

The Chosen One

By Lara Taylor
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"There is another world, called Nether, that runs parallel to this one. In Nether, where I am from, we have wise men called Scribes. They've got the robes, shaved head, tattoos, the whole nine yards—anyway, they discovered, about 75 years ago, how to open a sort of black hole in time. I don't know all the ins and outs, I'm not a Scribe. I just know it's a very complicated thing, to manipulate time like that.

So at first they sent out a large group of people to investigate. They never came back. Some say they loved it here, where the customs are not as strict as in Nether, and decided to stay. Others say that the paranoia associated with being different in this world led to the discovery and demise of our Explorers. Several years later, it was decided that another, smaller group would go, dressed more in the garb of this world. Only time travels quickly here, and where it was 1953 when the first group came through, it was already 1961 when the second group arrived.

At any rate, this new group of Explorers began noticing that some of your people had what seemed to be a super-charged aura about them. Only nobody here seemed to notice. And they were all children. It was a mystery. Were they the children of previous Explorers, where our body chemistry functioned differently here? Or was it that they were Nether half-breeds; half human, half Netherian? Or did they just use a part of their human brains that others couldn't access? We still don't know for sure. It seems though, after years of tests on willing half-breeds, that the strongest auras came from them. Others with visible, but weaker auras, are usually full humans who were more 'aware.'

"You are a half-breed," Gwen stated matter-of-factly.

"What?" gasped Cory. "You mean to tell me that one of my parents was not of this Earth?"

"That is exactly what I am saying," she said, continuing as if Corinne were actively listening instead of lost in her own world. "It was soon discovered that the humans' paranoia and, alternately, its curiosity, included its own kind. Kids were disappearing as soon as they showed signs of any psychic powers. Many thought they were

being taken to be tested, others thought it was not the government, but private interests groups..." Here Gwen trailed off, her brows drawn down in a frown as she thought. "It's all so complicated," she sighed, and then shook her head. "Anyway, the reason I'm here is to protect you from others and from yourself."

Corinne looked up, startled. "I'm a threat to myself?" she asked.

Gwen stood and swung her leg up and over the chair back as if dismounting a from a horse. "You could be," she acknowledged. "We don't know what your powers are, precisely. You are still young. You won't come into your full powers until you are 21 human years of age. Have you had anything weird happen to you in the past couple of years? Thoughts or wishes coming true in the heat of the moment? Things levitating or flying across the room? Dreams coming true the day after you have them? Losing time?"

"Losing time?" Cory interrupted. "What do you mean by that?" she asked casually.

"I mean self-hypnosis, where you last remember doing something calm, or sitting in class, and suddenly you start, as if you'd been asleep, and you realize that hours or minutes or sometimes even days, have gone by, and you don't remember anything...does this sound familiar? Gwen asked, narrowing her eyes and watching Corinne closely.

"Well no, I mean, of course not!" Cory stammered. "Why would that sound familiar to me? Anyway, this whole thing sounds ludicrous! Other worlds and Gates and supernatural powers. I mean, sure I read about it, but it's not real!" she exclaimed. "I mean, come on, what do you take me for? A Trekkie?"

"Trekkie? What is that? A troll of some kind?" Gwen asked. She had her left arm under her breasts and her right elbow propped up on it, her chin in her right hand, and looking quite puzzled.

"Oh great! Now you're going to tell me you have trolls in Nether, right?" Corinne asked sarcastically.

"Yes," said Gwen, nodding in confusion, "but I have only had a few cursory glances at this world, so I'm not altogether sure what this Earth has in store for me. We don't know everything just yet!"



Art student expresses himself by sculpting.

Photo by Mary Hill

CREATIVE CORNER

Anticipation of New Life

*What will you be like?
Who will you look like?
What will you do with your life?
I wait for you.*

*I feel your movements.
Strong, powerful, constant.
Will you be a boy or a girl?
I wait for you.*

*My body changes.
You are growing.
Will you be healthy?
I wait for you.*

*The time is here.
Something is wrong.
I am afraid.
I wait for you.*

*Oxygen mask, an IV, a spinal.
Hurry! Hurry!
The doctor takes you out of me.
I wait for you.*

*It's a boy!
Ten fingers, ten toes.
Everything is fine.
I hold you.*

—Cindy S. Bridges

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