

(introductory music)

**DISCLAIMER:** Welcome to *Taking Back Birth*, a podcast for women who know the truth about birth and those who want to explore the path of radical birth love. I'm your host, Maryn Green. *Taking Back Birth* celebrates the power you have to make decisions in alignment with your own truth. Decisions not subject to anyone else's authority. Decisions that create experiences that will change your life. *Taking Back Birth* is a production of the Indie Birth Private Contract Association and indiebirth.org. No material on this podcast should be considered medical advice. Birth is not a medical event.

**MARYN:** This is not the usual podcast. It is not Friday, and I am not near a formal microphone. So excuse the homemade quality of the plane flying overhead and the birds chirping and the dogs panting. I am feeling very sentimental and wanted to share my goodbye to Sedona out here on the land. Actually, technically, the last 15 minutes of my time on this land. When I'll be back, I don't know. If ever. I started the morning by feeling sad. I think that's to be expected. And to complicate or add interest to the matter, the city of Sedona and northern Arizona, in general, is burning. Burning as in fire which isn't atypical this time of year, but this is a severe situation. Not one we've seen to this severity in our entire time here.

So while people an hour or so have more strong warnings and maybe evacuated, we are still here hoping to make it out just in time but with severe restriction on the ability to use the land. So for whatever reason or way, the powers that be that come up with this kind of thing. I stand in the Coconino Reserve, the forest reserve. And it is set to close in just 15 minutes. There was a warning and a stern request yesterday put out to northern Arizona that all forest land would close today at 8:00 a.m. for fear of further incident and fire and because it's just so darn dry. So I will honor this. However, I took every opportunity to be out here this morning before 8:00 to have one last commune with this sacred land, which is going to make me cry. And to be honest, I got out here feeling a little angry that my time would be cut short. Tomorrow was supposed to be my last day on the land. Not today.

And feeling like a petulant child that is being cut off from their mother, I realize that's exactly what's happening. I look right now, and I wish I could share the majesty of this mountain with you. I can share a photo, but it doesn't do it justice. And I stand under Thunder Mountain. I have called her Mother Thunder for very long. For such good reason. Not only have I been out on this land almost every day of my life for the last eight years. Longer actually. But we have lived under this mother for the last eight years. She towers over our house and our land. And she's so great. She's so great in size and beauty with so many colors of red, variations of red, lots of green, lots of mini mountains, one of which we call Lion Rock. And I'm also standing in front of that.

Another Chimney Rock. And I have gotten to know her as a friend, as a source of protection and stability over the years. I won't pretend I know every nook and cranny. Certainly, people have climbed this mountain, and I am not one of them. People have died on this mountain. They have gotten stuck and not survived it.

So she is somewhat ruthless. But the parts I know, the parts I was able to hike all of these years—I do know literally every nook and cranny of her path. And this morning, I wanted to just honor this. Honor this mountain. Honor this land. Although smoky and cloudy this morning, there is an element of quietude, if that's a word out here that I haven't heard in a very long time. And I expect it's because there aren't people out this morning. But there's also something somber about this land. I think she knows that she's a bit in danger although she's so courageous and so strong I don't think fire scares her. It scares us. But it doesn't scare her. You can hear though that the wildlife out here is a little bit more quiet this morning. I haven't really seen much. I hear a couple of birds, but there is a somberness to this situation. And, again, I want to honor that and will make this my last time on this path.

So I started my hike barefoot just wanting to put my feet on her one last time. And, again, feeling like an angry child like why can't I get to my mother if I want. And I realize there is such a big separation. And what is separation, right? I feel it. I feel that we are being separated. I feel like a cord is actually being cut with this move. That Mother Thunder, that Sedona has mothered me for so long. And now it's time. It's time to fly. It's time to go out on my own. I know I will always be protected by this land. But I won't be here. And I'm feeling just this sadness for sure and a little anxiety around cutting this connection. So we brave the path alone. Pretty beautiful out here. Very quiet. And I wanted to do one last visit to a place I call Rumi's Cave. And, again, photos don't do it justice. But essentially, it's where the wash—where water would be, but there never hardly is because it's so dry. So this beautiful wash that sits in front of Thunder Mountain in one place. There's many places where there is a wash, but this one sits kind of next to Lion Rock. So it's nestled down deep.

And I'm not sure many people know about it. Certainly, if you were a tourist, I don't know that you would even find it. But it's such a special place. And it's a place I really came to in my pregnancy with Rumi nearly every day. It is the place I cried. It is the place I offered my worry. It is the place I grounded in. It is the place I daydreamed. And it is the place I connected with his soul. There was a reason, and I don't even know exactly what it was that his soul loved this place. He came in. He would move and be happy and connect with me and tell me everything was fine. And I would feel him in a way that I just wasn't able to in my daily life out in the world. So I call this place Rumi's Cave. And I had to kind of climb into it this morning kind of like a womb. And I found the place where I always sat. There are some rocks where it's really sittable, and it was comfortable when I was pregnant. And I would always just pee there too. Make that

offering, if I got that far hugely pregnant. And I always needed to pee. And then I would sit, and I would just sit. And I would put my hands and my feet on the earth. And my dogs would just relax because they felt it too. Totally protected. Like this amazing quiet energy where the buzz of the earth could reach you other than maybe a plane flying overhead. It's the closest I've ever gotten to absolute silence here.

So I sat there again this morning. I did the same thing I always did. I did shed a couple of tears but mostly of gratitude. Just thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. Thank you. Thank you, land. Thank you, great Spirit. Thank you for protecting me, for keeping Rumi safe, for preparing me for a transformational experience because it was those mornings. It was the time I spent in Rumi's Cave that gave me what I needed for the journey ahead, and I didn't realize it, of course, until now. And I sat there this morning, and I said a little prayer in all of the ways. And also just a selfish prayer, "Please show me. Show me something I can take with me from this space, that I can keep on my altar, that I can charge with intention of this place. The joy and the happiness and the abundance and the protection and the magic that was Sedona for so long. That was the magic of Rumi's Cave. And let me put it into an object I can take with me."

And I looked down where I sat, and there was a beautiful red rock. And there is only 3 billion of them. And so I was okay with whatever my eyes landed on first. But it landed on a beautiful heart shaped rock, which I've always felt like those are the gems. Those are the gems of Sedona. And people sell them, if they find them. I mean they're kind of like a crazy tourist thing. I'm sure some people carve them somehow out of the red rock. But this one was so naturally made and sitting right there. And so I received this blessing and said another prayer of gratitude, not just for Rumi's Cave and the space but for this special heart shaped rock that I now have in my pocket that I know I was gifted by this land.

And that's all. Just as quickly as we come, we go. And all things end. All things change. And so I'm embracing that this morning with definitely some poignant feelings around this being the last morning, at least for now, right? Never say never. Never say last. But for now. I will respect the Forest Service request to leave Mother Thunder and her land, her children alone until it is safer for humans to be upon it. And I so cherish these memories. I walk back to the street now as slowly as I can, living out my next couple of minutes, wanting a few more where I'm not speaking, where I'm not doing anything but just soaking in her vibration. And I realize the cord is being cut for a reason. I can do this. I can fly on my own. Everything I love about being supported and mothered by this place I have in myself. And that is such a grand gift. That is such a great realization, and I know it's true.

So blessings to you on this beautiful day whenever this podcast reaches everyone. This is my offering from Sedona. This is my offering for this week. And I'll see you in Kentucky. Beautiful blessings, everyone.

(closing music)