her so much time and care.

Eventually, the girl began wondering if all the brushing were removing some part of her she could never regain, wondering if the light had taken from her details only found in darkness. She began to wonder these things more and more until one day, overcome with her thoughts, she accidentally spoke.

"Hello?" The new friend said, looking confusedly into the depths of the cave. "Is someone there?"

The stone girl hesitated for a moment before replying "It was me."

"Me who?" the new friend said, still staring into the darkness, but this time deeper into the cave, looking directly beyond the stone girl.

"Me, the stone girl in front of you!"

This startled the new friend. The new friend jumped in fear at the talking statue, unsure of what could be happening.

“Sorry to surprise you” said the stone girl “I didn’t know I could talk until just now.”

“Amazing!” replied the new friend. “Are you alive?”

“Of course I’m alive, I’ve been living in this cave for a very long time” replied the stone girl

“Remarkable!” said the new friend. “Who put you here? Were you carved? What are you? I have so many questions”

“I’m sorry” said the stone girl to the excited new friend “I’m very confused with all the attention, and that light is very bright, it’s hard to concentrate”

“Oh! Of course!” said the new friend “here.”

And suddenly the cave returned to darkness.

“I’d still love to know more about you” said the new friend

“Sure” replied the stone girl “But stone moves slowly”

“Can I come back tomorrow, then?” asked the new friend

The stone girl sat for a while, considering the light and the brushes and all of her bug friends, and decided that she liked all of these things at the same time.

“Sure” said the stone girl.

Her new friend quietly picked up the light and left the cave for the day, but would return each day with new questions, and even more new friends, and suddenly the stone girl didn’t dream about a stone family anymore.