

Repeat

The girl stood peering over the edge of a large crater full of foliage. A purple glint caught the morning sun catching her attention, and she made her way towards it. Blood-red leaves hung like dead men on the trees around her. The air was still and silent, causing the girl to lose track of how long she had been walking.

When she stood in the center of the crater, she bent down and picked up an unearthly purple gemstone. It was the size of her index finger. She stared at it before stuffing it into a worn brown satchel at her waist. As the purple gemstone met its brethren, a muted clink sounded from her satchel. She hummed an eerie tune she stole from the wind and birds whispering around her and strolled away.

It was dusk when the girl exited the crater, giving her a slight chill. A streak of light shot through the sky, soon followed by many more. The girl did not spare a glance at them. She took a quick look over her shoulder at the crater before picking a random direction and walking. She kept walking, only stopping when there was a natural barrier obstructing her from walking onward. When she encountered a river, she would swim across it, making sure her satchel was tied tight so nothing would come out. When she encountered a gorge, she would follow it until it reached its inevitable end.

When the soles of her boots were completely worn through, she took them off and tenderly buried them under the roots of a large tree in the forest she was in. They had said that those shoes would last forever, but they never did, although, to their credit, they had lasted longer than most. It was dark when she had finished burying her traveling companions, and she noticed a plume of smoke and a dim light in the distance. Her eyes widened with surprise, and

she swiftly jogged in the direction of the smoke. She paid no mind to the twigs and small stones that poked at her bare feet as she made her way toward a small clearing next to a river in the trees.

The girl saw a group of humanoid figures surrounding a roaring fire. They all wore animal skin garments, and some figures held long branches with stones attached to the ends: stone spears. Then girl stood just outside the firelight stunned as she watched them huddle together for warmth and protection. Suddenly, one of the figures holding a spear noticed her and started shrieking at its comrades. They all turned to look at where the loud one with a spear was pointing at. They started babbling amongst themselves and the ones without spears huddled closer together while the ones with spears stood between the girl and the group and pointed their spears at the girl. The girl leaned back while clutching her head in manic laughter, her white hair framing her face like a demon in the firelight, before disappearing back into the darkness. Her peals of laughter echoed through the forest as she merrily trotted away.

Years later the girl returned to the same spot. The clearing was bigger and surrounded by a wooden palisade. She could see bustling figures through the cracks in the sharpened wooden stakes. Dilapidated hutches built of wood, mud, and animal skins littered the clearing. Based on the way the figures interacted with each other, the girl could tell that they did have some sort of a language system. Although their animal skin garments were more refined compared to when she had visited them before, compared to the girl's clothing, even after their years of use, they were too shabby. The girl sighed then turned around and walked back into the forest.

When the girl returned, the wooden palisade was replaced with a stone brick wall, the hutches with clay, wood, and stone houses, and the forest around with farmland. As she walked through the field, a middle-aged man with sun-tanned skin called out to her in an unknown

language. She found it intriguing that this screeching sounded more refined than what she had heard previously. She walked up to him and pointed at her throat and ears, then shook her head. The man looked at her with surprise on his face, then, with his callused hands, motioned for her to follow him.

They arrived at a house on the outside of the stone wall and two children burst out and jumped on the middle-aged man. The two children were shrieking incoherently, and the man spoke softly back to them. The man then gestured over to the girl and said something to the children. The children nodded before dragging the girl by the hands into the house. The family had been accommodating and provided her with new clothes and food. It took two weeks for the girl to understand what those people were saying. She picked up the language from the conversations around her without letting anyone know she was listening. Along with the man, Richard, and two children was the man's mate, a woman who went by the name Rose. Rose would talk endlessly while teaching the girl how to do housework. Richard would drag the girl out to the field to harvest his crops. The two children, Alice and Henry, would lend a helping hand wherever they were needed.

After a month, the girl felt comfortable enough to show that she could hear them. They were all sitting at the table eating when she got everyone's attention by waving, then she pointed to her ears, and then smiled and nodded. The family was shocked and held a mini celebration after bombarding her with questions.

"What's your name?" Henry and Alice asked in unison.

"How's you get here?" said Henry.

"Why couldn't you hear?" said Alice.

"Why couldn't you speak?" said Henry.

“Do you know where you came from?” said Richard.

The girl gestured to her throat and shook her head while looking down to convey disappointment.

“Stop bullying the poor girl,” said Rose. “Can’t you see she still can’t talk?” She turned to the girl. “Do you have a name?” she asked sweetly.

The girl scrunched her forehead in thought before shaking her head. Rose sighed.

“Can you remember anything?” asked Rose.

The girl shook her head and Rose sighed again.

“Now that you can hear, we have to start calling you something proper now don’t we,” said Richard.

“Can I choose a name?” Alice and Henry both asked.

“Is that okay with you?” Rose turned to face the girl.

The girl nodded slowly.

“Okay, how about we all recommend names and she’ll choose what she likes best,” said Rose. “Is that okay with you?”

The girl nodded.

“How about Lily!” said Henry. “Her hair is white, just like a Lily!”

“No!” said Alice. “I think it should be Cloud! Her hair is white like a cloud and her eyes are blue like the sky!”

“What kind of name is Cloud!” said Henry.

“What kind of name is Lily!” countered Alice.

“Guys calm down,” Richard said before Alice and Henry could start fighting. “How about Sylvia, after Sylphus the god farming since I found her right before harvest time? I didn’t

think we'd make it in time, but thanks to her help we managed to harvest everything. She's been a godsend for us!"

"Well," Rose said looking at the girl, "which do you like the most?"

The girl thought for a moment before pointing and Richard and smiling.

"I guess Sylvia it is," said Rose.

"Dang," said Henry.

"Sylvie!" chirped Alice.

Sylvia smiled showing the whites of her teeth. Then Sylvia's life with the family started. Without speaking a word, she wormed her way into the hearts of those around her with practiced ease and slowly became known throughout the city.

Two years later, the city was preparing a festival. Whispers floated around of a once-in-a-lifetime event, and the city sprung to life as people bustled. There was a festive atmosphere in the air as people prepared food, games, and a parade. Sylvia was also busy with preparations. They needed to harvest most of the crops before the festival, and food needed to be prepared.

A couple of days later, there was a meteor shower. The people of the city gathered in an empty plain nearby and celebrated all day. When night fell, they all turned their heads to marvel at the sky as streaks of light passed by. Many people started praying as it was a common belief that each streak of light carried the deceased. Others just blankly stared at the sky with stupid smiles on their faces. The family gathered around Sylvia and stared at the sky in wonder. Even the usually rowdy Alice and Henry were left silent.

"Do you know why I brought you back?" said Richard.

Sylvia looked at him and shook her head, but Richard didn't take his eyes off the sky.

“I saw a bit of myself in you,” he said. “Did you know I was a refugee of the war? I was a fairly well-off farmer before, but once the war started, I had to move. I could only take what I could carry with me, and I, along with many others, came here. To this small city on the outskirts of the empire. Well, it’s small by the Empire’s standards, but it still has so many people I don’t even want to bother and try counting. I met Rose on my journey here. She joined our group from a different city. Both of our families were killed, and morbidly, we bonded over that. Strange that it was her since nearly everyone else was in the same situation as us, but I’m glad it was her. It was a difficult time, and I wasn’t sure if I could ever find happiness again. But when Rose came into my life I saw in her the hope and strength that I needed. She brought laughter back into my days and purpose back into my heart.”

Richard continued, his voice filled with a mixture of nostalgia and warmth. “I got the same feeling when I saw you. They reminded me of the time when I was journeying here. Before I had met Rose and before Rose had met me. When I was just living life because I was already alive. Nothing had any meaning to me. I wouldn’t wish that kind of fate on anyone.”

He turned to look at Sylvia, his eyes meeting hers. “When I saw you, I felt if I didn’t do anything, you would just disappear. You walked into our lives with tattered clothes and the same air I had when I was a refugee. I couldn’t leave you alone in the forest. Even if it was for an entirely selfish reason, you deserved a chance to find your own happiness, just as I did. We did. That’s why I brought you back with me.”

Richard smiled at Sylvia, a reassuring and kind expression.

“Are you sure you didn’t take her in because you needed more hands for farmwork?” asked Rose with a laugh.

“Hey!” Richard said. “Okay, maybe.”

Sylvia faked a silent laugh, and the family continued to look upon the meteor shower in amazement.

10 years later the family started to think something was strange with Sylvia. Her face hadn't lost its smoothness, and she looked the same as when Richard had found her. Rose and Richard's hair were both turning as grey as ash. Rose was getting weaker and was often either in her bed or sitting in a chair. Richard was more mobile, but he could not do hard manual labor. That was left to Sylvia and Henry. Henry had grown up and married a different farmer's daughter he had fallen in love with years prior. Alice had become a live-in servant for one of the nobles in the city and was rarely ever seen on the farm. Richard and Rose both pestered Alice about getting married, but she refused saying she was too busy with work. Richard and Rose would always counter by saying Henry had married even though he was two years younger than her and she was already in her twenties. This caused discord between them and Sylvia thought that was probably the main reason Alice didn't visit too often. When she did it was usually just to spend time talking with Sylvia.

The two of them would find some spot away from other people, and Alice would talk, and Sylvia would listen. They would sit for hours as Alice would unload all of her burdens into the open air. Sylvia thought that Alice probably drew comfort in the fact that she thought Sylvia would take these conversations to the grave.

Feigning muteness came with its pros and cons. Although Sylvia could garner the sympathy of the people around her, she couldn't express anything clearly. Her unblemished skin, and youthful look aided in her likability, but also created some questions.

"Look at me now," said Rose. "I'm growing old and full of wrinkles."

Sylvia looked at Rose solemnly. Richard was sitting in a chair outside the house while Henry and his wife, Ivy, tended to the field and animals. Rose was in her bed being taken care of by Sylvia.

“But you look the same as the day you came here.” Rose stole a glance at Sylvia before looking out the window. “You know, sometimes I wonder...” Rose turned to look at her. “Never mind.”

One year later the city was invaded. The empire had fallen apart when the emperor had died without an heir. The kingdoms making up the empire all fought for control, and this unbalance was seized by a neighboring kingdom which took this opportunity to invade. With the city being on the border of the invading kingdom, they received little warning before soldiers flooded in.

Sylvia turned her head as the city bells all rang. Continuous monotonous ringing. That ringing signaled an incoming attack. People living outside the city walls crowded the city gates and pushed against each other to try to make it inside the walls just a second faster. Inside the walls was no less chaotic. Families were separated, and the local militia and soldiers stationed in the city were trying to regain order.

As Richard and Henry assisted Rose in walking, Ivy and Sylvia hurried along behind them. Ivy, casting frequent glances over her shoulder at the horizon, couldn't help but notice that Richard was engaged in a quiet conversation with Rose. Sylvia clutched a worn brown satchel close to her chest. Before they had evacuated the house, Sylvia had pulled the satchel out of seemingly nowhere and both Rose and Richard had forgotten about it.

“Alice should be safe since she’s living in the mansion,” said Rose to Richard. “Right?”

“Yeah.”



Two hours after everyone had made it inside, the sound of marching could be heard from outside the city walls. Before night fell, the attackers finished building their siege machines. The next day the city was under siege. Two weeks later the front gate fell. When the invading soldiers broke the gate, they were assaulted by the smell of rot. Dead bodies were splattered in the streets after being launched by trebuchets. Nearly all of the houses were collapsed. The invading soldiers didn't leave a single person alive. They razed the city to the ground after plundering what they could, then left for the next city.

Richard and Henry both died within the first week. Sylvia, Rose, and Ivy had been hiding in a small warehouse with many other villagers when the invading soldiers broke into the city. When they heard the gate fall, many ran to search for a different hiding place as they felt the warehouse would be the first place the soldiers would check. They had heard the rumors of what the invading troops did to their prisoners. They killed all the men and did as they pleased to the women. It was even said they would even accept a dead body if it were beautiful enough.

Sylvia, feeling that the time was right, calmly pulled a long knife out of her satchel. Its reflective sheen was nothing like any of the villagers had ever seen before, and its aura was unearthly. She coolly met Rose's eyes, then looked at Ivy and the two other women who decided to stay. One of them was burying their child's face into their stomach. He appeared to be 8 years old. The other was desperately trying to quiet a crying baby, tears streaming down both of their faces.

Sylvia walked over to the woman with the crying baby, then in one smooth motion, cut off both of their heads. The knife passed through both bodies as if they weren't even there. Rose, Ivy, and the woman with her all screamed.

“Sylvia-” was all Ivy could get out before she too was ended in one clean strike to the neck. Her head fell to the ground like a sack of potatoes.

Rose stayed deathly silent while watching Sylvia. Rose’s eyes, void of tears, met Sylvia’s. She sighed as if understanding. Her last words were I’m sorry.

Sylvia looked at the bodies around her. Each of them had their heads cut off in one clean slice. Painless. She heard faint voices outside, then banging on the locked warehouse door. Sylvia looked down at her body, then scrunched her forehead. She used her knife to create deep lacerations all over her body. Without flinching, she made one deep gash down her stomach. She coolly reached into her brown satchel and pulled out a handful of purple crystals. She quickly stuffed them into the gash in her stomach, making sure they couldn’t be seen behind her intestines. She then took the knife and hid it in her stomach as well. She then used her now free hands to pull the gash, closing it slightly, and hiding the contents in her body. The banging coming from outside the warehouse was even louder now, and the doors looked like they would give way any minute.

Sylvia placed her right hand on her neck. Then, she tore the fleshy part of her throat away. Her head fell as it had lost all of its support, but it was still connected to her spine and dangled in front of her chest like an ornament. She then fell to the ground. Before Sylvia died she heard the voices of the soldiers.

“What the fuck! They’re all dead!”

“Don’t worry there are definitely more elsewhere.”

“That one looked especially pretty too!”

In a city razed to the ground and full of corpses, The girl’s body twitched. Her throat, which had half of it missing writhed and crawled as it slowly grew new flesh and pieced itself

together. Her closed eyes shot open and she sat up. Her white hair was dyed slightly red, and her blue eyes surveyed her surroundings. Around her were mutilated corpses, two of which belonged to Rose and Ivy. She felt relieved to feel discomfort in her abdomen and looked down to see the gash in her stomach. A worn brown satchel lay inside out in front of her. She grabbed it, and flipped it back, then stuffed her hand inside the gash in her stomach and pulled out a knife. She wiped the bloody knife on Rose's chemise before sticking it into the satchel. Then, she stuffed her hand back inside her stomach and pulled out a handful of purple jewels. She gently cleaned each one of them on Rose's chemise and smock, but when they had become too stained with blood, she switched to Ivy's clothes. When they were satisfactorily clean, she dropped them in an inside pocket in her brown satchel before leaving the warehouse.

All that was left of the city was rubble, so the girl walked in the direction of the nearby river to wash the blood off of her body. Once at the river, she took off her clothes and cleaned them, along with her knife and the purple gems. It took a day to get the blood stains out, and even then, faint red streaks could be seen, and cuts and tears covered her cotte and chemise. Washing them had made the tears even larger. She looked at them in disappointment before putting the soaking wet clothes on. She strolled away from the river and city whistling a forgotten song.

It took humanoids far longer to develop agriculture than it did for them to build skyscrapers that towered over trees and mountains. They created machines that could travel many times faster than any other living creature and even started reaching toward the stars. However, they always wanted more. When what they wanted conflicted with what others wanted, they fought. Wars inevitably erupted, causing a disruption in major ongoing research and diverting resources and attention towards war potential.

Dr. Casimir Kimura was one of the few researchers who refused. He would rather try to save lives than end them. His philosophy especially hit home when his sister and her husband had both been murdered by a home intruder. The autopsies showed that both had been cleanly decapitated in one slice, and he was assured that their deaths had been painless.

Shortly after his sister had been killed, a girl with white hair and shining blue eyes showed up outside of his apartment. She said that she had been an orphan that his sister had adopted years ago, and had found him through the police. She showed him documents as proof. Casimir was surprised because he didn't think that his sister would adopt someone. However, he wasn't as close as he had been to his sister in previous years, and he knew that she and her husband had been trying for a child without any success. He took her in and treated her as family. She said her name was Seraphina, named after the goddess of winter Seraphina from ancient Thalassian mythology. His sister had always been a history freak, and Casimir wasn't surprised that was the name she had come up with. He felt the name was too long so he shortened it to Sera.

Casimir worked in the lab nearly every waking hour. He would leave when the sun rose, and return long after night had fallen. Although the sun had long been blotted out by black clouds that constantly covered the sky, and monolithic skyscrapers cramped together, there was a central city lighting plan that turned on and off when the sun would have risen and fallen.

"Sera has a brilliant mind," Casimir told one of his coworkers, Selene. "She thinks of the most absurd things, then proves that they are possible by making them reality. I think im going to try to make her my assistant."

"Even if that's true, everyone would think that's nepotism," said Selene.

"Only until she proves them all wrong."

“You know everyone wants to be your assistant Head Researcher Dr. Kimura.”

“Don’t call me that.”

Selene laughed.

“We’ve been in a bit of a roadblock with this whole immortality thing,” said Selene.

“After a way to stop aging had been found, nobody has made any progress on this. Maybe Sera can give us a fresh pair of eyes.”

Casimir sighed.

“You’d think that after people stopped aging, there would be less fighting, but it feels like there's more of it instead,” said Casimir.

“Those damn Union bastards. Are they ever not fighting?”

“Don’t think so.”

“With all the research and money they devote to their military, they could have solved all of the world’s problems by now. Instead, they are the world’s biggest problem.”

Casimir nodded in agreement.

Two years after Sera moved in with Casimir, she became his assistant researcher after graduating from Central University. He had sent her there the day after she had arrived claiming that it would help her broaden her horizons since he heard she had been homeschooled by his sister.

After living with Sera for so long, he looked at her like his own daughter. He had never married and never intended to since he believed that it would take too much time away from his research. However, Sera had thawed his heart by waking up earlier than he did to cook him breakfast and leaving dinner for him at night. He would stay up late at night talking with her about his research and walk into the lab the next morning like a zombie.

On her first day in the lab, Casimir took it as his duty to show Sera around the facility. As they walked on the way to the lab, Casimir told Sera about the facility.

“Most of the space here is dedicated to military research. Weapons, human modifications, and those sorts of things. But, my department is focused on immortality. So far the problem with age has been solved, but people can still be killed. My team and I are trying to find a way so that no matter what happens, you won’t die. We’ve made some major improvements in the last couple of years, and I think we’re on the verge of a breakthrough, but there’s still something we’re missing,” said Casimir.

They arrived at a pair of white metal doors, and Casimir scanned his ID badge on the reader. He put his fingers on the fingerpad that then extended, and then the doors opened.

“Meet the team,” said Casimir.

As soon as the doors opened, the group of people loitering on the other side hurried up to introduce themselves to Sera.

“These people are going to be your pseudo-family,” said Casimir. “Your most important people. After me of course!”

Everyone laughed.

Twenty-seven years later, Casimir was poisoned. He was rushed to the hospital with Sera close at his side, but by that time, his organs were already beginning to shut down. Realizing he didn’t have long to live, he asked Sera to be let in to talk with her. The doctors left after realizing he was already too far gone to be saved.

“It was my carelessness,” Casimir coughed up blood.

“You know, I’ve always had this nagging thought on my mind,” he said. “You’re not from this time are you?”

Sera blinked in surprise, then slowly shook her head.

“I knew it. There was just something ever so slightly off about you. I’m not saying that in a bad way, but it's just something I noticed after spending almost every moment of close to thirty years with you. It was just a suspicion and I doubt anyone else suspects anything. I’m not the top researcher in immortality for no reason.”

He coughed up more blood. Then silence filled the room.

“It must have been lonely right?”

Sera paused, then made barely perceptible, slow nods.

“I see. Will you remember me?”

Sera paused in thought. After a minute she slowly shook her head.

Casimir laughed which slowly devolved into a fit of bloody coughs. Blood sprayed out of his mouth and onto Sera’s clothes.

“I see. Was I at least good company?”

Sera nodded.

“I see.”

Casimir closed his eyes and never opened them again.

Four years later they had done it. Immortality had been achieved. There had been a slight change after the always-quiet Sera spoke up and recommended adding a function that would allow a person to die if they wished to. After debating, it was decided how they wanted to implement a death to their system of immortality. They claimed it would defeat the entire purpose of immortality if there was a condition for death, but Sera was adamant about it. They conceded since she had been a main contributor to the research, and had worked for some years more to create a foolproof system for death. Death would only occur if the person truly wished

for death for a long duration of time. After much back and forth, it was decided that the duration be twenty years.

The Union was crushed soon after immortality was achieved, but the toll in the meantime had been heavy. The sun was constantly blotted out by black clouds, and the land was destroyed. Too many people had died, and the ones who were left mourned their passing. In a last-ditch effort to strike back at the world out of spite, the Union self-destructed all of its territory. What was left of the world was a wasteland full of dead creatures and immortal people.

Twenty-one years later, nearly everyone was dead. The people who had not managed to get a hold of immortality died of suffocation. The others vanished in puffs of smoke, the majority of which had turned to ash directly after twenty years had passed. With the world in shambles, they felt as though they had nothing to live for. The remaining survivors all gathered in an abandoned city.

Over the next decades, their numbers dwindled until it was only two girls left. One girl had white hair and blue eyes, and the other had brown hair and brown eyes. The girl with brown hair called herself Eve, and the girl with white hair refused to take a name.

“Why not?” said Eve. “Do you know how hard it is to call out to you if you don’t have a name? I understand there’s no one else here I could be calling out to, but everyone has to have a name. It’s what makes us... us.”

The two girls were staying on the second floor of an apartment complex on the edge of the city. There, they could stare out the window at the unchanging grey and black scenery uninterrupted. They sat, talked, and watched the scenery for decades until the clouds finally parted revealing the sun.



“So that’s what a sun looks like,” Eve said staring directly into the sun. “I didn’t think it would be this bright. It’s getting warmer too. I wonder how hot it would be if I were actually on the sun.”

It took too long before the first signs of life appeared. Eve and the girl walked everywhere. The girl would choose direction at random, and both of them would walk together in that direction. There was nothing much to see other than the remains of what used to be the humanoid’s finest architecture and craters where battles had taken place. They wandered from place to place with no real purpose other than to keep moving.

“I wonder how long it’ll take for something to happen. I really want to see a plant. Like an ‘all na-tu-ral’ plant,” Eve pronounced the words in an off-kilter way as she spoke. “All this doing nothing is gonna drive me insane. Hey, I know it’s kind of rude for me to ask, but why are you still alive? You have the option to die whenever you want, but what drives you?”

The girl answered the question with another question.

“What drives me?” Eve had shock written on her face. “Well, um, I like to sing... and I want to get even better at it!”

Eve sang almost every moment for the next few years. Having no trainer, and nothing to base her singing on, her singing sounded more like screeching to the girl, but she did not say anything. Slowly, Eve started to develop her own sense of music, one so foreign, that even the girl had not heard it before. She sang so often, that the girl thought she would lose all sense of music in a couple of years if this went on.

Without being able to keep track of the years, both of them were uncertain how long had passed. Soon, or after a long time, the ground slowly morphed from a monochromatic black to

having some color. Water became more frequent during their journey, causing them no end of trouble.

“I hate all this water!” said Eve. “Im completely soaked and cold now!”

The girl looked at Eve, and she was soaked from head to toe. They had just crossed a river and now stood on the other side attempting to dry their clothes.

“Where did all this water even come from anyways?” said Eve. “Hey. Look at me!”

Eve then took her wet shirt and threw it at the girl's face. The girl stood there in shock as Eve broke out in laughter.

“If you could see the face you’re making!” Eve said. She tried and failed to contain her laughter. “I don’t even know what you look like!”

This action started a trend where after every body of water they crossed, Eve would try to find some way to soak the girl completely, and the girl would try desperately to evade.

Life slowly appeared around them as they traveled. Fish and plants appeared around the bodies of water they encountered, as well as insects.

“Ew! What the hell is that!” Eve jumped behind the girl putting the girl between her and the insect she saw in front of her.

Her reactions slowly became more tame, and after years of exposure, Eve was completely used to the appearance of new life.

“I don’t even care anymore,” said Eve. “They can’t do anything to me. I don’t care anymore. I don’t care anymore. I don’t care. I don’t care. They can’t hurt me. They can’t hurt me. Wait. They can’t kill me. They can’t kill me.”

Larger animals appeared soon after. Eve was more capable in handling the appearance than the insects.

“Do you know why I haven’t died yet?” Eve asked randomly in the middle of a forest. “I wanted to see things. My whole life, I was confined in the city. I wasn’t really doing anything. If you gave me the option then, I would have wanted to die. Now that I’m in control, I’m somewhat reluctant. I don’t know why.”

Eve got lost in thought.

“Oh! I know! What were they called again,” Eve stared at the blue sky filled with white puffy clouds trying desperately to remember something. “The Union! That’s what they were called. Wow, it’s been a while. Could we go to their capital city? I know it’s been destroyed, but I want to see it at least once.”

The girl looked at Eve, then looked at the sun. She nodded then turned and walked in a direction.

Some time later they arrived at a colossal crater. Plants had started growing inside, and a forest grew around it. A purple glint caught the girl’s eye, but she didn’t mention anything.

“Huh,” Eve stared at the crater. “Now would you look at that? I don’t think I’ve ever seen a crater that big.”

Eve fell on her back and stared at the darkening sky. She wore a content-looking smile on her face.

“I guess I’ve seen it all,” said Eve.

The girl shook her head.

“Well, there’s nothing left I want to see,” said Eve.

Eve looked at the girl.

“After all that walking I could really use a nap.”

The girl nodded and made eye contact with Eve. Eve sighed and turned her face toward the sky and closed her eyes.

“It's been fun,” said Eve.

The girl nodded.

“Will you miss me?”

The girl nodded.

“Hmmm.” Eve let out a hum in a familiar singing voice.

The girl lay down next to Eve and gripped tightly onto one of Eve's hands. Above them, comets shot through the sky leaving streaks of white behind them. The girl closed her eyes.

When the girl opened them again, she had become a lone island in a monotonous sea of green grass and trees.