In a case where the girl is the first and original incarnation, the paladin of the ring reincarnates her as the boy by accident, after their emergence from the rift in the past. The boy’s ordeal presents him with the opportunity to resume being the girl and step into her place following the eve of paradox.

When the paladin told her he had found a suitable host mother, the girl turned her body—in male form—over to the paladin, so he could sire a new incarnation of himself. Unfortunately, the assumption that he would naturally grasp his own soul during the parthenogenic inception was incorrect. He realized that he had reincarnated the girl as his son when he found himself in sole possession of her body after the moment of climax.

The main problem with a female first incarnation is that it rules out several of the Demon Within threads adopted over the course of developing this story. The northern conflict survives as the background for the massacre, as an act of war or a specific plot against the group her parents were involved with. Since the ring accounts for the gender bending, the massacre can result in the girl’s infection by a were-tiger, the traumatic awakening of her psychic potential, her redemption of an angel, the imprisonment of the soul of an exile within her mind, and the resurrection of her mother as a vampire tainted by a were-tiger infection.

In a case where the boy is the first and original incarnation, the boy reincarnates himself as a girl by accident, attempting to reincarnate the paladin after their emergence from the rift in the past. The girl witnesses the boy’s ordeal and is presented with the opportunity to escape the charge of murder by assuming the boy’s identity. As she confronts the memories unlocked by her own ordeal on the island, she eventually realizes she is the boy reincarnated.

When the tomboy emerged from the rift in the past, she was haunted by the paladin—now free of the demon, but still trapped in her mind. The ring made it possible for them to share the girl’s body, continuing to serve as a trigger after her fusion with the demon.

The paladin helped her to explore and master the powers she inherited from the demon, uncertain if the girl had become an avatar of the goddess or a goddess in her own right. In return, the paladin only asked the girl to help reincarnate him.

At the time the paladin asked the tomboy to reincarnate her, she acknowledged that a new incarnation of her soul would be a completely new person, but assured the tomboy that her new life would be like waking up in a dream and that one day she would remember who she was. The hardest part, she confessed, would be falling asleep and letting go of her old life. That proved just as true for the tomboy, who did not know the girl was her reincarnation until she woke up ten years after the massacre.

The benefit of a male first incarnation is that it restores the Demon Within threads adopted over the course of developing this story. On the eve of paradox, the tomboy displaced the goddess as the focus of the demon of the realm. The paladin was reincarnated as the girl’s twin, so the demon of the realm becomes the demon within the girl.

The massacre results in death of the girl’s mother, but it was the demon of the realm that possessed her. It was provoked by a demon assassin’s attempt to possess its focus. The girl’s confrontation with her possessed mother is responsible only for the traumatic awakening of her psychic potential, with the demon releasing her mother to death after determining that the girl was her reincarnation.

The paladin twin is the “friend” who died in the girl’s arms in the ruins. The girl’s refusal to let her sister die prompted the demon to take possession of the paladin’s soul, preventing the girl’s sympathetic death.

The ten years the tomboy lived in the past offer a place for other prominent threads, including the acquisition of the manor where the girl spent the first part of her childhood, exploration of the rift, capture by a space fleet stranded upon the threshold, service in a war within the rift, negotiation of an alliance of rift-bound communities, confrontation with agents of the adversary and consctiption by the order of the rift. An affair with a knight of the order coincided with her favor to the paladin, and the tomboy finally realized that she was the girl’s mother. When she discovered she was pregnant with twins, she also realized that one of them was destined to die in the massacre. Assuming that one was a reincarnation of the paladin, and one a reincarnation of her, she told the “father” the names she had chosen and made him decide which would be Ember and which would be Amber. Either way, the tomboy knew how she would die.

After the twins were born, when the tomboy was twenty, she was given an assignment that put her in the middle of a conflict in the underworld. Caught in the middle, she was infected with familiarity fighting a were-tiger in tiger form, and vampirism biting a vampire that was trying to drain her dry. When it became apparent that she might be strong enough to survive the battling infections, the rival immortals made a wager to settle their dispute based on which way she turned. To their dismay, she turned into a were-vampire. Her ability to turn into a tiger had innoculated her against that part of the were infection, giving the vampire infection a niche to exploit against the were infection. The reason the two infections merged, however, was because the angel that created the vampire’s bloodline had fallen and become the demon that created the were-tiger’s bloodline—and that demon was later bound to a ring by the paladin. The strength to endure the ordeal had come from the demon of the realm, which was willing to allow its focus to suffer in order to become stronger.

Ash, Asher – The boy spent the first seven years of his life in his mother’s home, with his older brother and twin half-sisters.

Ashlea – His mother was already the mother of two girls and a boy when she became pregnant with Ash. Ashley had been in love with another man when she learned that her family had arranged for her to marry someone else. The only way to avoid it was by becoming a muse. She apprenticed under her aunt, the girl’s grandmother. A muse was a surrogate of the goddess, something between a priestess and courtesan. Although she could not marry, she was an independent woman; any children she had would be considered legitimate—by the grace of the goddess.

Brand, Brander – The boy learned who his father was when he arrived at the academy. The paladin took the boy under his wing and trained him. Even though the paladin knew the boy was a reincarnation of the girl, he was not able to protect him from social pressures to be a normal boy, nor could he prevent them from encountering each other—though he tried. His knowledge of the girl’s history was too vague, and the magical community was too small and close knit for them to be truly isolated from each other. So, there were many opportunities for them to meet.

Ember, Emberlea – The girl was her mother’s only child, though the man she married had two girls from a previous marriage, the first two years older than the second, who was a year older than Ember. The grieving man was comforted by her mother, a few months after the death of his wife, and insisted on marrying her when he learned she was pregnant a few weeks later. Her father was a knight of the order of the rift, dedicated to dealing with threats associated with the deadly phenomena.

A childhood trauma – The girl was traumatized by the memory of the massacre she survived as a child. The assault on a gathering at the girl’s home was led by demon–possessed agents of an adversary of her father’s academy mentor and their allies.

One of the demons had infiltrated the group by taking possession of a tiger to stalk and then turn one of its members into a were familiar to steal her form. As the demon's familiar, the maiden had been compelled to hunt down and kill children—including the daughter of her mentor. The massacre had been timed for the week of initiate testing, when seven-year-olds were examined for psychic potential. The children were targeted in order to ensure the school's destruction. Because she loved the girl like a little sister, the maiden could not carry out her execution; she did not come to her senses until after the girl had been bitten and clawed, however.

The demon that raped the girl’s mind had possessed her mother, posing as her protégé to catch her off guard and seizing her at the climax of the battle. The girl’s frantic defense left her mother mortally wounded, easy prey for one of the demon’s vampire familiars. The vampire drained the girl’s mother in an attempt to destroy it’s demonic master. This drove the demon to possess the girl and destroy the vampire. Instead of fighting her possession, the girl dove into the demon intent on freeing her mother's soul. To their mutual shock, the girl’s selfless determination to save her mother’s life redeemed the fallen angel and stranded the soul of its host in the depths of the girl’s mind. Noticing that her wounds were healing, and that her blood was having the same effect where it fell on her mother, the girl made her mother drink it—unwittingly turning her into a vampire.

Believing her attempt to save her mother had failed, the girl went in search of help. She came across one of her dying friends and tried to bring her along, unconsciously forming a telepathic rapport in her attempt to wake the other girl and keep her alert. Since the sharing of blood had seemed to fail with her mother, the girl did not attempt to heal the girl with it—assuming it must only work on surface injuries. When her friend finally succumbed to internal bleeding, the girl shared the experience of her death. Only the presence of her angel saved her from a sympathetic death.

The girl’s father had been one of the demons’ unwilling hosts, worn like a disguise to infiltrate the gathering. Her father’s mentor eventually freed him from possession, making the girl and her father the only living survivors of the raid. Unable to forgive himself, and believing the girl and her mother were slain, he fled from his old life, taking the children of his first marriage with him.

After the massacre, it was rumored that the attack was in retaliation for an expedition the group had taken into the ruins of the underworld. The girl survived a psychic assault and experienced the deaths of at least one friend telepathically.

The shock of witnessing her mother’s death, combined with the traumatic assault of her mind by a demonic assassin created a mental block that protected her from the memory for a decade. Ember emerged from the depths of the underworld after being swept away in the currents of an underground river. It took weeks for her to escape from the underworld, finding her way from a cavern into the ruins under the city. She was forced to fend for herself until she was discovered by her mother living as an orphan on the streets several months later.

It was natural for the demon's vampire progeny to assume that the girl's mother was sired into their bloodline, created by one of the vampires that did not survive the attack.

The girl’s mother had accepted and adapted to her new existence by volunteering to be an agent in the underworld for her former master and mentor.

As typically happened with vampires, the girl’s undead mother became estranged from her family. As one of the undead, the girl's mother was expected to sever her mortal ties, including the legal role of parent and guardian. The girl’s relationship with her mother was recreated in the underworld through the traditions of the immortals. Her mother hid the fact that her daughter had turned her into a vampire, but the girl's transformation into a latent were by her protégé could not be concealed.

It was fairly common for vampires to claim were familiars; the familiar would act as the vampire’s agent and provide protection during the day. In most cases, the familiar started out as a human servant or protégé who became infected by a were while acting as the vampire's agent. The establishment of the vampire's patronage prior to the were being turned was the precedent used to overrule the were sire's claim.

Her mother fought to claim the maiden were, formerly her protégé, as her familiar and the protégé had to identify herself as the girl's sire. The girl, as the progeny of her mentor, her mother’s were familiar, was recognized as a member of her mother's household.

The vampire mother struggled to raise her daughter in the underworld. The vampire mother was forced to call upon her courtesan heritage to survive as a vampire. Having no home, however, the trio was forced to accept a vampire underlord’s patronage.

The girl’s ties to the underworld were cemented through her mother—or more specifically, her mother’s patron. The girl’s mother had provided as much protection for her daughter as she could in the underworld. Only her master—or those above him—could compel her to risk or compromise her daughter. Unfortunately, she could not protect the girl from herself.

The friends she had made while she was living on the streets continued to play a part in her life after she was found and brought home, keeping her tied to the underworld throughout her childhood. Her amazing agility earned her an unwitting, street-wise apprenticeship in cat burglary, disguised initially as training in the naked dance—a combination of dance, gymnastics, acrobatics and unarmed fighting.

The girl obscured her life as a thief so well that she gained a reputation in the underworld as an unusually competent assassin-in-training.

The girl’s father remarried and had two more children, twin boys.