

(Looking at the information provided as they tap into a computer.)

First of all, happy birthday. Oh, I just remembered today is the 7th, and here it is July. It's too bad you weren't born in 1977. Ha.

TIMA

Yes, I've never heard that before.

BOARDING AGENT

Two first-class passengers canceled, so you're both in luck.

TIMA

Thank you. That seems to be happening a lot today.

HELEN

Just imagine what will happen at sunrise. Ok, let's go sit over here. I have a lot to lay on you.

Start Here

(They sit down.)

This is a good place. No one to overhear. But if someone does, it's not like they'll take an old Black woman talking crazy talk to her granddaughter seriously.

TIMA

I don't.

HELEN

Watch your mouth, young lady.

TIMA

Sorry. But it's late, and I'm tired and hungry.

HELEN

Then just listen. Don't interrupt or ask me any questions until I'm done. Promise?

TIMA

Promise.

HELEN

Hundreds of years ago, when our people were first brought here, there was a prophecy, and the prophecy started with a daughter born under a full moon. She was born on July 7, and apparently, she was born with powers that skipped a generation, passed down to the seventh granddaughter of a seventh granddaughter. Now for those 7th granddaughters not born on July 7th, they get special powers that last for seven months

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TIMA

Grandma! How did you never tell me this?

HELEN

You're not supposed to interrupt me. I'm a seventh granddaughter of a seventh granddaughter, too. I just wasn't born on July 7, so my powers lasted only a glorious seven months. And if you want to know what those powers are, let's just say the world always says yes to you, so I made sure that I squeezed in all the yeses I could get in those months. That's why I have a house on the beach in California and a business that kept growing and making money long past my allocated time. I made sure that I crossed paths with the love of my life, so that we could get married and have babies that would have beautiful babies. I squeezed in a few more questions that required a yes.

(A long beat.)

You still with me?

TIMA

This sounds like something out of an Octavia Butler novel, but I'm still listening.

HELEN

Good. It's the job of the elder to pass all this on when they think the girl can hear it. But it can only be on a seven birthday year. And that's not ever seven years like multiplication. It's like numerology where you add the numbers of the birth year up. When you were 25, I didn't think you could handle this much better than you would have at 16. But now...

TIMA

But now I'm 34, another three plus four.

HELEN

Exactly. Now you're 34. You seem settled with Jimmy and mostly happy in your life. I also see a little sadness in your eyes when you think no one is looking.

TIMA

You always pay attention to me when it seems no one else is. As a psychiatrist, I feel as if I'm always keeping an eye on other people. You've always kept an eye on me. Even from afar.

HELEN

You're my special grandbaby. And just like I did, When you have six older sisters, it's easy to get lost in the shuffle. But here's the greater power you get as part of this prophecy - you get seven years of yeses, not seven months.

Stop

TIMA

A prophecy. And seven years? Just like that?

HELEN

Well, not quite.

TIMA

That's what all of this is about. A superstition.

HELEN

Not a superstition. A prophecy! A prophecy that's come true over and over again.

TIMA

You're serious.

HELEN

As serious as my weekly press and curl with Ethel. You have to take a little trip first. More like a quest. But you sailed through the first challenge already.

TIMA

I wouldn't say that getting through airport security this time of night is much of a challenge.

HELEN

Getting through airport security is just a routine pain-in-the-ass. The first challenge was to gather riches.