

Xavian glanced around the forest glade before picking up the rabbit he'd caught. With a day until the transforming ceremony, he wants to ensure his mother will have enough food until his return. If he survives. Not everyone does. Some return scarred or missing limbs. Sometimes both. Tangible reminders signifying their transition into adulthood and magic. Absconded at night, they awake in unfamiliar territory and must navigate their way back equipped with a knife and a prism. Nobody knows Xavian can already communicate with trees, which will guide him home, and in exchange, he'll spend a lifetime protecting the forest.



## Author's Note:

This week I had to include the word prism, and the action of transforming. I may have stretched it a little with the action because, while a literal transformation likely happens, it's also a mental transformation. Either way, it's a little darker than the happy little trees I wrote about in my first fantasy micro story. I brainstormed, exploring multiple possibilities. I ended up playing off an idea Andrew Peterson used in the Wingfeather Saga. They had a coming of age ceremony that was more about being fully trained. They remained vigilant, expecting a stranger to abduct them. Except the adults added sleeping potions to the birthday cake. It reminded me of a Native American ritual I read about once where when the young come of age they go out into the woods and can't return until they meet their spirit animal.

I also considered that in almost every fantasy book there's a rite of passage at least one character must take in order to find their power or learn more about themselves. In the end, I figured Xavian needed to go out on his own coming of age journey, but I'd give him a leg up because he already knew what his ability was and could use it to his advantage to return home faster than anyone else. Unless, of course, he wakes to find himself on a beach. I considered adding that, but the pesky limitation of words held me back. Besides, if nobody knows he can talk to trees, why would they drag him to the beach? Oh, so many questions,

and with more words, I might have explored the idea.

# The Reluctant Author

