

## **JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF WITHIN**

by Varsha

Kayla came from a humble family of potters. Her people were very down-to-earth and supportive of Kayla's endeavors. She couldn't have asked for a more loving set of parents. Kayla was fascinated by nature and would go down to the river near her house and sit under a tree for hours on end.

One day, Kayla approached her father who was working at the wheel and said, "Father, I want to see the world and what it has to give me. I want to go on this journey alone so that I come to understand myself better." Her father, not having heard a more wonderful request, replied, "Certainly my dear child. Your mother and I shall personally prepare for your departure."

"Oh! Thank you so much father," Kayla exclaimed and went back to the river bank where she had always felt at home.

And so at dawn the next day, Kayla's parents bid her goodbye with a bunch of coins and bread and water for the journey ahead. Kayla had known no such freedom till she tread through meadows and basked in the sun that warmed her skin. She stopped to rest once in a while and couldn't believe what existed before her. She was amazed by the unexplored sights of nature.

Soon darkness gathered and instead of retreating to a lodge, she found comfort underneath the stars. And they spoke to her, "Though we are landmarks of the universe, it is you and not us that holds your destiny." Peacefully did Kayla sleep that night and woke up refreshed and ready to take on the rest of her journey. She noticed that the sun wasn't as

bright as it had been the day before. Her doubts were justified when soon after, the sky darkened, and it started raining. Instead of seeking shelter, Kayla let the rain soak her skin, and it spoke to her, "In me you shall grow again and learn to embrace your storms." The lightning affirmed what the rain had said and giving way to thunder spoke, "Be the lightning. Even if it is for a second, light up the sky." Kayla had never felt so calm, and that night she slept happy and unafraid. The next day with a smile lighting up her face, Kayla continued on her journey into the woods that were greener than ever. There she stopped and stood staring at the tall trees who spoke to her, "Be like me. Stay grounded, keep growing and know when to let go." After a moment, Kayla felt as if she had company and looked around her. That's when she heard the wind's playful whisper, "You are a leaf that I can sweep away, watch yourself as you soar."

With closed eyes, Kayla realized that she had learnt all that there was to learn and seen all that there was to be seen. It was now time to go back to where she was needed. On her trip home, the sun, the stars, the rain and lightning, the trees and the wind followed her. Kayla was welcomed by her family who rejoiced in her discoveries. As Kayla grew older and honed her pottery skills, her works displayed homage to the beauty of her friends- the sun, the stars, the rain and lightning, the trees and the wind.