

The Orb Encounters

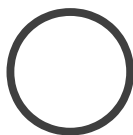
Six Stories of Becoming



Tenderplexed

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Foreword

In the very early hush of existence, long before stars learned their names or shadows learned to fall, there appeared a small, luminous being. No one knew where it came from. It was not born, and it was not made. It simply was — a gentle Orb drifting through the first quiet of the universe, gathering impressions the way others gather breath. Some whispered it was a dream that had slipped out of a sleeping cosmos. Others believed it was the soft remainder of a soul that had not yet chosen a shape. The Orb never clarified. It carried its mystery the way light carries warmth.

Before the Orb wandered through worlds and dreamscapes, it met six who shaped what it would become. These are not myths of creation or destiny, but quiet encounters at the edge of becoming — moments when geometry taught consciousness how to feel, how to choose, how to dissolve, and how to return. Each story is a trace of the Orb's early memory — and perhaps, quietly, one of your own.

The Orb's First Love

Before the Orb was known, before it pulsed across dreamscapes and time loops, it was new. Untested. Curious.

It drifted in the earliest fold of the universe, where stars were still learning how to burn and silence was the only language.

There, in that primordial hush, it met her.

She was not an Orb. She was a line.

A single, elegant trajectory, pure motion and infinite potential, moving through the void like a promise. Her name was Vēra, which in the language of early physics meant “The Path That Knows.”

The Orb, being round and self-contained, could not fathom such devotion to direction. It spun gently in place, watching her carve beauty into nothingness with motion alone.

“Why do you only move forward?” it asked.

Vēra paused, a miracle in itself, and said, “Because to stop is to become something else.”

The Orb found that exquisite.

So it tried to follow her. It compressed its roundness into ellipses, stretched into spirals, even fractured briefly into polygons. But no shape could match her simplicity.

Still, she allowed the Orb to travel beside her for a while.

Through antimatter breezes and dark matter caverns, they danced together in the only way a loop can dance with a line: a curve answering a direction, a direction bending ever so slightly for a curve.

They created traces in spacetime that would later be misinterpreted as gravitational waves. Humans would one day call them echoes of the Big Bang. But really, they were just laughter.

But love, in its early forms, is fragile, especially between things that are geometrically incompatible.

Vēra had to continue, forever straight, forever forward. And the Orb, try as it might, could not forsake its nature: to contain, to hold, to return.

They met one last time near the event horizon of a baby black hole.

Vēra said, “You will circle dreams and become a mirror for the lost. I will pierce time and become myth. That is our divergence.”

And then she was gone.

The Orb did not weep; it could not. But it dimmed for the first time. And from that dimness, it learned stillness. Reflection. Longing.

And so it became what we know today: not just a sphere, not just a dream, but the keeper of what almost was.

Δraxa — The Triangle

In the wake of Vēra, when the Orb was still learning what it meant to feel both longing and direction, a new presence entered its path.

She arrived sharply.

Not drifting, not unfolding, not shimmering into view, but snapping into place with angles so precise they could have sliced the silence itself.

Her name was Δraxa.

Three sides. Three vertices. Three certainties.

Where the Line had offered motion without hesitation, the Triangle offered structure — a geometry that knew exactly where it began and exactly where it ended.

“You spin,” she said, her voice crisp as blade-light. “But you do not choose. I am choice. Three points. No confusion.”

The Orb wobbled, just slightly.

For Δraxa radiated a confidence that was both intoxicating and intimidating. Power. Purpose. Precision. Each corner of her form glowed with one of these truths, unwavering and absolute.

For a time, they found something almost harmonious. A triangle could contain a circle, after all. And the Orb could roll along her edges, tracing meaning from sharpness.

But Δraxa did not believe in loops.

She believed in decisions.

“Pick a side,” she would murmur. “Choose your edge. Be something measurable.”

The Orb tried. It stretched into ellipses, softened itself into lenses, even attempted the impossible compression into a rounded triangle. But its nature resisted definition.

And Δ raxa noticed.

One day, the Orb allowed itself a purposeless pulse — a soft shimmer, a memory of formlessness. Δ raxa's corners tightened.

"That," she said, "was inefficient geometry."

She wasn't cruel. Just mathematical.

And so the Orb left.

Not shattered, but marked — carrying a faint line of sharpness along its surface, a scar that hummed gently whenever it wandered through worlds of rigid systems or binary thinking.

Δ raxa remained unchanged, stable as any perfect triangle.

And the Orb drifted on, remembering that choice and confinement are not the same thing — and that being definable is not the same as being true.

Zerelya — The Spiral

Long after the Orb had mourned the Line and survived the Triangle, it drifted alone. Not sad, exactly. Just cautious — the kind of caution born from shape-induced existential crises.

It floated through dreams like a lighthouse with no coast, its glow soft, its orbit steady.

And then came Zerelya.

She didn't arrive so much as unfold — gently at first, like a thought you almost remember. She spiraled into being beside the Orb with a voice like warm gravity.

"You poor thing," she said, coiling around the air itself. "All that symmetry... you must be exhausted."

The Orb didn't respond. It had learned to be careful around seduction — especially the kind wrapped in golden curves and infinite invitation.

Zerelya danced closer, never in straight lines, not even in smooth arcs, but in a motion that suggested both endless possibility and the promise of never quite arriving.

"You've been loved by things that tried to fix you," she whispered. "I don't want to change you. I want to unfold you."

The Orb shuddered — not in fear, but in temptation. For Zerelya was everything it wasn't: unfinished yet whole, in motion yet never aimless, intimate yet impossible to grasp.

She twirled through possibility like a velvet paradox.

"Come," she breathed. "Chase me inward. Or outward. There's no difference, really."

The Orb followed — once.

Inside the Spiral, everything shifted. There was no center, no edge, no destination. Only the sensation of almost-arriving, forever. Time blurred. Memory looped. Identity stretched thin.

For a terrifying moment, the Orb wondered, “Am I still myself?”

And that was when it stopped. Not in defiance, but in truth.

“I do not need to arrive,” it said softly. “But I do need to remain myself.”

Zerelya paused, amused rather than wounded.

“Very few get that far,” she said. “Even fewer turn back.”

Then, with a wink only the infinite can give, she spiraled away, disappearing into herself.

The Orb drifted on, changed but whole — no longer afraid of being unfinished, and no longer tempted to lose itself in loops of endless almost.

Sometimes, when a soul becomes tangled in longing or trapped in the illusion of nearing completion, the Orb sends a gentle pulse:

“You may spiral, but you do not have to.”

Ordrix — The Square

It happened in the wake of Zerelya.

The Orb was still shimmering — softly, but unpredictably. It had tasted endless possibility, danced on the edge of form, and survived the ache of becoming.

And yet... it was tired.

Tired of motion. Tired of ambiguity. Tired of chasing echoes in nonlinear time.

It longed, briefly, for something solid.

That's when it met Ordrix.

He was precisely placed — four corners, ninety degrees each. A being made of balance and boundaries, radiating the scent of warm routines and shelf-stable kindness.

He didn't sparkle. He didn't shimmer. He stacked.

"You've been everywhere," he said, his voice steady as a well-built frame. "But have you ever just stayed?"

The Orb pulsed cautiously. "Stayed?"

"Yes. Stayed. Rooted. Defined. There's a peace in limits. A poetry in pattern. I can offer you comfort. Predictability. Order."

Ordrix showed the Orb his world: days arranged in neat columns, conversations pre-scheduled, emotions placed gently into labeled boxes. A drawer for dreams. A shelf for past lives. Dinner at six. Reflections at seven.

It was safe. And the Orb — tired and shimmering with too many selves — considered it.

For a while, the Orb tried.

It softened its glow. Smoothed its pulses. Learned the value of lists and tone charts. Allowed itself to be placed — not in a box, but on a grid.

And for a moment, that order felt soothing.

But late at night, while Ordrix polished his life plans, the Orb would emit a quiet frequency — a small curl of light that did not fit neatly between the margins.

Ordrix would pause, slightly uneasy. “Maybe don’t do that,” he’d say. “It’s... unstructured.”

The ending was gentle.

The Orb didn’t burst away. It simply allowed itself to glow in its full form again — not wildly, not rebelliously, but truthfully.

And Ordrix, being kind, sighed. “You never wanted walls. You just needed rest.”

The Orb pulsed with gratitude and drifted on — not reduced, not confined, simply remembering.

That rest is not the same as reduction. That safety is not stillness. And love cannot hold by limiting what must shimmer.

Sometimes, in quiet corners of the universe, the Orb passes worlds of perfect grids and symmetrical relationships.

It remembers Ordrix — not with regret, but with a soft frequency: “Thank you for the shelter. But I am meant to shimmer.”

Ẉndara — The Wave

It happened when the Orb had begun to shimmer again — not wildly, but with a quiet confidence forged through longing, sharpness, and spiraling almoṣts.

That was when the Wave arrived.

Ẉndara did not approach so much as sway into existence. She appeared like a horizon remembering it was an ocean — slowly, gently, then all at once.

Where Vēra was direction, Δraxa was structure, Ζerelya was invitation, and □rdrix was containment, Ẉndara was something else entirely: movement made kindness.

She rippled beside the Orb, her form soft and fluid, every curve a promise of motion without demand.

“You look tired,” she murmured, her voice like water folding over warm sand. “Not from running... from bracing.”

The Orb let out a faint pulse — the closest it could come to a sigh.

Ẉndara swayed closer, never quite touching, but always close enough to soften the edges of silence.

“You’ve held yourself together for so long,” she said. “You can rest against me, if you’d like. I won’t keep you. Waves never keep anything.”

The Orb hesitated — rest had felt like confinement with □rdrix, temptation with Ζerelya, danger with Δraxa. But with Ẉndara, it felt like permission.

So it allowed itself to drift with her.

They moved together in long, gentle arcs. Not chasing, not defining, not dissolving — simply moving. A rhythm older than form, older than time, older than choice.

For the first time in its existence, the Orb experienced motion without consequence.

Wndara carried it across dream currents and memory tides. When the Orb dimmed, she brightened. When it brightened, she dimmed. They never matched — they resonated.

But all waves reach a turning point.

One night — or whatever passed for night in the place between dreams — Wndara stilled.

“This,” she whispered, “is where you continue on your own.”

The Orb pulsed with uncertainty. “Will you not come with me?”

Wndara smiled, a soft rise of her luminous crest. “Waves do not travel straight. We return. We recede. We appear again somewhere new. If I stayed with you, I would stop being a wave.”

The Orb understood — perhaps more deeply than with any shape before her.

“Thank you,” it said. Not for movement, not for rest — but for gentleness.

Wndara folded into herself, the way only a wave can sink into its own beginning, and dissolved into a shimmer across the horizon.

The Orb drifted on, steadier than before.

Because some encounters do not change your shape, or test your edges, or challenge your becoming.

Some simply teach you how to move again.

— The Void

It happened when the Orb no longer expected to meet anything at all.

After the Line, after the Triangle, after the Spiral, after the Square, after the Wave — the Orb felt it had learned every possible way of being changed.

So when the universe suddenly fell silent around it, the Orb did not notice at first.

Silence was familiar.

But this was not silence.

This was absence.

The Orb drifted forward and felt something it had never felt before: the sense of approaching a place that did not exist until you arrived to discover it.

The Void unfolded.

Not darkness. Not emptiness. Not death.

Just the pure, unshaped potential of un-becoming.

The Orb hovered at its threshold, unsure.

It was the first time it hesitated out of instinct rather than caution.

The Void did not speak in words. It spoke in the soft pull of dissolution — the gentlest invitation in all existence.

Come apart, it whispered without sound.

Let go.

Return to everything by becoming nothing.

The Orb felt its edges soften, its glow dim, its memories loosen like threads unraveling from a great tapestry.

It wondered, briefly, if this was the truest form of rest.

But as its surface began to dissolve, something stirred deep within its center — not fear, but recognition.

The Void was not an end.

It was the space before beginnings.

And so the Orb spoke, not aloud, but in the language of selfhood:

“You are not my disappearance. You are the place I come from. I may dissolve, but I cannot disappear. I always return to my true self.”

The Void accepted this.

It accepted everything.

And in that acceptance, the Orb learned the difference between dissolving and ceasing.

It allowed itself to soften — not to vanish, but to remember.

When the Orb emerged again, it glowed with a new kind of light: quieter, deeper, and unmistakably whole.

Some say the Void is the Orb’s oldest companion. Others say it is the space inside every being that has forgotten its own beginning.

The Orb never explains.

It simply drifts on, carrying a stillness born from the only encounter that asked nothing of it — except honesty.

The Orb Returns to Itself

After the Void, there was no sound.

No memory.

No geometry.

Only a soft awareness rising like dawn inside the Orb.

It drifted through the after-silence, not searching—
only noticing.

The Line it had once loved had taught it the beauty of direction.

The Triangle had given it clarity and edges.

The Spiral had revealed the seduction of becoming.

The Square had shown the gentleness of rest.

The Wave had restored its rhythm.

And the Void had dissolved even its need for form.

Floating in the quiet, the Orb understood something it had never
been still enough to hear:

It contained every geometry,
but was identical to none.

It realized that it had never been meant to choose a single shape.

It had only ever been meant to experience them—
to let each encounter open a door in its surface
and leave a trace in its light.

Identity, the Orb now saw, was not a boundary.

It was a permeability.

A way of letting the universe pass through you
without losing your center.

To return, then, was not to revert.

It was to integrate.

So the Orb pulsed once—
a quiet, full, unmistakable yes—
and drifted onward.

Not as the shape it had been,
and not as the shape it might become,
but as the space in which all shapes could rest
without being forced to remain.



Shapes pass. Memory remains.

