“Sienna will meet us in the dojo.” Luke, the speaker, was a tall, wiry man of Egyptian appearance, well dressed in expensive fashionable casual clothes.

Elanor nodded. She was a tall African woman, almost four fingers taller than Luke. She wearing leotards, sports bra and t-shirt. Her feet were bare. Sienna had agreed to teach her something, but that was all Luke had said. He liked an air of mystery, which could be infuriating.

“I presume you mean now?” Elanor asked, thinking - it’s about ten minutes walk from here, but where is she coming from? They were in Luke’s chateau in the South of France, and she seemed to be spending more time there than in her own home.

“When we arrive, she will appear.” Luke smiled. “You can go as quickly or as slowly as you like. Within reason of course.”

“Of course. Shall we go?”

The dojo was in one of the wings, older than the rest, but it had been refurbished some years back. The room was once either a dining hall or a ball room, Luke wasn’t sure. The floor had been rotting floorboards over stone flags. He’d had it redone in Japanese style, pine floor, shoji screens and pine panelling, and it had become the dojo, a place for practising martial arts. Elanor was third dan black belt in karate, so when ever she was at the chateau she took the opportunity to work out there.

They entered the dojo through the doors at the back. The place was empty, they removed their shoes and padded barefoot toward the middle of the floor. A moment later the main doors swung open and a proud lioness padded in and towards the two of them. Elanor didn’t startle, instead she commented softly to Luke “Is that Sienna?”

“Yes, she is showing off. Welcome aunt Sienna.”

The lioness shimmered and flowed into a young woman. Dressed in a long formfitting white linen dress that left little to the imagination, with a huge collar of gold and gems that extended from her neck to her shoulders, above the neck was the lioness head crowned by a large solar disk in gold. Elanor looked at the figure in surprise, wondering what to say. She looks like some Egyptian goddess she thought to herself.

Then the form shimmered again, and a girl of about twenty stood before her, light brown skin, exquisitely beautiful face framed by dark hair cut in a bob, with tawny yellow eyes. About her head was a band of gold bearing a rearing cobra at the front. She barely came to Elanor’s shoulders. She gave Elanor a haughty glance, then said to Luke “Lukeios, I came as you requested. Is that your mortal?”

“Yes. Elanor, may I present aunt Sienna, who was known to the ancient Egyptians as Sekhmet, their goddess of war.”

“Goddess of war?” Elanor thought that deities of war were gods. She bowed in a semi formal Japanese style to avoid giving offence.

“Yes child, goddess of war. Most males are too stupid to be trusted with war. To them it is a game, Killing, maiming, raping, pillaging and looting is fun. Women know that war is about defending the home and family, women are usually on the receiving end. If it was anyone but Lukeios I would have refused, and if you were male I would have refused. Why do you want to learn the arts of Sekhmet?”

“Oh, I don’t, to be honest. But Luke asked me to learn them for him, so I agreed.”

“It is good you are honest.” The goddess’ eyes raked through her, seeming to read her past and her present. Elanor felt naked before that gaze. “Why do you think Lukeios has asked you to learn these arts?”

Luke had explained all this to her before she had agreed. “As a mortal, his powers are limited when dealing with the physical world. Even then he needs to be asked to help before he can help any more than an ordinary mortal can. The exception is when gods or demons are directly involved. I don’t have those limitations, I can help him to help others, and if I learn what ever you can teach me, then as his chosen companion, his own limitations are lifted to an extent.”

Sienna raised her eyebrows and smiled. That gave her face a mysterious and somewhat predatory look.”You are correct, and unusual for a mortal. Very well, let us begin with some physical exercises.”

Those exercises were a combination of slow yoga movements, stylized tai chi and chi gong movements, and faster ones reminiscent of katas from karate, all of which Elanor had studied. Sienna permitted herself a smile. “You have some ability with these exercises. It gives me hope that you might be able to learn what Lukeios has asked me to teach you.”

“Thank you.” Elanor thought this was a bit condescending, but did not want to anger the goddess.

Luke commented “Sienna, I did mention she has a third dan black belt in karate, and has studied yoga, tai chi chuan and chi gong. I would not have asked if I did not think she could learn.”

“Yes Lukeios, you did, but I will be the judge of her ability.” With that she reached forward and tapped Elanor on her forehead. Her perceptions changed so that she could see lines of energy criss-crossing the world like some fantastic laser light show. She could see her own aura as swirling colors surrounding her. Luke and Sienna each had a nimbus around themselves - Sienna’s golden while Luke’s was silver.

Sienna had Elanor perform exercises of making energy flow along meridians around her body, and then from Elanor to Sienna. She thought she was doing well, and then Sienna tapped her forehead again. The next thing Elanor remembered was waking from a dream where she was doing things with basketball sized balls of swirling light. Sienna was nowhere to be seen.

“Luke, what happened then?” She explained what she remembered.

“Sienna was teaching your dreaming body. You know that as the part that survives death. She was entirely in the second attention, your dreaming body separated from your physical. She said you are an able student, which means she is pleased with you.”

“Then how am I going to be able to use what she is teaching me?”

“It will become like moving your body. You don’t know how you do that, you just think and it moves. So it will be with what Sienna is teaching. Once you have assimilated the basics you can begin using it.”

From then on Elanor saw Sienna about once a week, though she could not remember what she and Sienna did. She also had lessons with Mifunwi once a week, and Red Raven about once every fortnight. Mostly this was at Luke’s chateau where she spent several days at a time, sometimes it was at her apartment in London, and every now and then she would run into one of them somewhere else.

Once she complained to Luke “They are all teaching me things, I thought you were going to teach me.”

Luke smiled his angelic smile. “I am teaching you things, just not formal lessons. Those three are the best when it comes to teaching humans magic and sorcery. Mifunwi is teaching your physical body and mind, what she calls the First Attention, Red Raven is teaching your dreaming body, this is your Second Attention, while Sienna is teaching your spirit body or Third Attention. My skills are music, poetry, song and dance, the arts and peaceful coexistence. I taught humanity music, metal working and civilization.” He laughed. “Now I am relief organist at our parish church, but when the priest wants Bach’s cantatas and fugues at a fund raising concert, I am the organist.”

Two months later, Elanor was admiring herself in the full length mirror in her bedroom in her apartment. Luke was standing beside her, and gently tapped her forehead with her fingers. She felt the now familiar shift of perceptions, as her aura became visible along with the lines of energy that seemed to be everywhere in the room. Luke’s body was now surrounded by a silvery nimbus. “You should be able to see spheres of light in your aura.” Luke commented.

There were a number of basketball sized spheres of swirling color in her aura. Seven seemed to line up with where she pictured her chakras to be, but there were many more around her. “What are they?” she asked.

“Energy connections. As you surmised, seven of them line up with what the Hindus call your chakras. But as you can see, there are more than seven. Depending on how you count, there are ten or eleven that correspond to chakras on your physical body - they are gateways from your spirit to your physical.” He briefly touched the seven. “These you know of, but look at your feet. Some of us count two, one for each foot, but they are small, and only count as a major nexus when you consider both feet, so we count your feet as the eighth chakra. This is the one that grounds you, and connects you to the earth. Each of your hands has one chakra, admittedly slightly smaller than say your solar plexus, but we count each hand nexus as another chakra, giving ten for your physical body. There are another six - one on each side of your hips, one on each side of your chest and one on each side of your head. They are the anchors of the dreaming body, and sometimes called the left and right pillars. There are three more above your head, they are the anchors of your spirit body. The work you have been doing with Sienna has been to develop these spheres. Given time they will become strong, and then you will come into your power.”

“I know I can’t ask how long that will take, but can you give me an indication?”

Luke shook his head. “That’s up to you. We will check your progress each month, and it will take several years, maybe tens of years.”

Elanor shrugged. As she did, her attention was caught by faint silvery lines joining some of the spheres. “What are these?”

“Energy meridians. Those are the ones I activated when we cured your cancer. They will become stronger as your power grows. Others will also become active as your power grows.”

Over the next two months Elanor’s dreams became increasingly vivid, culminating in her becoming lucid in most of her dreams. Luke, Red Raven, Mufunwi, several of Luke’s other associates, plus two of the columnar guides appeared regularly. She practised moving around, changing the dream, changing dream scenery, and then changing her form. Dreams wherein Sienna appeared seemed to fade as soon as she awoke.

After three months of this, Luke took her visiting different regions that he claimed were ‘Abodes of the Dead’ where they waited for rebirth. Then she spend another month actively helping dead people pass on into the afterlife.

Another few months were spent visiting stranger places, including the Realm of the Stones, the Realm of the Winds, the Realm of the Waters, the Realm of Fire and the Realm of Wood.

Then she began to practice the skills she had learned in dreaming in the waking world. Elanor started with simple things, and as her powers grew, worked up to more complex things. Some of the simpler things included influencing the minds of others, seeming to be invisible, seeing with sorcerous sight, levitating, seeing through the perceptions of animals and birds, fetching things and sending things away.

The more complex things required additional energy, loaned by Luke or Mifunwi or Red Raven. This included shape shifting, shielding, healing, walking through walls. While Elanor could perform these feats with borrowed energy, she dispaired of ever having enough of her own.

Then came an initiation, which Luke, Mifunwi, Red Raven, Sienna and the Wolf Man attended. The wolf man played his bone flute, a melody that seemed to cleave the realms, Luke sketched lines of silver fire through her aura, and at the end Sienna presented her with a necklace of nineteen different stones arrayed on a gold chain. “These will allow you to tap into what I have been teaching you without needed to borrow power from any of us.” Sienna informed her. “Now I will see you only once per month. In between times you must practice in waking.”

When the others had left, Elanor asked Luke “What is the purpose of this necklace? How do I use it?”

“Up till now you have borrowed power from us to perform more complex feats. Now you can use your own. These stones will channel power into each of the chakras for you to use. You are now a powerful sorcerer, though you still need to become comfortable with what you can do. You no longer need me to tap your forehead to change your perceptions, you can do it yourself.”

“How?” No one had told her how she could to this.

“Don’t think about it. Your personal power will tell you how. And then just do it.”

Elanor stood there for several moments, perplexed. Then she emptied her mind, withdrew a chopstick from her bun, and tapped it against her left palm. Immediately her perceptions changed, and she could see the lines of the world.

“You don’t need to use the chopstick. You can do everything by thinking. But if it helps you focus then use it.” Luke observed. “Just do not become dependent on using the chopstick.” Elanor nodded. She knew the stick was just a prop, but it helped her to direct things. It wasn’t really a magic wand. “Now shield yourself.” Elanor spread her hands in a twirling motion, and the shield spell activated, encasing her inside a bubble of silver light. “Good, inside that you are impervious to most sorcery, and most physical harm. Take a look at yourself in this mirror.” Luke made a full length mirror appear in front of her.

A strange sight greeted her. Her semi clothed body was covered in lines and swirls of silver light, like some tattoo of a magical circuit diagram, but extremely complex. There were nineteen spheres of colored light glowing in her aura, and more silver lines linking them. Around her neck were nineteen small vortexes of swirling color. Elanor tapped the chopstick against the back of her left hand, and the vision faded. There was just the suggestion of a silver nimbus. She wondered if everything else was still there.

Luke smiled “The lines and spheres are still there, but you can no longer see them. You might like to keep your sorcerous sight active, because you will be able to operate better that way.” Elanor wasn’t so sure it wouldn’t interfere with day to day life. “Oh, deactivate it if it becomes a nuisance. But when you are with us I think you will find it useful.”

“I guess there is still a lot for me to learn?”

“Yes, but there is no hurry now. You’ve had an intensive course, now you need to assimilate what you have learned, and see where you are comfortable growing.”

“What if I should lose the necklace?”

Luke smiled kindly. “You cannot lose it, it cannot be taken by force, but if you remove it you can recover it. I’ll show you. Give it to me.” Elanor did as she was bid.

“Now activate your second attention, your sorcerous sight.” Elanor did so, and discovered the lines and spheres were still there. “Yes, your powers are unchanged. Picture the necklace about your neck. Will it to be there, as if you were fetching it.”

Elanor imagined that, and a moment later it was so. “It’s part of me, isn’t it?”

“Yes, Sienna married it to your luminous energy field, only someone as powerful could remove it. You have come into your power, now you must practice using it.”

Elanor smiled to herself. This meant travelling with Luke and helping him to help others. Life was becoming very interesting and hopefully fulfilling.