Desperation is the period of Queen’s extreme control over the rapidly advancing Nithrani civilization. Once Meren’s assassination attempt leaves her cursed, crystals slowly consuming her from her hand, plans to complete the citadel exponentially speed up. Queen does everything she can to survive long enough to witness its completion.

**Events**

* Nithran is reformed into a much harder authoritarian regime. The capitol grows tall with skyscrapers from recovered metal and technology of the Mothership. Citizens are heavily controlled in where they go, what jobs they work, what they can discuss.
* Rebellions form, but are quickly put down with force. To prevent future rebellions from running out of control, Queen develops a sector of intelligence that works to infiltrate and fracture burgeoning rebellions.
* Wul gives up on his search for Hethu. He accepts reconnection with Queen and resides in the Nityr colony.
* Ilun, corrupted by Earth and Fire Elementals, attacks the colony. Wul nearly kills him, but is stopped by Yuvir, Ilun’s mother. The two search for Ilun, finding him in a cave. Wul tries to subdue him without killing, but Queen appears and instantly spears Ilun through the heart. Yuvir attacks Queen in a rage, and loses her arm in the clash. Wul attacks in response, shocked at the heartlessness. He nearly hits Queen, but is forced to the ground. Queen breaks his lower back and takes him back to the capitol.
* Wul returns to the Nityr colony unable to use his legs, and heavily traumatized. Yuvir has survived and recovered, and is assigned to care for Wul. Wul takes up alcohol. Yuvir tries to get Wul to train her in combat, but he gives up not far in. The two clash frequently over Queen--Wul having been brainwashed to worship her completely and Yuvir hating her deeply.
* In a fight, Yuvir smashes all the alcohol collected in the house and leaves in a huff. The house catches fire and she bursts in to rescue Wul. Returning to the house after getting Wul to a hospital, Yuvir finds a shard of Ilun’s Elemental corruption in the ashes and stabs herself where her arm is missing, letting the Elemental grow a new arm. With sheer will, she retains some control over her body. She vows to kill Queen. She heads south in a half-awake stupor, more controlled by the Elemental than herself.
* Meren is pulled into Ven’s double-agent situation. The two meet with Queen’s espionage head, and he gives them an ultimatum. Hand over identities of other rebellion members and go free, or indicate they want to join with him to grow the rebellion. Meren leaves it up to Ven. Ven goes with the latter, giving fake identities. Ven finds that the identities of other rebellion members leak anyway, and realizes he was played. He disappears, Meren only finding an anxiety-ridden video of him saying goodbye.
* Grief-struck Meren takes a gun and goes outside to see a parade for Queen visiting the sector. She melts into Aura as she shoots, forming a bullet composed of her entire being. Queen is struck in the hand, not quite fast enough to dodge.
* Queen’s hand begins growing crystals that spread painfully and resist her control.
* Niko is born into a renowned military family. His first use of Aura stops the tide along a beach for miles, and he is shipped around to further war efforts in the east of Nithrandir. The experience deeply scars Niko, and he vows to never use his Aura again. His father scorns this and stops interacting with him. His grandfather is similarly angry, and forces Niko to engage in training that necessitates Aura use. Niko tackles it without doing so, struggling until his brothers begin to secretly assist him.
* Queen travels to King’s city, believing him to have sent an assassin. She takes the scepter King is using to stabilize the Light and Dark Aura, and seizes control over it for herself. Focusing the conflicting energy to the crystal disease slows its spread, but does not stop it.
* All Devoted of Queen are called back to the capital.
* Tilia ascends to a queenlike position in New Ordor. She garnered support through intense expansionist rhetoric. After centuries of pastoral monkism, a significant sect of New Ordor were ready to expand. She and her priestesses use similar Aura techniques to Nithrani priests.
* Niko’s father trains a group of prisoners and befriends them, making them into a troupe. They journey across the nation and quell Elemental threats. At one point, they enter a cave system where a strong Water Elemental is hiding.