



THE WORLD  
OF REBIRTH

TEAM GAMETHERAPY



Dedicated to all who seek to find their  
courage. Courage does not mean being  
fearless; courage is the strength that allows  
us to fight our fears.

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the hero of your own journey. Dare to fight, dare to overcome,  
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#### AUTHOR'S NOTE

The story and characters within this book are works of the author's  
imagination. This book is not a textbook or a guide on how to live.

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# CHAPTER 1

## AEONARA

Just saying the name Aeonara brought me both sorrow and joy, peace and energy. After the fall of the old world, only a few people survived. Those who remained divided themselves according to their beliefs and how they adapted to the new conditions.

You, born from the dust of these ancient lands, know that for ages your ancestors walked upon these sacred paths of the forest. Their days were intertwined with the wild beauties of nature, but also with the dark perils that this forest offers. Together, they faced the shadows lurking beneath the canopy of trees, guided by the light that protected them from destruction.





This story will be told by me, Lucis. Everything I know, have heard, or experienced myself will now belong to you. I will neither make anything up nor hide anything.

I was born twice. First, on the darkest night when not a single star appeared in the sky. I never knew my parents, and so I was raised by Yara, an old priestess who was the spiritual leader of our Yrent tribe.

From a young age, I was different. While other children played among the trees or learned to gather crops, I mostly kept to myself. My world was full of questions that others did not ask. Why did the world end the way it did? Who built the ancient skeletons found deep in the forest, and what did they mean?

However, my biggest obstacle was my fear. Since childhood, nightmares haunted me. In them, I was trapped in dark corridors where the walls seemed to breathe, and the light slowly faded. This fear was not ordinary; it was deep, almost instinctive. I could never enter narrow spaces, so I avoided the caves where the tribe stored its supplies.

The others did not judge me, but their looks of pity hurt more than anything else. "Lucis is different," the women whispered by the fire. "Maybe she is cursed."

But Yara saw something else in me. "Fear is a teacher, Lucis," she told me one evening as we sat by the fire. "It controls us only if we let it. But you can overcome it."

I stared into the flames as if searching for an answer. "But what if I am not strong enough?"

"Everyone who is strong was once weak," Yara replied. "And you are stronger than you think. Your questions will give you answers. And the answers will give you a path."



I was born a second time during the ritual of adulthood when our land had turned around the sun thirteen times.

I lay on my back, my body sunk into the cold, damp earth. The air was piercingly silent, except for the rustling of the wind in the tree crowns and the muffled chanting of the elders who stood over my grave. Their voices were monotonous as if the ancient forest itself was singing with them.

Above my head, I saw a thin strip of light. For a moment, the face of old Yara leaned over the pit. Her wrinkled eyes were full of compassion but also firm conviction.

“Lucis,” she said softly, almost in a whisper so that only I could hear, “this is the trial that all must endure. Fear is the gateway. Pass through it, and you will return to us as someone new. Not as a child, but as a Yrent.”

Her face disappeared, replaced by the others of the tribe who had gathered around. Their gazes were not hard or cold but focused. I knew this was no place for weakness.

“Buried as a child, reborn as an adult,” the elder leader spoke in a deep voice that echoed through the area. “Lucis, embrace the darkness, embrace the earth that nourishes us, and become one of us.”

A dark cloth was placed over my face, and a hollow reed was placed in my mouth.

The first layers of sand began to fall on my body. It was cold, damp, and clung to my skin. Every movement was muffled, as if the earth was absorbing everything I was capable of doing. I breathed rapidly, trying to stay in control, but the pressure on my chest grew.



The sand covered my legs, my hips, then my shoulders and arms. The rhythm of the drums quickened, and my heart raced along with them.

At the moment when the last handful of earth covered me, the world around me vanished.

I was completely engulfed. Darkness was everywhere, the sand pressing against me from every side. My breath was shallow, heavy. I tried to breathe through the reed, but everything inside me screamed to move, to dig myself out—but I knew that would mean failure.

Deep within me, panic grew. My thoughts scattered like frightened birds. What if I suffocate? What if no one digs me out? What if I stay here forever?

But then I remembered Yara's words: Fear is not the enemy. It is the teacher.

I closed my eyes—it was pointless in the darkness, but it helped. I tried to slow my breathing, to follow the rhythm of the drums that faintly penetrated through the earth. Inhale... exhale... inhale... exhale...

With each breath, I imagined that the sand around me was not a threat. It was my protection. It embraced me, muffled everything that scared me. And the more I breathed, the calmer I felt.

Suddenly, I felt something strange. As if the earth surrounding me had its own life. I felt its pulse, its energy. It was a force I had never known before—deep, ancient, indestructible. I felt as though I had become a part of it. I was no longer just Lucis lying in a pit. I was the earth, the forest, the wind. I was everything that our tribe revered.

The sand no longer suffocated me. It was a guardian, not an enemy.

Light.



At first faint, as if I were seeing the sun's rays for the first time after centuries in darkness. The earth above my head began to shift. The first hands grasped my shoulders, then others my hips.

The air was sharp and cold as I emerged to the surface. With a breath, I felt everything inside me awaken.

The faces of the tribe looked at me. Some were smiling, others were serious, but in all, I saw pride.

"Welcome back, Lucis," Yara said, embracing me tightly.

"Now you know what it means to belong to the earth. You are no longer a child."

The sand clung to my skin, but I didn't mind. I was covered in the earth that created me and the air that had reborn me.

I was one of them.

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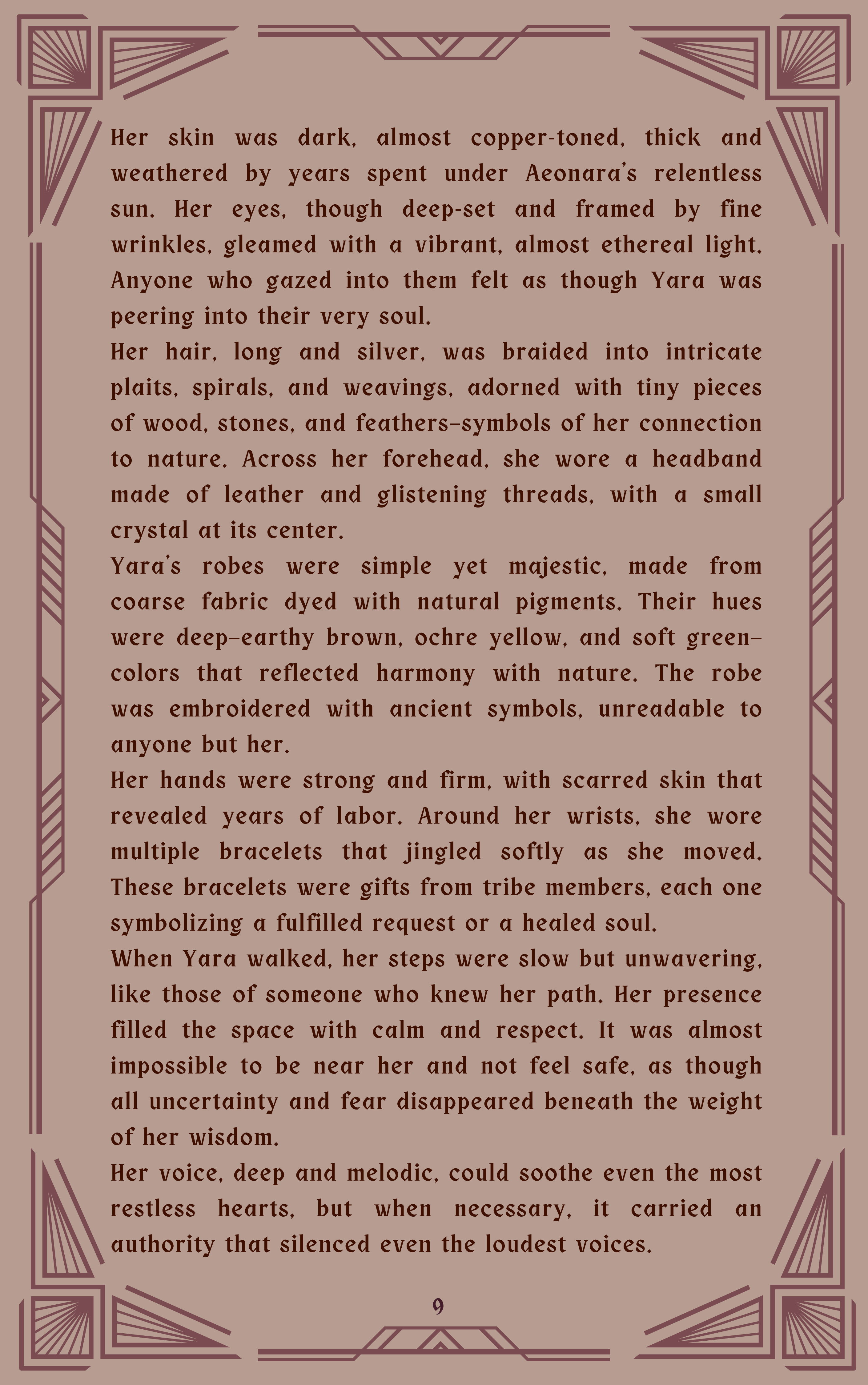
In the Yrent tribe, whispers of change spread. I felt something coming. More and more often, I had the feeling that a voice was calling me—weak, yet persistent. It was the same force that kept me awake at night, that made me gaze at the sky and ask questions.

I watched the distant lines of trees that converged into a dark horizon. The forest, known as the Eternal Shadow, was terrifying and endless, yet my eyes never left its edge. Something unknown lay within its depths. I felt it—the calling that grew stronger each day. And now I knew that I had to go.

"Lucis, come here!" called the voice of old Yara.

I approached the fire where the elder woman sat with the others from the tribe and took a seat on an empty stone. Yara was the embodiment of ancient wisdom, as if every wrinkle on her face had been written with a story.





Her skin was dark, almost copper-toned, thick and weathered by years spent under Aeonara's relentless sun. Her eyes, though deep-set and framed by fine wrinkles, gleamed with a vibrant, almost ethereal light. Anyone who gazed into them felt as though Yara was peering into their very soul.

Her hair, long and silver, was braided into intricate plaits, spirals, and weavings, adorned with tiny pieces of wood, stones, and feathers—symbols of her connection to nature. Across her forehead, she wore a headband made of leather and glistening threads, with a small crystal at its center.

Yara's robes were simple yet majestic, made from coarse fabric dyed with natural pigments. Their hues were deep—earthy brown, ochre yellow, and soft green—colors that reflected harmony with nature. The robe was embroidered with ancient symbols, unreadable to anyone but her.

Her hands were strong and firm, with scarred skin that revealed years of labor. Around her wrists, she wore multiple bracelets that jingled softly as she moved. These bracelets were gifts from tribe members, each one symbolizing a fulfilled request or a healed soul.

When Yara walked, her steps were slow but unwavering, like those of someone who knew her path. Her presence filled the space with calm and respect. It was almost impossible to be near her and not feel safe, as though all uncertainty and fear disappeared beneath the weight of her wisdom.

Her voice, deep and melodic, could soothe even the most restless hearts, but when necessary, it carried an authority that silenced even the loudest voices.



Yara was the soul of the Yrent tribe, their guide in a chaotic world.

On the eve of the winter solstice, the tribe gathered around a massive fire. It was a time of rituals, where old stories were told and priests foresaw the future. Yara sat before the flames, performing an ancient ceremony. She tossed special herbs and old coins from forgotten times into the fire. The smoke rose in intricate patterns.

"Nameless, formless, let earth embrace,  
A silent shield in time and space.  
Who breaks its peace shall darkness claim,  
Bound by shadow, lost to flame.  
Beneath the sky so vast and free,  
Our purpose waits, our fate shall be.  
In earth's deep calm, we stand and swear,  
Our refuge found, our home to share."

Her voice was deep and hypnotic.

The words echoed in the silence of the forest, gentle and monotonous, as if they were part of it. Every member of the tribe knew them, from children who whispered them during play to the elders who recited them during rituals. They were not just words, but a message carried through generations.

We repeated this chant on every occasion. It was a reminder that we were part of the forest, not its masters. It taught us that everything we needed was around us and that our place in the world was hidden in balance, not domination.

The forest gave us everything we needed. When I was a child, the elders told me that the forest spoke to us, but we had to learn how to listen. The rustling leaves were its song, the howling wind its warning, and silence was its greatest wisdom.

Our ancestors forbade the Tark'han because they believed that everything enclosed was a temptation—it separated humans from what was real. “Never build a Tark'han. It is a grave unseen, a prison you create for yourself,” Yara once told me.

The world we knew was not easy, but it was real. The forest gave us its rules, and we accepted them. And so we walked its paths, repeating the chant that reminded us that everything we needed, we already had.

"Nameless, formless, let earth embrace,  
A silent shield in time and space.  
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Bound by shadow, lost to flame.  
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Our purpose waits, our fate shall be.  
In earth's deep calm, we stand and swear,  
Our refuge found, our home to share."

"The story I will tell you today is not just a story," Yara continued after the chant. "It is a prophecy that has been passed down among us since the stars were still bright."

I knew what was coming. I had heard this story many times before, but this time Yara's words carried a different weight, as if the story was about me.

"The world was once full of life," Yara began, her voice drifting through the forest like a soft whisper.



"People lived in harmony with the earth, knew the language of the stars, and listened to the wind. But one day, they were consumed by pride. They stopped listening to the whispers of the world, rejected harmony, and turned their backs on what nourished them. And so their world turned to dust."

Everyone fell silent as Yara lifted her gaze to the sky. Her eyes glimmered in the dim light, as if she could see something in the distance that others could not. "From this forgotten dust arose the Yrent tribe—our tribe. We are the ones who preserved the wisdom of the earth and its rhythm. We are the guardians of balance."

Her voice grew stronger as she leaned on her staff and looked at the gathered people. "And we believe that one day, the Light Bearer will come. The one who will understand the language of the stars, embrace the power of darkness, and transform it into light. The one who will cross the threshold of an ancient secret hidden deep within the Eternal Shadow and restore balance between humanity, nature, and the universe itself."

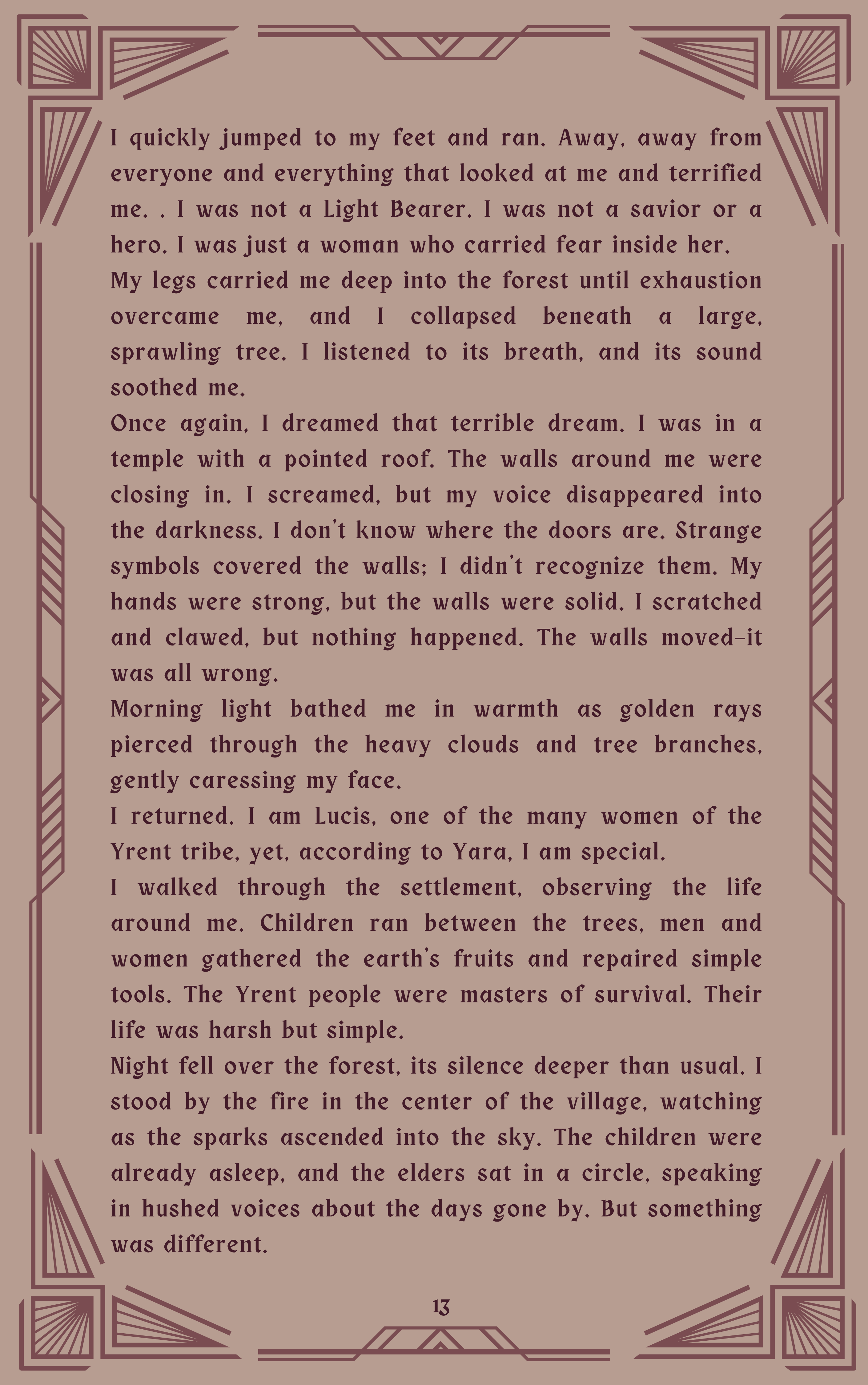
The silence that followed her words was deep. As if the very forest had paused to listen.

Then a male voice broke the quiet. "But who will be the chosen one?" asked Yoros, a young hunter.

Yara's eyes slowly turned to me. "It is her," she whispered. "The calling has already begun. She must find the Tark'han with the sharp peak."

A murmur spread through the tribe. Even I did not want to believe that I was the one meant to fulfill the prophecy. Me? The one who was afraid of a mere cave? I shuddered. Was this hope, or was it a burden?

No one spoke a word. Everyone seemed lost in thought, overtaken by fear.



I quickly jumped to my feet and ran. Away, away from everyone and everything that looked at me and terrified me. . I was not a Light Bearer. I was not a savior or a hero. I was just a woman who carried fear inside her. My legs carried me deep into the forest until exhaustion overcame me, and I collapsed beneath a large, sprawling tree. I listened to its breath, and its sound soothed me.

Once again, I dreamed that terrible dream. I was in a temple with a pointed roof. The walls around me were closing in. I screamed, but my voice disappeared into the darkness. I don't know where the doors are. Strange symbols covered the walls; I didn't recognize them. My hands were strong, but the walls were solid. I scratched and clawed, but nothing happened. The walls moved—it was all wrong.

Morning light bathed me in warmth as golden rays pierced through the heavy clouds and tree branches, gently caressing my face.

I returned. I am Lucis, one of the many women of the Yrent tribe, yet, according to Yara, I am special.

I walked through the settlement, observing the life around me. Children ran between the trees, men and women gathered the earth's fruits and repaired simple tools. The Yrent people were masters of survival. Their life was harsh but simple.

Night fell over the forest, its silence deeper than usual. I stood by the fire in the center of the village, watching as the sparks ascended into the sky. The children were already asleep, and the elders sat in a circle, speaking in hushed voices about the days gone by. But something was different.



When fierce storms tore through the land, your ancestors united in communities, braving nature's wrath together. Under the moonlight, they faced wild beasts that hunted them. Lacking shelters, they relied on their courage and unity, confronting their predators. Though many were taken into the night, their strength and bravery live on in their descendants.

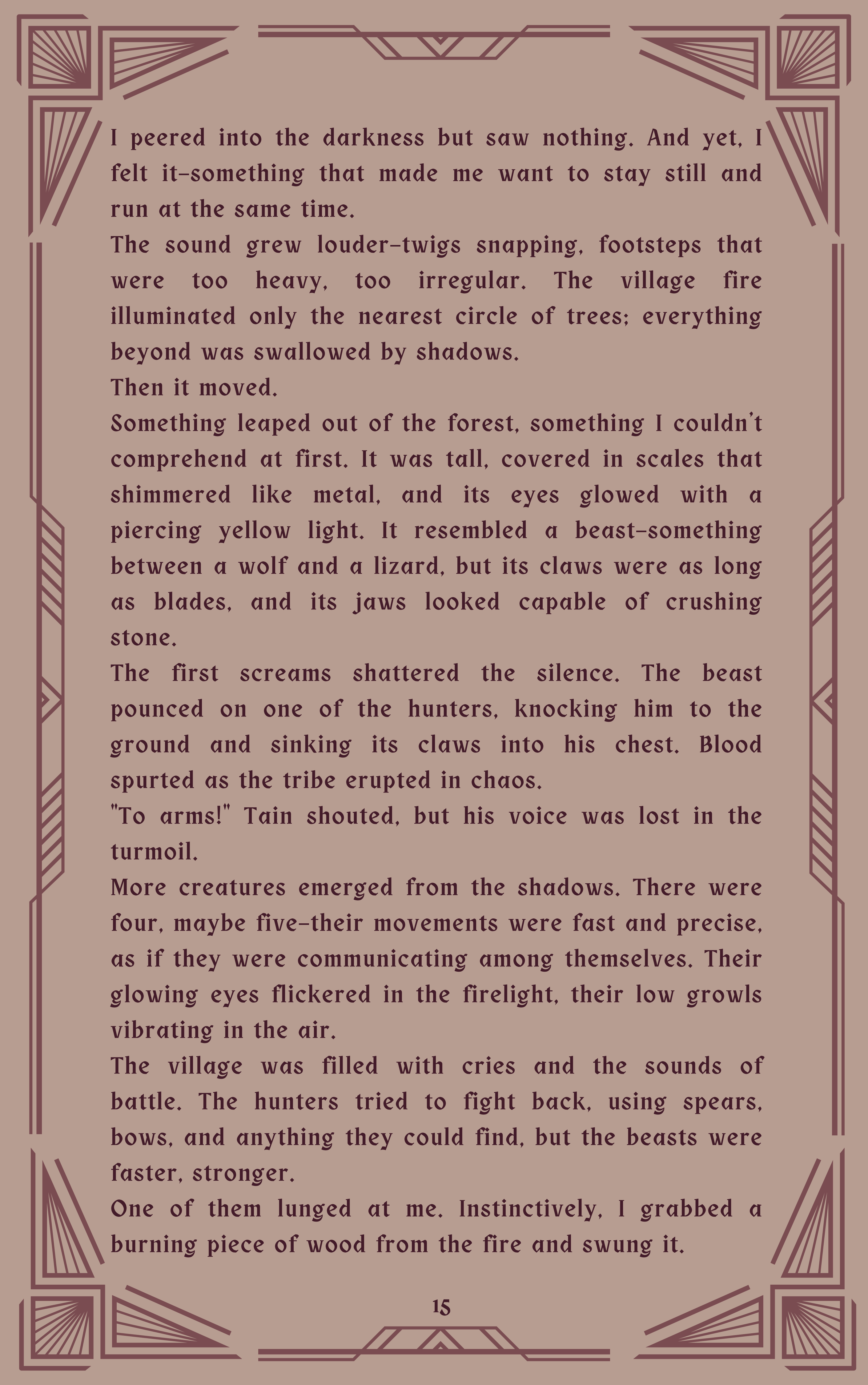


The air felt heavier, as if the forest itself was holding its breath. The wind, which usually howled through the tree crowns, had died down, as if it too sensed something was wrong.

And then I heard it—a faint, almost imperceptible rustling in the dark.

"Lucis," someone whispered behind me. I turned to see Tain, one of the hunters. His face was tense. "Something is moving at the edge of the forest. Too big to be deer."





I peered into the darkness but saw nothing. And yet, I felt it—something that made me want to stay still and run at the same time.

The sound grew louder—twigs snapping, footsteps that were too heavy, too irregular. The village fire illuminated only the nearest circle of trees; everything beyond was swallowed by shadows.

Then it moved.

Something leaped out of the forest, something I couldn't comprehend at first. It was tall, covered in scales that shimmered like metal, and its eyes glowed with a piercing yellow light. It resembled a beast—something between a wolf and a lizard, but its claws were as long as blades, and its jaws looked capable of crushing stone.

The first screams shattered the silence. The beast pounced on one of the hunters, knocking him to the ground and sinking its claws into his chest. Blood spurted as the tribe erupted in chaos.

"To arms!" Tain shouted, but his voice was lost in the turmoil.

More creatures emerged from the shadows. There were four, maybe five—their movements were fast and precise, as if they were communicating among themselves. Their glowing eyes flickered in the firelight, their low growls vibrating in the air.

The village was filled with cries and the sounds of battle. The hunters tried to fight back, using spears, bows, and anything they could find, but the beasts were faster, stronger.

One of them lunged at me. Instinctively, I grabbed a burning piece of wood from the fire and swung it.



The creature snarled; its scaly skin seemed almost impenetrable, but the flames startled it.

"Fire!" I shouted. "Use fire!"

The hunters seized flaming branches and used them as weapons. The beasts hesitated, their movements no longer as precise, but they remained deadly.

When morning finally arrived, the battle was over. Three beasts lay dead at the forest's edge, their bodies covered in burns and blood. The others had fled, their glowing eyes disappearing into the depths of the forest. But the losses were heavy. Several hunters were dead, their bodies mangled by the creatures' claws and teeth. The elders gathered around the fallen and began singing the funeral song that would guide their souls back to the earth.

After the battle, I stood over one of the dead creatures. Its body was massive, but upon closer inspection, I noticed something strange—its scales were not entirely natural. They had a metallic sheen, as if touched by something unnatural.

"What are they?" I asked Yara, who stood beside me.

Her face was grave, her voice quiet. "These creatures are a sign, Lucis. Something has changed the land we knew. And what now roams here is not what belongs."

I stared at the beast, its unnaturally glowing eyes, its scales that absorbed the light. I felt that this was only the first threat. The world we thought we knew was changing. And I was not sure if we were ready for that change.

On the second evening, after sunset, when its light bathed the settlement in a golden glow, Yara approached me once more. All day, she had been avoiding me, and I had been avoiding her.

I could not bring myself to tell my dear, beloved Yara the truth—that I was afraid. Afraid of the unknown, of what was to come, and of the change that was inevitable. But she sensed it, as if reading my thoughts like an open book.

"Your fear will not stop you unless you allow it to," she told me.

"But what if it consumes me?" I asked.

Yara placed her hand on my shoulder. "Fear is not an enemy. It is a teacher. It shows us what we must face in order to grow. You, Lucis, are stronger than you think. And your journey begins where questions end and seeking begins."

All night, I pondered Yara's words. And the next day, I looked at everything around me as if seeing it for the first time.

Our settlements were unlike those of other tribes. We were forced to live as the earth commanded, though none of us truly understood why. The Yrent tribe followed ancient rules, ones we respected even though their origins had been lost to the mists of time. One rule was clear:

"You must not build from the earth; you must not build from wood. Live beneath the sky."

And so, we had no Tark'han made of wood, stone, or clay. We were part of the forest, but we could not claim it as our own. Instead, we lived under its protection, yet at the same time, we were at the mercy of its whims.



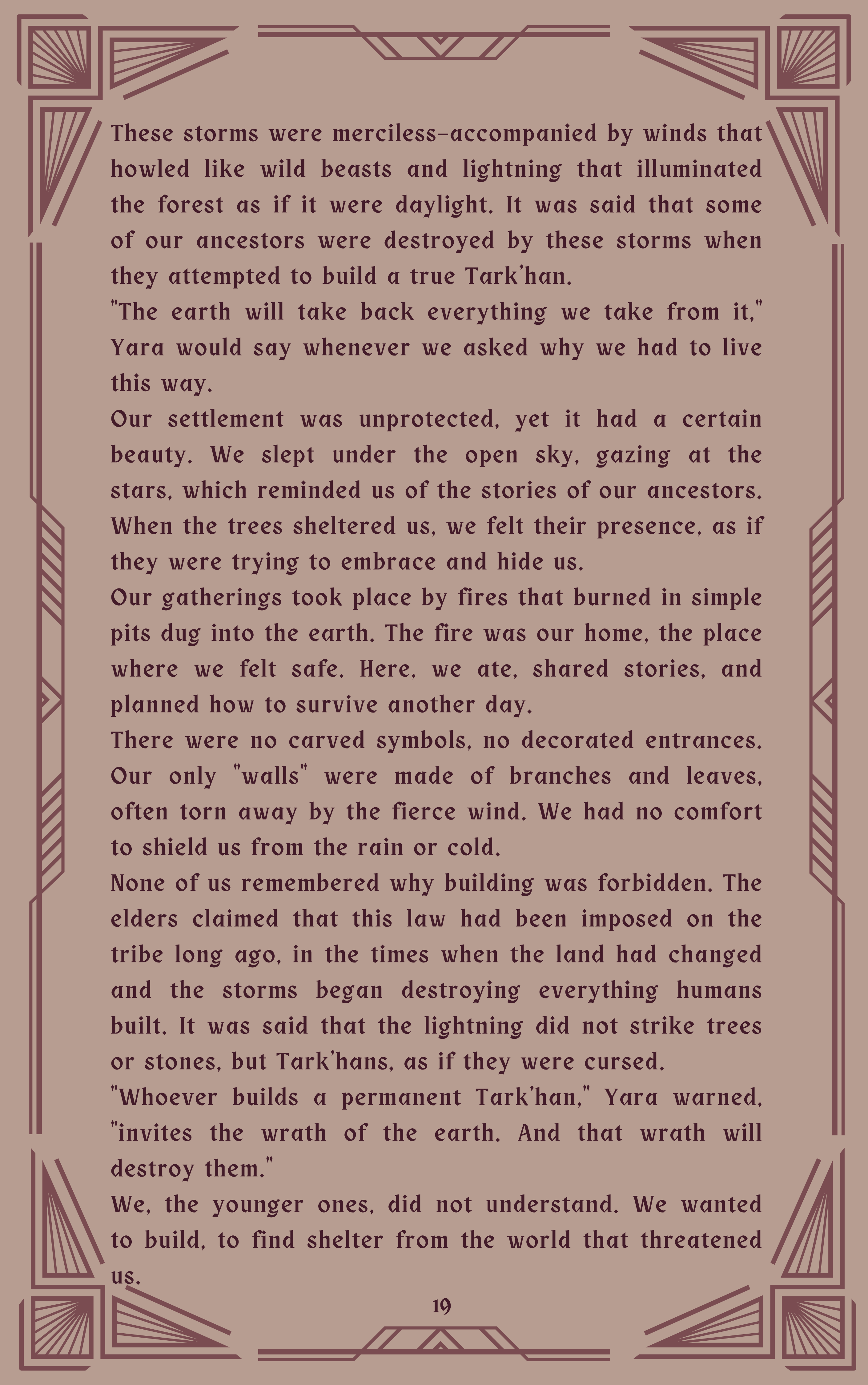
When storms gathered their clouds and darkness ruled, people sought refuge in caves, hidden deep within the heart of the forest. These caves, however, were not empty - they were inhabited by wild beasts, venomous reptiles, and insects that brought death. In their darkness, fear was born, creeping into their hearts and turning their resolve into weakness.



Our homes were never permanent. They were makeshift shelters, changing with every storm, with every night when the wind and rain scattered everything we had built. The fallen branches of trees served as our roofs—if we found them lying on the ground—but we never broke them. We laid hay, leaves, and moss on the earth to create a place to sleep.

Every morning, we had to rebuild our shelters, for the night storms, which we called the wrath of the earth, often destroyed everything we had created.





These storms were merciless—accompanied by winds that howled like wild beasts and lightning that illuminated the forest as if it were daylight. It was said that some of our ancestors were destroyed by these storms when they attempted to build a true Tark'han.

"The earth will take back everything we take from it," Yara would say whenever we asked why we had to live this way.

Our settlement was unprotected, yet it had a certain beauty. We slept under the open sky, gazing at the stars, which reminded us of the stories of our ancestors. When the trees sheltered us, we felt their presence, as if they were trying to embrace and hide us.

Our gatherings took place by fires that burned in simple pits dug into the earth. The fire was our home, the place where we felt safe. Here, we ate, shared stories, and planned how to survive another day.

There were no carved symbols, no decorated entrances. Our only "walls" were made of branches and leaves, often torn away by the fierce wind. We had no comfort to shield us from the rain or cold.

None of us remembered why building was forbidden. The elders claimed that this law had been imposed on the tribe long ago, in the times when the land had changed and the storms began destroying everything humans built. It was said that the lightning did not strike trees or stones, but Tark'hans, as if they were cursed.

"Whoever builds a permanent Tark'han," Yara warned, "invites the wrath of the earth. And that wrath will destroy them."

We, the younger ones, did not understand. We wanted to build, to find shelter from the world that threatened us.



But every time someone broke the law and tried to build something solid, a storm came—wilder than the last—and leveled everything to the ground.

And so, we learned to live without a permanent refuge. Our food was hidden in caves deep in the forest, our sleeping places changed with each sunset. Our tribe was always on the move, always ready to adapt.

Even though we did not understand, we respected the law of the forest. But deep inside me, a question grew, the same one all young Yrent asked:

What would happen if someone built a Tark'han that the storms could not destroy?

We Yrent carefully divided the land, ensuring we did not exhaust its resources, and often left it to rest according to the ancient rules of rotation. Our sleeping place was not just a shelter. It was a symbol of our survival, our connection to the Earth, and our determination to live in harmony with nature, despite the hardships Aeonara placed before us.

The night was quiet—too quiet. I lay on my makeshift bed, my head resting on an animal hide when a strange sound woke me. It was like the rustling of leaves, but heavier, faster.

Instinctively, I sat up, my eyes adjusting to the darkness.

After a moment, I realized the sound wasn't coming from just one direction. It was all around us.

The forest, which usually protected us, suddenly felt constricting, as if it were closing in against whatever was approaching.



In times when the stars were the only witnesses to the nocturnal raids, enemy tribes often surprised them, seizing their crops and all that they had painstakingly gathered. Those who were careless fell prey to these unexpected attacks.



"Lucis!" Tain's voice cut through the silence. He ran toward me, his eyes filled with panic. "Something is coming! We saw them by the stream—they're everywhere."

"Who?" I asked, but before he could answer, a scream echoed from the other side of the settlement.

I jumped to my feet and ran toward the sound. When I reached the clearing, I saw them.

They were people—or at least, they looked like people. Their bodies were hunched, muscular, their skin covered in dirt and scars.



They wore almost nothing, just rags barely clinging to them. Their faces were wild, twisted, their eyes unnaturally wide, as if they had completely lost themselves in the darkness of their world.

They did not speak. They used no words. They communicated only through growls, shrieks, and gestures. Their movements were erratic, fast, and their goal was clear—our food.

I watched as one of them lunged at the piles of hay we had stacked to protect our grain. He tore at the sacks with his bare hands, ignoring the thorns that sliced his palms. Another tried to grab baskets of fruit, but when one of our hunters approached, he was thrown to the ground with brute force.

They were not killers. They were not murderers. But their strength was inhuman, and their cruelty was merciless.

One of our women, Mara, tried to drive them away with a wooden stick, but one of them ripped the weapon from her grasp and shoved her aside. He did not deal her a fatal blow, but he did it without hesitation, as if her pain was meaningless.

"To the forest!" Tain shouted as he realized we could not stop them. "Take the children!"

I quickly grabbed a crying child who stood nearby and ran into the shadows of the trees, where the others were already gathering. We hid behind the trunks, watching as the wild people took everything they could find—fruit, herbs, scraps of meat. But they did not attack us directly. They did not try to hunt or kill.

It seemed that hunger was their only master.

"Who are they?" I asked Yara, who stood beside me, gripping her staff tightly as if it were her last line of

defense.

"Those who have forgotten," she answered quietly. Her eyes were not filled with fear, but sorrow. "They are the remnants of those who lost everything. They have no language, no culture. They survive, but they are no longer human."

"Why do they leave us alive?"

Yara shook her head. "Perhaps they know that if they kill us, they will destroy their own source of food. Perhaps there is still something human left in them. Or maybe... maybe they simply do not know what it means to kill. Their hunger is their only law."

When we finally returned to the settlement, the wild ones were gone. They had left behind scattered baskets, torn sacks, and broken branches that we had used for shelter.

From the distance, I could still hear their cries—faint but present.

I knew this would not be their last attack.

These wild people, ravaged by hunger and forgotten by the world, were now our new threat. And until we learned how to face them, we would always live in fear that one day, they would take everything from us.

Their presence was a warning.

The world beyond our forest was still dangerous, still full of shadows we could not understand.

Our people began counting the losses. Several of our hunters were injured, but no one had died.

"What now?" Tain asked, his voice tense. "If they return, can we stop them?"

"No," Yara said firmly. "But we can give them what they seek and let them leave. We cannot fight against the force that drives their hunger."



# CHAPTER 2

## THE FOREST

The next day, I made my decision. I packed what little I had—a cloak, a knife, and the amulet from Yara—and set off toward the Eternal Shadow. The calling had grown stronger, and I could no longer resist it. With each step, I felt as if the forest was pulling me deeper, away from the world I knew. The trees seemed taller, their trunks thicker, creating a world of their own.

Among the Yrent tribe, it was said that this forest was filled with phantoms, spirits of the old days, and dangerous beasts. No one had ever returned from it alive.

The first night, I was alone. The sounds of the forest surrounded me—the snapping of branches, the whisper of the wind. On the second night, the shadows appeared—a figure moving between the trees, always just beyond my field of vision. I knew it was not my imagination. Something—or someone—was watching me.

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My name is Kael. I am from the Kazaret tribe, a master of mechanics and the keeper of machines salvaged from the old world. Our people believe that the key to survival lies in the knowledge hidden within the technology left behind by our ancestors. But to unlock this truth, we must understand not only the function of these devices but their very essence.

One day, my commander sent me on a mission deep into the forest of legends. There were stories of strange underground shelters buried beneath layers of earth, protecting people and holding the secrets of the past—knowledge of survival and the means to face mortal challenges. No Kazaret had ever reached them. I intended to change that.

The forest was dense, its branches stretching out like the skeleton of a giant beast. With each step, I felt the ground beneath me grow heavier, as if the forest itself resisted my presence.

I had seen her in the woods before, but she had disappeared. And now, I saw her again.

She stood in a clearing, illuminated by the faint light that filtered through the thick canopy. She was young, with long, tangled dark brown hair curling around her face and body. Her green eyes, deep as a hidden lake, were fixed on something I could not see. A marking adorned her face—a pale pattern resembling a bolt of lightning.

At that moment, she noticed me. She lifted her head, and our gazes met.

"Who are you?" I asked.

Her stare was steady, but her body tensed slightly, as if preparing for a fight. "Lucis," she answered simply. "And you?"

"Kael. I am from the Kazaret tribe."

Her lips pressed into a thin line. "Kazarets. Technologists. Why are you following me, and what are you looking for?"

Her tone irritated me. "I could ask you the same thing," I replied.



"This path is not safe, especially for someone who..." I hesitated before finishing, "...does not look prepared."

Her eyes narrowed, and she took a step closer. "I don't need your advice, Kazaret. I know why I am here, and I don't need your judgment."

At that moment, I noticed the knife at her side. It was thin but deadly.

"I didn't come to fight," I said. "But if you see me as a threat, we can settle this."

Lucis didn't reply, but her hand inched toward the hilt of her blade.

Her movement was swift. Before I could react, she drew her knife and struck. I dodged to the side just in time—her blade passed inches from my chest. Reflexes saved my life.

"So this is how it's going to be?" I asked, drawing my own knife and facing her.

"If you want to survive, you'd better fight."

Our weapons met with a sharp clang that echoed through the forest. The fight was swift and intense. Her movements were graceful yet powerful, each strike precisely aimed. I relied on my speed and reflexes, but even so, I barely managed to dodge her attacks.

"Why are we fighting?" I asked, breathless between evasions.

"Because I don't trust you," she answered bluntly.

After several exchanges, I took a step back. "Wait," I said, breathing heavily. "This is pointless. I am not here to hurt you."

Lucis halted, her gaze still wary, but I could see my words had reached her. "Then why are you here?" she asked.



"I am searching for the underground shelters," I admitted. "I seek knowledge that can help my tribe survive. This world is cruel, and without our machines, we would have fallen long ago. But machines are not perfect. We need something more. The underground can protect people and holds the secrets of the past—knowledge on how to face mortal challenges. We discovered unknown technology that seems almost alive, but we cannot use it. We cannot tame it. Maybe the underground will give us answers."

I pointed to the metallic device strapped to my back, connected to a complex system of tubes and valves leading to the mask over my face. The device emitted a faint hum, its lights pulsing as if it were breathing with me.

Lucis nodded slightly, and I continued. "This is our life here in the forests. We call it Dychron. Without it, we Kazarets wouldn't survive a single day. The toxic air that does not affect your people would kill us."

The device functioned as a personal filtration unit. It drew in air through tiny vents at the sides, purified it through a series of chemical and mineral filters, capturing toxins, and converted it into clean oxygen, which was then channeled into my mask.

"But Dychron is not perfect," I continued. "The filters wear out, and we must constantly replace them. If it stops for even a few minutes, we start suffocating."

"And what happens when you run out of filters?" Lucis asked, eyeing the device with suspicion.

I frowned. "Without filters out here, we die."

I removed Dychron from my back and placed it on the ground. My hands moved over its mechanisms, carefully checking its functions as I spoke.



"We improved this model. Older Dychrons were bulky and restricted movement. But this... this is our finest creation."

My fingers traced the controls with the confidence of a master. Machines were not just my craft—they were my life.

"If we could harness the unknown technology and create indestructible filters, we could develop a version of Dychron that would function indefinitely," I mused. "That is why I came to search for the underground world. The people there understand how to tame technology and unlock its secrets."

"But you would still be dependent on machines," Lucis replied.

I looked at her thoughtfully. "Perhaps. But machines are to us what the forest is to you. Without them, we would be nothing."

Lucis studied me for a moment, then lowered her knife. "I am searching for the Tark'han with the sharp peak. It is a place where I will find answers. A place where I will discover the truth about myself. Maybe my journey will help all the tribes of Aeonara."

I lowered my knife as well, observing her. She was determined and strong, but beneath her stance, I saw something else—a fear she was trying to overcome.

"I think we each have our own fate," I said. "We seek different paths, but the spiritual goal is the same."

Lucis smiled slightly, as if amused by my words. "Our tribes may not be as different as we think, Kael. If we both survive, we will meet again in this forest. And perhaps we will realize that we are not enemies, but fellow travelers on the path to understanding."



I bid farewell to Lucis, wishing her strength and unwavering will to overcome all the obstacles that awaited her.

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The forest was calm, yet its silence was not empty. It was filled with the whisper of leaves and the soft rustling of the wind, as if nature itself was telling stories of a time that flowed slowly and steadily. I walked along a narrow path, one carved by the footsteps of wild animals. Sunlight filtered through the thick canopy above, painting intricate patterns on the ground.

I felt as though the forest was watching me, as if a thousand hidden eyes observed my every step. Yet this time, the sensation was not unsettling. It was a quiet acknowledgment, like an old friend silently witnessing my journey.

I stopped in a small clearing. There was something strange in the air—a presence. And then I saw him.

Seated on a stone block in the middle of the clearing was a man. His head was tilted back, his face turned toward the sky, as if waiting for a sign. He was tall and lean, his features delicate yet sharp. His long hair shimmered with dark hues, adorned with tiny silver beads that caught the light. He was dressed in a light robe woven from what seemed like moonlight itself, subtly glowing and shifting in the wind, though the air was still.

But what fascinated me most were his hands. They were covered in intricate tattoos stretching from his fingers to his shoulders.

The patterns resembled constellations, their lines intertwining and diverging like stars in the night sky. When he moved his fingers, the tattoos seemed to shift with him, creating the illusion of living stars upon his skin.

As I stepped forward, his eyes opened. They were dark as the night sky, devoid of whites, yet in their depths, I saw tiny flickers of light—like distant stars. He did not move; he simply gazed at me, as if waiting for me to speak first.

When I opened my eyes, I knew something was different. The sky was the same—dotted with stars, their light shimmering like a thousand unspoken answers lurking in the darkness. But the air... the air carried a strange energy. And then I saw her.

The first time I had seen this woman was in a dream. I had been sitting by the fire, as I had many times before. The flames danced, their light reflecting on my hands, decorating them with the symbols the elders had once etched into my skin—marks of the stars and their endless cycles. But this night was different. The forest, which usually sang with quiet harmony, was now eerily silent, as if even its breath was uncertain.

And then she was there.

A woman I had never seen before. Her eyes sought answers, yet it was she who carried the questions. She stood at the edge of the fire's glow, and though her stance was firm, her face betrayed her doubts.

"Welcome," I greeted her, as if we had known each other long before this moment. I did not know her name, but I knew it would be revealed to me in time.

She did not answer right away. Instead, she sat on the other side of the fire, her gaze fixed on the flames.



"I am Zehrin," I told her, breaking the silence. "And you will find the path that we all seek."

She turned to me. "What path?" Her voice was steady, yet beneath it, I could hear uncertainty.

I smiled. I knew my answer would only lead to more questions. "The path of cyclical time."

"Time is not a straight line," I told her, reaching for a piece of wood to feed the fire. "It is not just a movement forward, as many believe. What has happened will happen again. And what is yet to come has already been."

I saw her eyes soften slightly, as if her mind had begun unraveling the complexity of these words.

"In our tribe, we say that time is like the stars," I continued. "When you look at them, you do not see only what lies ahead, but also what has already been. Each star, every movement in the sky, is a reflection—a mirror of the past and the future alike. If you understand this motion, you will understand your own life. Time is not merely something that flows. It is a circle, constantly opening and closing."

"But how can we change it?" she asked, her voice urgent. "If everything is just repetition, what are we supposed to do?"

I looked at her and saw that strange mixture of frustration and hope growing within her. "What you are doing, woman, is exactly what you must do," I answered calmly. "You must understand that your journey is not just your own. We are all part of a greater story, one that repeats over and over. But if you understand this cycle, you can change it."

"How?" she asked, her voice quieter now.

"We are meant for balance," I said, leaning on the staff I held. "And this balance is not just within us, but in our connection to the earth, to the stars, to the entire universe. Your people, your tribe, and even the other tribes wandering this land—we are all part of this cycle. And until we realize that every step we take is just another turn in the circle, we will never find peace."

The woman lowered her head, her eyes sinking into the ground for a brief moment. Then she looked up. "The dream I had," she said softly, "the one where I was trapped in a room with no doors, where the walls kept closing in. That was time too, wasn't it?"

I nodded. "Yes. Your dreams are more than just dreams. They are reflections of your own cycle. The fear that holds you back is also a part of it. You must face what is behind and ahead of you in order to move forward. Only then can you take the next step."

I saw that my words resonated with her. Her gaze had changed—still full of questions, but now, there was hope as well.

"And what about this world?" she asked. "Do you think we can change our future?"

For a moment, I was silent, watching the fire's sparks rise toward the sky. Then I looked at her and smiled gently. "We can. But only if we understand that there is not just one path. The path is a circle, and all paths will one day meet."

The flames danced between us, and I knew that this conversation was not just for her. It was for me as well, and for all those who sought answers within the cycles of life and death.

When I woke up, I was alone, but her presence lingered within me.



The dream had been a clear sign—soon, I would meet that woman face to face.

She stood at the edge of the clearing, her stance firm, yet her expression betrayed uncertainty. She was not expecting me. But I knew her. The stars and the dream had already revealed her arrival to me.

"You are Lucis," I said as I stood. Her name felt natural on my tongue, as if I had spoken it a thousand times before. "The one the stars speak of."

I saw her eyes widen slightly. To her, I was just a stranger. "Who are you? And how do you know my name?" she asked. Her voice was sharp, but I sensed more questions in it than threats.

"I am Zehrin of the Fenar tribe," I answered, slow and steady. "And you are the one who carries the light. I saw you in a dream, and I know you will unite us."

I could feel her confusion, but I was not surprised.

"Lucis," I repeated, reassuring her that I was not here to harm her. "The stars led me to you. The constellations spoke of you as the one who can change everything."

She hesitated, then slowly sat at the edge of the clearing, still on guard. Her gaze flickered between me and the dark forest surrounding us, as if debating whether to flee.

"I have only heard of the Fenar in stories," she finally said, her voice softer, but the uncertainty remained. Then, her eyes landed on my hands. "Your tattoos... what do they mean?"

I extended my hands toward her. "They are our maps," I explained. "Each tattoo represents a constellation and its story. We believe that every person has their own constellation in the sky, guiding them through life."

I pointed to the symbol arching across my wrist—interwoven lines resembling wings. "This is the Pathmaker. A constellation that speaks of balance between what we see and what we cannot imagine. It is my destiny—to seek the connection between the earth and the sky."

I saw her gaze soften. Perhaps she was beginning to understand that my tribe was not merely about faith but about seeking answers in the light we all see yet few truly understand.

"They say you read the future in the stars," she said. "How can anyone believe that the answers are up there?"

I smiled. It was a natural question; one I had heard many times before.

"The stars are more than just points of light," I explained. "They are monuments. They remember what was and reveal what could be. Every movement they make is a sign—a message from the universe for those who know how to listen."

"And what do they say about me?" she asked, and there was something more in her voice now. As if she longed for the truth but feared it at the same time.

"Some stars remained silent," I said, lifting my gaze toward the sky for a moment. "But others revealed a light in the darkness. A bright light spilling its glow through the shadows. The priests say that you are the one who can bring balance between worlds. Your light is the key to our survival."

I watched as her gaze dropped to the ground. Her silence told me more than her words ever could.

I stood and extended my hand to her. "Come," I said. "Let me show you how we see the stars."



I led her to a high clearing at the edge of the forest, where the trees parted and the sky lay bare before us. There was no sound—only the breath of the earth and the presence of the two of us.

"The stars speak the clearest when we listen in silence," I said, kneeling and closing my eyes. "Close yours too."

I felt the weight of her hesitation lift as she gave in to my words. I took her hands in mine. "Imagine that every star is a spark. Each one holds a story. Each one is connected to the next. And we... we are part of that connection."

When she opened her eyes, her breath quickened. I knew she could see what we saw—the stars dancing, telling their story.

"This is incredible," she whispered.

I smiled. "This is what the universe shows us. But it only reveals its secrets to those who are ready to listen."

At that moment, one star shone brighter than the rest and slowly fell toward the earth. My heart swelled with awe at the sight.

"That is a sign," I said quietly. "A star falling to the earth means that your path and mine have intertwined. And that the pyramid you seek is the place where everything will be decided."

She looked at me, her gaze steadier now, as if she had found answers she did not even know she was searching for.

"What is the pyramid?" she asked.

"The pyramid is a Tark'han with a sharp peak," I explained. "And I am here to help you understand what you must do. The light you carry is not just for you. It is for all of us."

At that moment, I knew that her presence was no coincidence.

She was the light our stars had promised.

And I was ready to show her the way.

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The next day, the forest seemed darker, as if it had begun to swallow the light. The branches of the trees towered high above me, their shadows dancing to the rhythm of the wind. I stopped in a small clearing where something once stood—skeletal remains of stone structures. The scattered rocks, overgrown with moss, traced the outlines of something unknown. The place was now abandoned, yet the silence within it was not empty.

At the center of that silence stood a figure.

I froze. At first glance, it appeared to be a child—slight, with pale skin that emitted an almost translucent glow. Strands of hair hung loosely, white as freshly fallen snow. But the eyes... the eyes were unnatural. Their color resembled the sky before a storm, that fleeting moment when the world holds its breath before thunder strikes.

When the darkness of fear took root in their hearts, we came, bearers of light and knowledge, to show you the way. We built this pyramid, which is the embodiment of wisdom and protection. Know that the fear of enclosed spaces is but a shadow of your thoughts, and we shall show you how to control it. Our art of building has brought you a perfect structure, a fortress against your fears.





I had been waiting for her. I knew she would come. Just as light always finds its shadow, Lucis had to find me. When she finally appeared between the trees, she was exactly as I had imagined—uncertain, yet determined. She turned to me, her gaze full of questions. I could feel her surprise at my presence, yet something in her had already accepted that she was meant to meet me.

"They call me Niva," I said simply. "I have been waiting for you."

I saw her tense, her body stiffening. There was confusion in her eyes, but not fear. Not yet.

"You were waiting for me?" she asked. Her voice was steady, but her soul trembled.

I nodded slowly, like leaves shifting in the wind. "Yes. These are the remains of the Tark'hans," I said, gesturing around us. "And you must find the temple with the pointed peak. The pyramid. It calls to you. I am here to help you find the way."



"Where are you from?" she asked, her voice filled with cautious curiosity.

I hesitated for a moment—not because I didn't know the answer, but because it was not easy to say.

"I am from here," I said at last. "And from elsewhere. My home was once full of light and sound. Now, it is gone. Only silence remains. And me."

I saw that my words unsettled her, yet deep inside, she believed them. Why wouldn't she? She was part of the same story as I was.

I walked ahead of her, step by step, as if I knew every stone, every twisted branch in the forest. I knew she would follow—her own inner voice commanded her to. The trees grew denser, their crowns thickening until they swallowed the sky. We walked into darkness.

And then, we were there.

The pyramid emerged from the shadows like something alive. Black, as if it absorbed the very light around it. But I knew that Lucis saw more. She saw how the surface pulsed with delicate threads of energy, shifting between deep blue and gold.

"It's her," I whispered.

I watched as she stepped closer, placing her hand on the pyramid's surface. Her face was a mixture of fear and wonder.

"It's incredible," she murmured.

"What you see is only the shell," I told her, watching her closely. "The true Tark'han lies within."

Lucis stood before the pyramid, her hand resting on its pulsing surface. I knew she could feel it—the ancient energy that had been here long before this world was born.



"Why me?" she asked softly.

"Because you seek answers," I said. "Only those who seek can find them. The truth does not come to those who demand it, nor to those who wish to claim it for themselves. You search because you must. Because it is your fate."

I saw her body tense again as she battled her own thoughts.

I knew what would come next.

"I am afraid," she admitted at last.

I smiled—not out of amusement, but because I knew this was her first step forward.

"That is good," I said. "Fear tells you that you stand at the threshold of something important. But you must not let it stop you."

I watched as she closed her eyes. For a moment, her breath quickened, as if she was fighting herself.

I knew that in that instant, she was hearing her own voice, facing her own doubts.

When she opened her eyes again, I was gone.

But she knew she had to keep going.

I felt it—the moment she took her first step toward the entrance.

And in that instant, her fear transformed into strength.

She knew the path ahead would not be easy, but she was ready.

And I knew that I had fulfilled my purpose.

Fear no longer controlled her.

It had become her teacher.

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The past, present, and future are inseparably woven together, like three threads of the same fabric.

Yara sat by the fire, her aged hands slowly grinding roots and herbs into a clay bowl. The flames illuminated her wrinkled face, casting shadows that moved like dancing stories. The evening was calm, yet she could feel unease in the air. Aeonara was changing, just as the seasons do—but this was something more.

She tore her gaze away from the fire and looked at Lucis, who sat nearby. The girl was playing with a piece of wood, absentminded, as she often was when trying to escape her own thoughts. Yara smiled.

Lucis was a young woman whose appearance reflected both the rawness and beauty of Aeonara. Her skin had a natural golden hue, shaped by years spent under the harsh sun and the cool shade of the forests. It was smooth, yet on her face, she bore a peculiar mark—a faint, intricate pattern resembling a flower or a branch, stretching from her left temple down to her jaw. This mark was neither an ordinary scar nor a tattoo. It had appeared when she was seven years old, during a violent storm that struck their settlement.

That night, Lucis had been lost in the forest. The storm was so fierce that trees bent, the wind uprooted them, and thunder roared like the voices of ancient gods. When they found her the next morning, she was lying in the middle of a clearing—motionless but breathing. The mark had appeared on her face as if drawn by the very light of the lightning.

The mark was delicate, lighter than her natural skin tone, and at certain angles or under specific lighting, it seemed to glow faintly.



When she was nervous or under stress, the mark pulsed with a dim light, a mystery that puzzled her tribe.

Some people in the settlement saw it as a sign—a gift from the earth or the stars, a symbol of her destiny. Others feared it, believing it to be a curse that invited misfortune.

Lucis herself never fully understood why she bore the mark, but she felt it was part of something greater. Yara had once told her, "That mark is a key, Lucis. It is proof that you are connected to something older than our tribe, older than Aeonara itself. One day, you will understand."

Her eyes were unusual. Framed by thick, dark lashes, their color resembled the deep green of the forest—vivid yet enigmatic. Anyone who looked into them felt as if Lucis could see beyond the surface, as if she perceived hidden stories woven into the world around her. Her gaze was not harsh, but piercing, always searching, always knowing.

Her long, dark brown hair was twisted into loose strands, carrying tiny remnants of nature—small leaves, seeds, even traces of ash from the fire. Though she never paid attention to them, these details emphasized her connection to the land she called home.

Her body was slender and agile, yet strong—hardened by daily labor and endless journeys through the forests. She wore simple clothing, garments she had either made or altered herself. Her tunic, crafted from light brown fabric, was reinforced at places that required protection. Along her hips, she had sewn pockets for small essentials—a knife, herbs, and pieces of dry bark for fire-starting.

On her feet, she wore sturdy brown sandals that allowed her to move swiftly through the forest and across rocky terrain. Their straps were adorned with simple carved symbols, etched using wooden tools—marks of protection and strength, given to her by Yara. The only adornment she wore was an amulet on a leather cord around her neck. A small crystal, glimmering faintly whenever the sunlight touched it. This amulet was a gift from Yara, a symbol of her connection to the old prophecies and the protection the priestess had placed upon her path.

Lucis was not beautiful by the old world's standards, but her presence was striking. In the way she carried herself, in the way she walked, there was strength and determination. And in her gaze, though laced with fear, there was a spark—a light waiting for its time to fully shine.

Yara remembered the night Lucis was lost.

It was the wildest storm Yara had witnessed in an age. The wind howled like a wounded beast, and the thunder shattered the night's silence into jagged pieces. When she realized Lucis was missing, she knew at once that something extraordinary had happened.

Alongside the men, she searched the forest. They did not find her until morning, lying in the center of a clearing untouched by the storm. Around her, trees had fallen, the ground was torn, yet the place where she lay remained undisturbed.

And that was the night the mark appeared on her face.

When Yara looked at the child, still asleep, her heart froze with a strange premonition. The mark was an imprint of something greater—a pattern that resembled



resembled tree branches, a flower, and at the same time, a lightning bolt striking with precise intention.

Yara sighed as the wind pulled her from her thoughts. Lucis was now a young woman, strong yet still wrestling with her inner demons. As the tribe's priestess, Yara had heard the old stories of the Lightbearer, but she had never imagined she would live to see their fulfillment.

"Yara," a quiet voice sounded beside her.

Lucis stepped closer to the fire, her eyes shimmering as they always did when she carried questions she could not explain.

"Why do I have this mark?" she asked, brushing her fingers over her cheek as if hoping the answer would reveal itself beneath her touch.

Yara looked at her for a long, serious moment.

"Because you are chosen," she said simply.

"Chosen for what?" Lucis frowned. "I feel something calling me, but I... I don't know what it means."

"It means your journey is only beginning," Yara replied.

"The mark you bear is no accident. It is both a gift and a burden. It leads you where others cannot go. But only you can decide whether to follow that path."

Lucis was silent, her gaze fixed on the flames.

"The world is broken," Yara continued, lowering her voice as if afraid someone might hear. "And you hold the key to mending it. Your mark is connected to something older than the Yrent tribe, older than Aeonara itself. You are the last spark that can reignite the light in this land."

Lucis bit her lip, uncertainty flashing in her eyes. "And what if I'm not strong enough?"

Yara laughed, a deep and warm sound.

"Everyone who is strong once doubted themselves," she said. "You are strong, Lucis. But you must understand it for yourself first."

When Lucis left, Yara remained by the fire alone. She watched the flames and thought of the future.

She knew that the path ahead of Lucis would not be easy.

In her years, Yara had come to understand that the world always demanded the greatest courage from those who doubted themselves the most.

The story begins, she thought.

And when it ends, Aeonara will never be the same.



# CHAPTER 3

## THE PYRAMID

Lucis' heart pounded so hard she felt as if its beats could shake the earth beneath her. The entrance to the pyramid loomed before her—dark, motionless, like the gaping mouth of a giant waiting for someone to step inside.

"This is the place," Lucis whispered to herself. Her thoughts intertwined with what she felt in her body—something was calling her, something she knew she had to overcome.

Her steps halted the moment she crossed the threshold. She looked up, but her gaze was swallowed by the immense height and depth of the structure. A vast chamber stretched before her, filled with towering pillars and things she had never seen before. Massive stones hung in the air, suspended by what looked like tangled vines. A chill gripped her throat.

The pyramid was not just a Tark'han—it was a trial.

"Why am I here?" she asked aloud, but no answer came. Only the growing certainty that this place was alive, waiting for her to uncover something hidden within it.

And then it happened.

Before her, a sphere of light appeared—gentle and golden, floating steadily in the air. Its movement was calm, yet filled with power. It was not a being of flesh but pure, radiant energy—the embodiment of knowledge itself.



We brought you here, chosen one, to enter these sacred walls, to uncover the mysteries we left for those prepared to learn. The building craft that your hand will one day create is a pillar of your civilization. Master the fear that binds you, and understand that only your mind is the key to liberation and progress.



"Are you ready?" a voice echoed, though it did not come from lips—it resonated within her mind. Its tone was clear, unwavering, yet filled with an ancient wisdom spanning countless ages.

"Who are you?" Lucis asked, her voice cautious yet curious.

"I am Viator," the voice answered. "The guide of those who seek the light. And you, Lucis, are searching for the truth hidden within this pyramid."



Lucis felt her fear momentarily loosen its grip. She knew this encounter was not just about finding answers—it was something greater. It was about overcoming the fear that had shaped her entire life. She sensed a path opening before her, even if she had no idea where it would lead.

"I am afraid," she whispered. "So afraid that I don't know if I can go on."

"Fear is natural," Viator said, his voice gentle yet firm. "It is your guide, your teacher. It shows you where your limits lie. But if you overcome it, you will discover your true strength."

Lucis took a deep breath. She felt that every movement she made now carried meaning. These words echoed in her mind— Fear is not an enemy; it is a teacher.

This was the truth she had to accept. She had to face what surrounded her.

Viator continued, "The pyramid was built to test those who seek knowledge. But it is also a place where your will meets your fears. Can you pass through your deepest darkness and find what lies at the end of this path?"

Lucis smiled, though her heart still pounded.

"Yes," she said firmly. "I will face it."

She stepped into the vast chamber, crossing its overwhelming expanse. She ran up the carved staircase toward a portal, and suddenly, the first challenge revealed itself.

A low-ceilinged room, filled with an unusual puzzle.

"I can't enter this tunnel," she murmured to herself. But step by step, she moved forward, reaching for the first piece of the puzzle.

A strange pressure tightened in her chest.

The pyramid seemed to come alive, shifting its structure, forming mechanisms that constantly moved. The walls pulsed with energy, swallowing and releasing light in chaotic patterns.

"This is your first test. Your trial," Viator's voice resonated as his glowing form materialized before her once more.

"Overcome what surrounds you, and you will move forward."

The room began to shift. Stone moved, forming a labyrinth where each step was a challenge. Lucis stopped. If anything had been unclear before, now it was certain—this place was testing her fear and her ability to adapt quickly.

A deep sense of unease settled in her mind—not fear of the outside world, but fear of the enclosed space pressing in around her, like unseen bindings that constricted her breath.

The walls, once silent and majestic, now seemed to close in, swallowing her. Their edges appeared to draw nearer, creeping toward her body. The air in the chamber grew thick, heavy, almost tangible.

"No... no, this isn't real," she whispered in her mind.

Her chest tightened, as if a crushing weight sat upon her lungs. Each breath became heavier, unnatural.

At first, she tried to ignore the panic that clawed at her, but the more she fought it, the more powerless she felt. The air stood still, unmoving, suffocating. Each breath felt like it could be her last. Her fingers trembled, and even as she tried to inhale, her lungs refused to fill. Her heart pounded faster, the pressure in her chest growing unbearable.



Listen closely as I unveil ancient techniques to tame the wild fire of fear within you. I will teach you the rhythms of breath and thought patterns that empower you to conquer any fear in your path. This temple of knowledge is filled with trials and challenges; each step reveals another page of wisdom. Only by facing these trials will you gain understanding and become the master of your destiny.



"Breathe deeply... breathe deeply," she repeated to herself, but her body refused to obey. The fear she felt was not just in her mind—it was tangible, weighing down on her. She clenched her jaw, trying to stay calm, but the crushing pressure threatened to paralyze her completely.

Darkness began to creep into her thoughts.

Everything around her seemed to shrink. The chamber became suffocating.



The once solid walls now felt like an unyielding force pressing in, inching closer.

Suddenly, memories flooded back—nightmares of being trapped in dark, narrow spaces with no way out. It was as if those dreams had become reality.

"Help..." she whispered, feeling as if she was running out of air.

Lucis felt something pulling her downward—something unseen, something relentless. Every breath was shallow, the air not fresh enough to sustain her.

The pyramid, meant to be a place of knowledge, had become a place that suffocated her, testing the very limits of her endurance.

And then, a quiet, soothing voice broke through the chaos.

"Breathe deeply," Viator's voice echoed, soft yet firm, as if coming from within her own mind. "Close your eyes and take the time to connect with this space. Your breath is the key."

Lucis hesitated but tried to calm herself. Her hands clenched tightly, as if holding onto something solid. The air still felt dense, and fear burned in her throat.

"Do not be afraid. Relax. Try again," Viator urged, his tone steady with infinite patience. "Breathing is how you connect with your body and master your mind. Breathe slowly, deeply."

Lucis took a deep breath, but her chest constricted. Each inhale only made her heart pound faster, as if her body refused to obey her will.

"Breathe through your nose," Viator continued. "Focus on your breath. Imagine that every inhale is light entering your body, and with every exhale, the darkness that unsettles you is leaving."



Slowly, you will free your mind, and everything that frightens you will begin to fade."

Lucis closed her eyes and focused inward. She inhaled through her nose, slow and deep.

With every exhale, she felt the fear slowly dissipate, her thoughts becoming lighter.

Breathing was difficult, but the more she concentrated on the air flowing through her lungs, the more she felt herself breaking free.

"Look at what happens when you breathe deeply and with calm," Viator said. "This space will change, and so will you. Each breath grants you strength, a force that exists within this place."

Lucis began to feel stronger. The pyramid was no longer just a dark place enclosing her—it was a space that was communicating with her. With each breath, her body relaxed. The walls of the pyramid no longer seemed as threatening, though something powerful remained—something that still challenged her to move forward.

"Do you still feel the fear that once kept you from breathing?" Viator continued. "Your mind is the key. The fear you felt was only an illusion, something you created yourself."

Lucis opened her eyes and took a deep breath, this time without resistance from her body. She realized that the fear that had always surrounded her was not her enemy—it was her challenger.

"Fear is not an enemy, it is a teacher," she whispered to herself, memories of Yara returning to her. "And I will overcome it."

"Yes, Lucis. This is how it begins. Are you ready for the next step?"

Lucis looked ahead. She crossed the atrium once more and entered the next chamber. Her determination wavered as fear tried to return, but she inhaled deeply and faced the challenge. She solved the puzzle before her, then moved to the next task. A new corridor appeared within the pyramid—dark, but no longer terrifying.

She felt her heartbeat slow, her mind steadier. This time, she was not afraid to continue.

"Yes," she said with certainty, her voice carrying a newfound confidence. "I am ready."

The deeper she ventured into the pyramid, the more difficult the trials became. Some were intricate technical puzzles, while others were deeply personal—manifesting as towering, seemingly insurmountable walls blocking her path. But with every step, every challenge, every solution, Lucis felt herself moving closer to a revelation. "Your greatest challenges do not come from the outside world, Lucis," Viator said once, as the pyramid seemed to test her even further. "They are the battles within you."

Lucis continued, her steps growing firmer, even as uncertainty lingered in her heart. Each movement became harder, yet she felt that the pyramid was guiding her, that every action carried meaning.

The pyramid kept opening before her, and each room she entered presented a new trial.

Then—silence.

A silence that was more than the absence of sound. It was something deep, something that pressed against her chest.



Lucis walked forward, but each step felt heavier, forcing her to slow down. The air thickened, resisting her movements. The space around her blurred—she no longer saw the walls, no longer felt the ground beneath her feet.

It was as if she were nowhere and everywhere at once. She stopped.

Something flickered in front of her—a faint glimmer, like the reflection of stars on a still lake.

As she approached, she felt the space around her shift, like a veil being lifted to reveal something long hidden.

And then she saw it.

Something that pulled her inward, deep into her own mind.

She saw her fears.

She saw her desires.

Memories that once felt distant surfaced, as if they belonged to someone else.

She shivered.

"Welcome, Lucis," a voice said.

It was soft, like the whisper of wind, yet in every syllable, she felt its immense power.

"This is the place where you will see the truth."

Her gaze locked onto a reflection—her own soul laid bare.

She saw herself, but not as she had seen her reflection in the forest streams or the still waters of a lake.

This reflection was foreign, filled with pain and fear.

The eyes that stared back at her were empty, as if they belonged to someone who had long lost faith.

She held her breath as the image began to shift.

She saw herself trapped in her deepest fears—lost in darkness, too weak to go on.

She saw the girl standing at the edge of the forest, staring at the pyramid, afraid to take the first step.

"What do you see?" the voice asked.

But this time, it did not come from outside—it came from within her.

"That's not me," she whispered.

"But it is," the voice replied. "It is the part of you that you reject. The part you have never accepted. If you do not love yourself, how can you hope to find balance? What is keeping you from embracing who you are?"

Her throat tightened. Every word resonated deep within her chest.

"I'm afraid," she admitted. Her voice was quiet, but honest. "I'm afraid I'm not strong enough. I'm afraid I will fail."

"Fear is not your enemy," the voice said gently but firmly. "It is your teacher. Learn to embrace your fear. Not to obey it, but to accept it. Because within it lies your greatest strength."

Lucis took a deep breath. Fear had always been like a shadow, following her—in her dreams, in her memories, in every step she had ever taken. But now, standing here, she realized something different.

Fear was not something that could destroy her.

It was only a voice that urged her to stop.

And she chose to listen to another voice instead.

"I am strong," she whispered.

The words were simple, yet they held everything she needed.

Her reflection began to change.

The empty eyes staring back at her filled with light.

She saw herself—but this time, she was different.





Her gaze was steady.

Her body reflected determination.

She was no longer afraid. She no longer felt shame.

She had accepted herself—completely, with all her flaws, which were, in truth, part of her strength.

The space around her was empty, but she felt different. The silence that once suffocated her now filled her with peace.

Lucis stepped forward.

Her steps were steady, each movement a new beginning.

She did not look back.

She didn't need to.

Everything she had needed to know, she had already found—within herself.

Lucis moved through the corridors of the pyramid, each room a new challenge. When she entered the next chamber, the walls seemed to shift constantly, as though she had stepped into a living labyrinth. The doors behind her closed, and the space sealed shut.

All the walls around her began to move, changing their shape. This labyrinth felt endless, and each wall radiated an energy that tried to push her back, to make her turn away.

"This is where you meet your limits," Viator said. "Not every path is a straight line. Sometimes, you must accept that you must find your own way, even when you cannot see where it leads."

Lucis hesitated. She was trapped in a space where her fear of the unknown grew stronger.

How could she pass through this labyrinth?

Every step felt uncertain, and the walls seemed to close in on her.

But as she closed her eyes, she remembered Viator's words:

"Breathing is the key."

She took a deep breath and began to focus.

Each inhale was deep, slow.

With every exhale, she felt her body relax.

Her mind cleared.

Her steps became more certain.

And suddenly—she knew where to go.

Each movement felt natural, as if the path had always been there, waiting for her to see it.

"There is no destination in this room, Lucis," Viator said.

"The destination is within you. The goal is to find your own way, even when it is not visible."

Lucis walked forward—without fear.

And suddenly, before her, a new corridor opened.

This time, she did not turn back.

She knew she had conquered the doubts that once held her still.

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I was alone.

The pyramid had led me to its deepest chamber, where time and space no longer made sense. I stood in a place that constantly shifted—beneath me, the floor shimmered like the surface of still water, yet when I moved, it felt solid, like walking on glass. The walls, if they could even be called that, stretched infinitely high, covered in shifting patterns that pulsed like a living universe.

In the center of the room, a relic hovered.



It was a sphere, no larger than my hands, seemingly made of pure light. Its surface was liquid yet firm, as if it existed beyond the reach of physical laws. As I stepped closer, its energy enveloped me—warm and cold at the same time, comforting yet chilling.

"What are you?" I whispered, though I did not expect an answer.

The sphere suddenly expanded, its light flooding the room.

And in the next moment, I was no longer in my world.

I stood atop the hill where my village had once been. But the forest was gone—only blackened stumps remained, scorched by fire and time. There was no life here, only ash and silence, a silence so profound it was deafening.

Before me stood a man—tall, broad-shouldered, gripping a weapon in his hands. His eyes were hard, hostile.

I knew him.

Kael. The man I had met in the forest, from the tribe of the Kazareti—the people we had once considered our allies.

"This is all that remains," a voice spoke behind me.

I turned and saw Viator.

"What happened here?" I asked.

"What always happens—a conflict that no one stopped. Your tribe and the Kazareti met in battle, and it led to ruin. Your forests were burned, the Kazareti machines destroyed. And now, there is nothing. No life. No future."

Images flickered around me—warriors of the Yrent and Kazareti clashing, machines tearing into the earth, flames consuming everything we had ever known.

"Why are you showing me this?" I asked, my heart pounding.

"Because this is one possibility," Viator answered. "One of many."

The vision changed.

I stood on the same hill, but this time, the world was different. The forests stretched endlessly, their trees taller and healthier than I had ever seen. In the distance, I heard the laughter of children and the songs of birds returning to their nests.

At the heart of this new world, people stood together—my tribe, the Yrent, and the Kazareti.

I saw them working side by side, building homes that blended machines with nature in perfect harmony. The machines were no longer cold, lifeless tools—they were alive, woven into the land itself.

"This is also a possibility," Viator said.

I looked at the children running through the fields. One of them held a small object glowing with light—the same relic I had seen in the pyramid.

"How did we achieve this?" I asked, my voice filled with hope.

"You," Viator replied. "This future begins with your choice."

The sphere contracted, its light fading, and I was back in the pyramid's chamber.

The relic floated before me, calm, as if waiting for my next move.

"Why me?" I whispered, staring at it.

"Because you have the ability to see beyond what is in front of you," Viator said. "You can bring the light that unites people. But only if you overcome your prejudices, your fears, and your limits."

I looked at the relic.



I knew I had to take it—that this moment was decisive.  
But I also felt the weight of my choice.

Whatever decision I made would change the world.

I reached out and touched the relic's surface.

Its energy surged through me, filling me with warmth  
and clarity.

And in that moment, I understood.

The future is not set.

Its shape depends on us—on our actions, on our ability  
to see not just what divides us, but what binds us  
together.

The sphere vanished.

But its light remained within me.

"I am ready to face my greatest fear," I said, my voice  
steady and resolute.



# CHAPTER 4

## INTUS

Lucis stood in the center of a vast, endless chamber of darkness. The silence was so deep it felt as if she were drowning in a vacuum. This place was different from all the others. There was no light, no walls, no ceiling—only an impenetrable void that seemed to be part of the space itself.

**INTUS, the embodiment of your deepest fears, is always present, waiting only in the darkness of your heart. But you must not give in. Together, we shall show this dark force that the mind is a fortress that cannot be easily destroyed. You will triumph, for your will is mightier than any fear.**





"What now?" she whispered, but her own voice vanished instantly, swallowed by the void.

Then—movement.

It was not alive. It was not mechanical.

It was something in between.

Slowly, a form began to take shape in the darkness. It was amorphous, shifting, as if made of shadows and mist. Its every movement was silent, yet consuming, as if the very space around it bent to its presence.

"Lucis."

The voice did not come as a sound, but as a thought reverberating directly in her mind. It was deep, cold, and piercing.

"Welcome to my domain. I am INTUS."

Lucis felt her heart freeze.

She knew what INTUS was—or rather, what it represented. It was the embodiment of her greatest fears, the manifestation of her subconscious rising against her.

"Your fear created me," INTUS spoke, its form constantly shifting—stretching, shrinking into a tiny sphere, then expanding into a massive beast, then twisting into a dark, shapeless monster. "I am the shadow in your heart, the echo in your mind. And now, you must face me—or be consumed."

The chamber began to change.

From the infinite void, walls began to form, rising like waves from the ground, growing taller and taller until Lucis was trapped in a small, suffocating cube.

Her breath quickened.

A memory flashed in her mind—all the nightmares, all the tight spaces, all the times she had felt there was no way out.



"Look at yourself," INTUS laughed, its voice echoing from all directions. "You fear suffocation. You fear that you will die here, in this pyramid. You fear yourself."

Lucis tried to inhale, but the air felt thick, resisting her every breath.

Panic spread through her body like poison, paralyzing her, forcing her to her knees.

"You are not strong," INTUS declared, now towering above her like a massive shadow. "Your fears control you. I am their embodiment. You will never defeat what I am."

Follow my voice, and together we shall uncover the path to definitive victory over INTUS. However, this triumph will not be yours alone. You must share this knowledge with your brothers and sisters, so they too may find freedom from the fear that plagues them. Only then will you ensure that the darkness of enclosed spaces will never again be your master.





Lucis closed her eyes.

She felt as though she were sinking, as though she were on the edge of collapse.

But then—

She remembered Viator.

His words.

His teachings.

"Breathe," he had once told her. "Fear cannot control you if you embrace it."

Slowly, with trembling hands, she placed her palms over her heart.

She took a deep breath—not sudden, not panicked, but slow and deliberate.

She imagined the air filling her body with light, and with each exhale, she let go of the darkness she had carried within.

"Fear is not an enemy," she whispered, her voice quiet but steady. "It is a teacher."

INTUS hesitated.

Its form wavered, as if her words had unsettled its very foundation.

"What... what are you saying?" it demanded, its voice no longer as certain.

Lucis opened her eyes.

"You are afraid," she answered. "But fear is not about power. Fear is about growth. If I accept it, you cannot control me."

Lucis stood tall, her breath now steady. With each inhale, she felt the space around her expanding. The walls that had once confined her began to dissolve, as if scattered by the light radiating from within her.

INTUS tried to move closer, its form now stretched and uncertain.

"No!" INTUS roared, its voice suddenly filled with panic.

"You cannot destroy me! I am a part of you!"

"Exactly," Lucis replied. "You are a part of me. But you no longer control me."

Suddenly, her entire body filled with light.

The mark on her face glowed, sending out radiant beams that pierced through INTUS, unraveling its form.

The darkness of the chamber dissipated, and Lucis stood in a space now bathed in pure, liberating light.



# CHAPTER 5

## THE BEARER OF LIGHT

Lucis stood alone, her body feeling lighter, her mind clearer. She knew that INTUS had not disappeared entirely—it was still a part of her, but it no longer had power over her. The pyramid had become her ally, a place where she had learned that fear was not an enemy but a tool for growth.

You are the bearer of our light, which you will bring among the people. Your teachings on the art of building will show them how to construct structures and cities that will protect them from all threats - whether they come from the sky, the forest, or the enemy. With your light, they will know that their protection lies in the strength that you will cultivate within them.





"This is not the end," came Viator's gentle voice as he appeared in the form of a radiant sphere.

"Your fears will return again and again, but now you know the truth. Fear is not the enemy, Lucis. It is your greatest ally—if you can learn to embrace it."

Lucis nodded.

She was ready.

Not just for the next steps within the pyramid, but for everything that awaited her beyond it. Because she now understood that strength was not found in fighting the darkness—it was in accepting it and transforming it into light.

Suddenly, she found herself in a glowing chamber at the very peak of the pyramid. The light that filled the space was warm and alive, as if it possessed its own conscious will. After all the trials she had faced, she realized that this place was not just a destination, but a source of the answers she had been seeking.

Before her, Viator appeared, his golden sphere shining more intensely than ever before.

"Lucis," he began, "your journey has reached its summit, but its true purpose is only just beginning. You are the bearer of our light—you must bring it back to the people."

Lucis frowned. "Light? What does that mean? How can the light I found here change the world out there?"

Viator paused for a moment, as if gathering all his knowledge to give her the best answer.

"The light I speak of is not just what you see. It is knowledge. It is the understanding of balance—between what is solid and what is fluid, between what is visible and what remains hidden."



The sphere before them glowed even brighter, and from its surface, images began to emerge.

Lucis saw people building cities—their structures rising into the sky, yet deeply rooted in the earth. She watched as these buildings protected communities from wind, rain, and even destructive forces from the unknown world beyond. These cities were alive, harmonized with nature; their walls were not just barriers but shields, absorbing and redirecting every impact.

"Your mastery of building," Viator continued, "will show people how to create structures and cities that will not just be homes, but guardians. Your buildings will not be fortresses built from fear but sanctuaries that remind all who dwell in them that true strength lies in harmony, not conflict."

Lucis felt her heartbeat quicken.

She envisioned her people—the Yrent, the Kazaret, the Fenar—learning from this place. She saw them building something that would endure.

But with that vision came the weight of responsibility.

"And what if I fail?" she asked quietly.

Viator turned to her, his light pulsing gently, reassuringly.

"You cannot fail, Lucis. Every step you take, even those that seem like mistakes, are part of the path. You are the one who carries our light. You will show them that their protection does not come from stone and walls alone, but from the strength that is nurtured within them."

"Strength within them?" Lucis repeated. "How can I teach them to find that strength?"

"By showing them your own path," Viator answered.

"Your battle with INTUS, your acceptance of your own fear, your realization that light and shadow are merely two sides of the same coin—this is the lesson you are now ready to pass on. Just as the pyramid taught you, you will teach them."

The sphere glowed once more, revealing an image of the pyramid—not just as a structure, but as the heart of life itself. Settlements stretched out along its sides, their homes built with the same harmony embodied by the pyramid—strong yet adaptable, simple yet majestic. The people lived in symbiosis with this great structure, which was not only a physical space but also a source of knowledge.

"This message," Viator said, "is not just for you, but for all those who come after you. It will teach them that protection is not about isolation but about understanding. Your buildings will reflect this balance—strong yet open, protective yet not impenetrable."

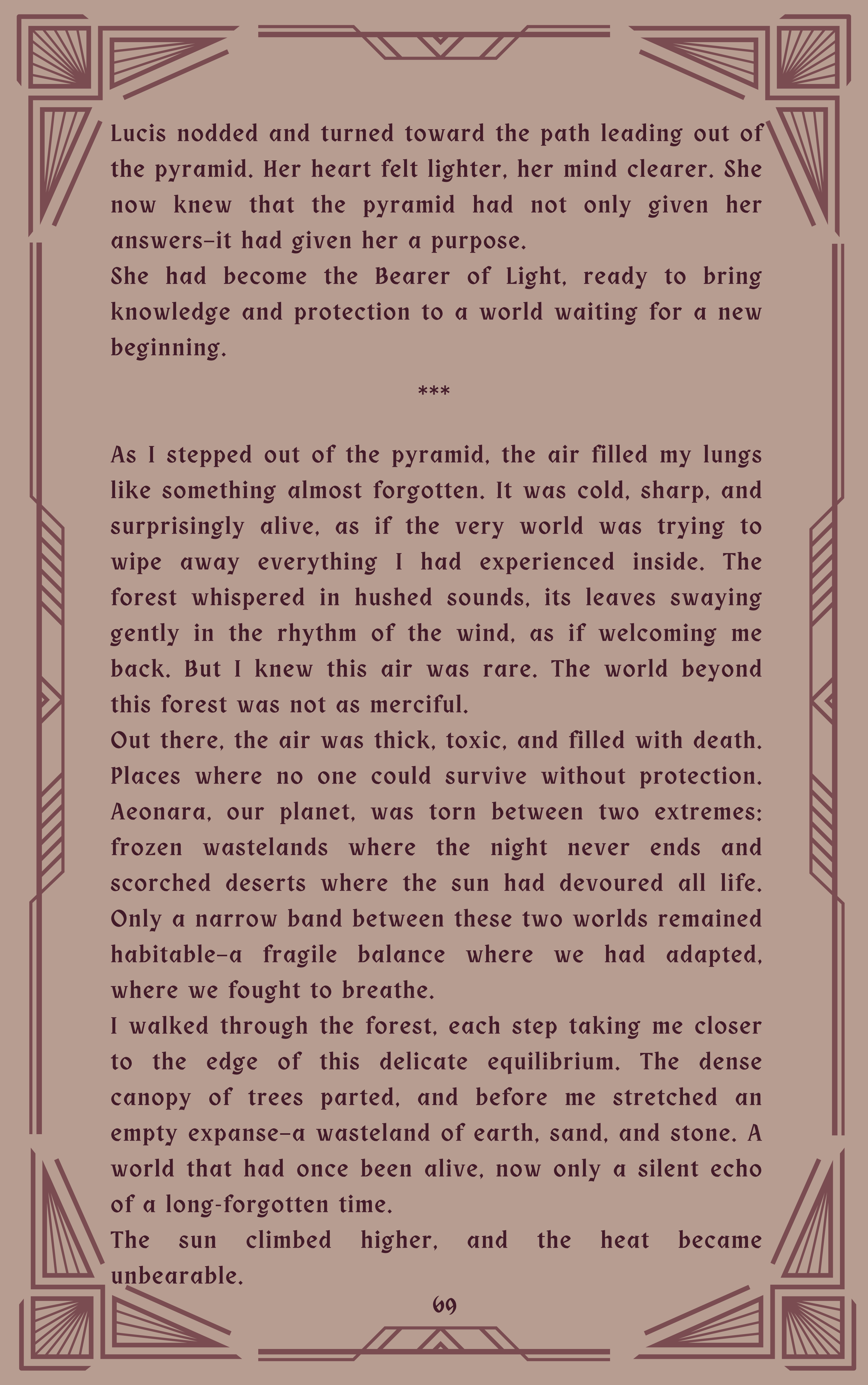
Lucis looked at Viator, then at the glowing core of the pyramid. Her purpose was becoming clear. She had not been sent here merely to overcome her own fears. She had been sent here to carry this message back to the world.

"I understand," she finally said. Her voice was steady, and in her eyes burned a new determination. "I will do everything in my power to bring this light back to the people."

Viator shone even brighter, his sphere nearly merging with the light of the pyramid's core.

"Then you are ready. Remember, Lucis— the light you carry is stronger than you think. And even when the path is dark, you will always find a way to illuminate the night."





Lucis nodded and turned toward the path leading out of the pyramid. Her heart felt lighter, her mind clearer. She now knew that the pyramid had not only given her answers—it had given her a purpose.

She had become the Bearer of Light, ready to bring knowledge and protection to a world waiting for a new beginning.

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As I stepped out of the pyramid, the air filled my lungs like something almost forgotten. It was cold, sharp, and surprisingly alive, as if the very world was trying to wipe away everything I had experienced inside. The forest whispered in hushed sounds, its leaves swaying gently in the rhythm of the wind, as if welcoming me back. But I knew this air was rare. The world beyond this forest was not as merciful.

Out there, the air was thick, toxic, and filled with death. Places where no one could survive without protection. Aeonara, our planet, was torn between two extremes: frozen wastelands where the night never ends and scorched deserts where the sun had devoured all life. Only a narrow band between these two worlds remained habitable—a fragile balance where we had adapted, where we fought to breathe.

I walked through the forest, each step taking me closer to the edge of this delicate equilibrium. The dense canopy of trees parted, and before me stretched an empty expanse—a wasteland of earth, sand, and stone. A world that had once been alive, now only a silent echo of a long-forgotten time.

The sun climbed higher, and the heat became unbearable.

Then, the ground beneath my feet trembled.

At first, it was gentle, like a whispered warning, but then it grew stronger. Sand and stones shifted, the world around me rippling as if something beneath it was waking.

I crouched to steady myself, pressing my hands against the disturbed earth. I felt the vibrations—irregular, powerful, and strangely mechanical.

This was not the movement of nature.

Something beneath my feet was alive.

Something deep, beyond my understanding.



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