What was going on?

First there was an alien invasion, then there was that weird announcement, then there were the floating rocks in the sky, and finally there was this. This thing floating in front of her. Cordelia didn’t really have a choice in the matter, did she? It was touch the capsule and probably die, and it was walk away from the capsule and probably get murdered to be someone’s last meal.

At least this way she knew she probably wasn’t going to be bitten death.

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That had been two years ago. Two years before she invaded Nightingale March and two years before she’d found herself here, after dueling Reina for their lives and emerging victorious. This was the first time in those two years she’d ever willingly killed.

Man, those star people were messed up, if they terraformed planets and blessed—or was it cursed?—native sapient species with supernatural powers for their entertainment. But for the chance at one, limitless wish? Cordelia thought being a puppet in a show was worthwhile.

But now was not the time for that. Now was the time to be confused. Out of Reina’s limp form a glowing flower was blooming, facing towards Cordelia the way other flowers face the sun.

It beckoned her. In some way that Cordelia couldn’t understand, she felt compelled towards it, to touch it and see what would happen.

It wasn’t normal for flowers to bloom from dead people, even *if* they had Auras. She’d seen enough people die to know that. June, Apex, and Charity were all such people, had all been her friends, and never once had Cordelia seen this.

She touched a single petal of the unearthly flower, and everything spun. The air as knocked out of her, and as she fell it felt as though she was being kicked down and someone was stepping on her chest.

A trap? Energy *had* been Reina’s element, after all.

But it was over too soon to be a trap, and Cordelia’s glove and the gem embedded in the back of her hand had both changed. The deep brick red was flecked with gold, the same gold that lined Reina’s mirror.

The earth was not Cordelia’s in the way energy had been Reina’s; the earth had never been hers in that way. Cordelia dominated the earth, did not nudge and prod it like Reina did energy, and something told her that she, too, could now dominate energy. She could dominate anything, but she would have to kill for it.

Too bad Phantom was dead. He’d have applauded her now.