

A Diamond in My Heart, by Lorena Angell

Book two in The Unaltered series

Chapter 1 - Freedom

I used to scoff at magical powers and abilities, used to have this amazing focused direction in life and didn't allow my time to be wasted on silly conspiracy theories or gossip. I certainly didn't believe in the existence of any superpowers or unnatural abilities—until I became the first person on earth to display all the known powers and abilities.

A few months ago, I learned first-hand cosmic energy rays exist and have always existed, and that nearly everyone on the planet has been affected by them in one way or another.

My mother, Dr. Charlotte Courtnae, and I belong to a rare bloodline of purity that exempts us from the effects of those cosmic energy rays. Something about our DNA protected us while we were in the womb, and we were never “altered.” We are unchanged, unaffected. Unlike me, she doesn't *know* she's an Unaltered human.

Living on a planet where I'm a member of this minority isn't so bad, really. Those with powers and abilities who think they can rule the world have no control over me. My mind cannot be read by the Readers. My future remains unseen by the Seers. Healers cannot manipulate my body, and I'm untraceable to a Hunter, for I have no scent. Runners would technically have the advantage over me if I were a regular Unaltered like my mother. But I'm not regular. I'm not ordinary.

I'm an Unaltered Diamond Bearer.

I carry a piece of the Sanguine Diamond within my heart, which gives me every known power and ability plus a couple bonus powers. Maetha, my mentor and the person responsible for the jewel in my heart, hasn't admitted anything, but I suspect she bears a diamond shard in her heart as well. I plan on asking more questions when she comes to visit.

Five months have passed since I returned from the Runner's Compound in Montana. It feels like an eternity ago. I finished up my junior year in high school and welcomed the summer months as a time I could develop my powers. I've had to be more careful when using my

abilities. When I healed my neighbor's broken hip right after I returned, I didn't think he would tell my parents—or the whole neighborhood, for that matter. My parents, being the doctors that they are, suspected dementia rather than believe I might have the ability to heal using my mind. Lesson learned. Now I only try to use my healing power when I'm in large crowds.

The last couple of weeks, I've been helping at my mother's counseling clinic while her regular receptionist, Evelyn, is on vacation. Today I'm supposed to take a couple files over to the Behavioral Health Center two blocks away. I could easily walk, but I figure I'll hit the Coffee Shack on the way back as an excuse to drive my new cherry-red Mini Cooper.

My parents bought me the car when I came home from Clara Winter's "Olympic" training camp. They were told I'd been in an automobile accident that resulted in injuries which had disqualified me for this go around of competition. I think they assumed I'd be bummed about being sent home and thought the Cooper would cheer me up . . . and they were right. I know I'm fortunate to be the only child of two doctors and that most kids my age would be lucky to get a rusted-out, dented, twenty-year-old car, so I try not to brag. Needless to say, any opportunity to get behind the wheel excites me to no end.

I take the files to be delivered and leave the building. I climb into my vanilla-scented car and start the engine. After making sure the mirrors are in the correct position, I carefully back the car out of the parking spot. Turning back around to put the car in drive, I see a man leaning against the building I'd just exited.

Strange. I hadn't noticed him before.

He stands around six-feet tall, with well-trimmed black hair, and I guess his age to be mid-forties. He has a square jaw line, straight nose, and his eyes are hidden behind black sunglasses. His long, black trench coat is open in front, revealing a lanky frame dressed in a T-shirt and faded blue jeans. Square-toed motorcycle boots peek out below the hemline of his jeans, hinting at the possibility he owns a Harley. His trench coat reminds me of what cowboys wear in the old Western movies my father loves to watch.

This man doesn't fit the profile of the normal patrons of the clinic. I decide to use my Hunter ability to smell the air around me, searching for his scent. Perhaps I'll be able to determine if he has a cosmic power. The smell of his leather duster, jeans and T-shirt fills my nose. However, this man has no personal scent, which raises alarms.

My attention is pulled away by an approaching car. I move my car out of the way and look

back for the scent-less man, but he's gone. I drive away to deliver the files, realizing I haven't met anyone other than Maetha and my mother who doesn't have a scent.

When I arrive at the Coffee Shack after delivering the files, I see him again. This time he's leaning up against a pick-up truck with his thumbs hooked in the front pockets of his jeans. My first thought is he must be a Runner, but the fact he doesn't have a scent cancels that out. This man is clearly Unaltered. I'll be waiting for a few minutes until the two cars in front of me have their orders filled, so I decide to exercise my ability to probe his mind—one more opportunity to practice the powers of the diamond on unsuspecting subjects. I reach out with my mind to penetrate his thoughts, but find it hard to feel any kind of mind or thought process. Then, without warning I'm hit with a mental force so strong the wind is knocked out of my lungs. My fingers death-grip the steering wheel while I try to regain my breath.

A smooth, deep voice enters my head. *How is it a young girl like you is able to read minds?*

My lungs burn with the need for air as my mind swims around the realization this man is a telepath. Maetha told me telepathic powers died out over the years and the power only exists inside the complete Sanguine Diamond. I only have a piece of the diamond now, and cannot communicate telepathically anymore. I put my thoughts at the front of my mind, figuring if he has this power he must have other powers too—he must possess a diamond.

Did Maetha send you? I ask with my mind.

Maetha? So she's behind this?

Bingo! He knows about Maetha, so he *must* have a diamond.

Behind what? I question. My lungs finally relax and I am able to inflate them properly.

He readjusts his stance and takes off his sunglasses, revealing heavy eyebrows hovering above squinted eyes. I wonder why he removed his shades. Is he trying to get a better look at me? He must be reading my mind because he puts them back on.

Who died for you? he asks, assuming I'll know what he means.

I don't know what you're talking about.

The car behind me honks to alert me to pull forward one spot. I do so.

Maetha still operates with the same deception, I see. You should take my advice, little girl. Get as far away from her as you can.

Why should I listen to you?

Because I know her better than just about anyone else!

His statement makes my hair stand on end. *What's your name?* I ask.

I don't go by one. Names are mere labels that inhibit progression. I prefer to be recognized by what I offer. Today I offer freedom. You may think of me as your freedom.

Ooh-kaaay. I am officially freaked out! *Oh, I won't be thinking of you at all, bucko!"*

The car in front of me pulls forward and I follow—only I don't stop at the window. I press the gas pedal to the floor, leaving tread marks on the pavement.

My heart races and my eyes check the rear-view mirror repeatedly as I speed through traffic on my way back to the office. My compact Mini slices through tight spots with the ease of a bobsled. The further I travel away from the creepy man, the more my clenched jaw begins to relax . . . until I arrive back at the office, where I discover “Mr. Freedom” leaning against the building in the same spot as before. I should have realized his diamond would afford him the running ability, but I'm still surprised to see him.

Calli, when you decide to utilize my help, all you'll have to do is ask. His lips part in an almost evil smile, revealing perfectly straight white teeth. Then he turns and walks away.



A couple of days have passed since I saw him, and I can't help but frequently look over my shoulder. I still experience the same panic when I think about the man I've come to refer to as “Freedom.” His whole demeanor left me feeling uneasy. It's just fine with me if I never meet him again.

I wonder how he found me. Did he seek me out, or was he passing through and detected a difference in me compared to other people? I also ponder what he said.

More than anything, I wonder how many other Unaltereded have diamonds in their hearts.

Maetha said she'd come and train me to visualize auras, like my roommate, Beth, from the Runner's compound. Now that I understand all Unaltered humans have identifiable auras, whether or not they have a diamond, I'm excited to learn how to spot other people like me. But I haven't heard from Maetha yet. I will certainly ask her more about her powers and why Freedom was familiar with her—and how many others there are like us.



An important date is fast approaching: the day Chris Harding resigns as a spy.

I would love to go see him . . . to get my “Chris fix.” I could watch him from a distance and he wouldn’t need to know I was present. But what if he saw me? What would that do to him? He’d be reminded of the pain we suffered because of Maetha. Not only would he be tortured further, it would also be painful for me. I was several years older in the vision than I am now.

I know I will see him again, but I also know now is not that time. He, on the other hand, doesn’t—and shouldn’t—know I have powers. From his perspective, the whole chain of events was manipulated, just as he and I were, thus nullifying the possibility of any future between us. Not to mention the fact that in his vision I was a Healer, not the ordinary human he now believes I am.

If I were present at his resignation, he would come to the conclusion I have Seer or Reader abilities, which I would need in order to know his plans. Even though I discard the idea of showing up to see him, the longing to do so doesn’t leave me.

Chapter 2 - Nyctophobia

I can't help but feel somewhat uncomfortable while working the reception desk at my mother's psychiatric clinic. Compared to the age of most of her patients, I'm just a "whipper-snapper" —which they're fond of telling me. Well, only one patient did, and he was eighty-nine years old. Imagine that, a man so old, yet deathly afraid of the dark.

Most of my mother's patients suffer from the same phobia.

I never realized what my mother went through in the course of one day at the office. Take today, for instance. Her patient line-up begins with a middle-aged man who tapes black garbage bags together and plasters them all over his windows to protect himself from the light. Another patient won't go anywhere at night because his fear of the dark is so severe. Yet another won't even leave the house in the daylight because she's afraid of cloudy days, afraid even of the shade cast by big leafy trees. The final patient of the day is a young girl around eight-years-old who suffers panic attacks whenever her mother tries to take her outside after dark.

When my mother exits her office with the young girl, Sasha, she hands me her chart. A yellow sticky with a phone number and name is attached to the front.

"Calli, would you please call and set up an appointment for Sasha?" my mother asks.

The name on the sticky is Charles Rhondell. My eyes shoot up to my mother, who doesn't seem to understand what I'm thinking. I've met a man with that same name before—the leader of the Mind Readers. Is this the same man? Does that mean . . . I look at Sasha, who's eyeing me curiously, angling her head from side to side.

She speaks in her quiet whisper of a voice. "You're different."

"How do you know I'm different when you've never met me before?"

"No, you're different than most, but just like the doctor."

"Honey, it's impolite to talk to people like that." Her mother nervously tries to suppress her daughter's innocent comment.

Without even looking into the mother's mind I can see she's embarrassed about her

daughter's behavior, and she doesn't want to believe her daughter might be able to read minds. I enter the mother's mind and find a couple instances where she thought Sasha might be accessing her thoughts. I can feel how logical reasoning fought with indisputable facts. She feels Sasha has read her mind before, but she doesn't want to admit her suspicions to anyone for fear of ridicule.

"But Mommy, she doesn't have a brain," Sasha insists, only to be quickly ushered across the room and given a sharp reprimand.

I pick up the phone and dial the number for Mr. Rhondell. He's out of the office, but a receptionist lines up an appointment for the following week. He will come to my mother's office to meet with Sasha.

Sasha's mother comes back over to the desk. "I apologize for my daughter's behavior. Sometimes she says things like that and leaves me horrified. I'm really sorry."

I glance across the room to the couch where Sasha sits with her arms folded and her ankles crossed. I hand the woman an appointment card with the date and time Mr. Rhondell's receptionist lined up. "Don't worry about it. Most of the time I feel like I don't have a brain. The doctor will meet with you in one week."

"One week? What am I supposed to do with her until then?"

I look around for my mom so she can rescue me, but she's already gone back into her office. So I say, "Well, don't try to force her outside, and she won't have a panic attack." The woman seems frustrated with my response. She drops the card in her purse, then walks over, snatches her daughter's hand, and briskly leaves the office.



Later that night at dinner, I try to read my mother's mind, hoping this time I'll get in. I'd really like to know how much she knows about Charles Rhondell. Over the past few months I've tried repeatedly to reach out for her mind only to find there's nothing there. When I look at my father, I feel a connection to his mind. If I focus on him, I'm able to read his thoughts. But concerning my mother, when I see her, I don't feel the same connection. I'm reminded of how I felt when I was a regular human. There were no minds attached to people, just people . . . and my wishing I could read their minds.

I'm unsuccessful connecting with my mother's mind, so I decide to ask her about Charles

Rhondell. “Who is the man you had me call for your last patient? Is he a doctor too?”

“No. He’s a behavioral specialist who works miracles with kids who are afraid of the dark and who think they can read minds.”

“Do you get many kids like her?”

“I’ve seen several patients with nyctophobia, but they weren’t as young as Sasha. Sometimes nyctophobia is accompanied with delusions of future sight.”

“Future sight?”

“Yes. One mother was so upset because her teenage daughter was predicting the future with surprising accuracy. It took a long time to convince her they were mere coincidences.”

“Do you remember what the girl predicted?” I ask, admittedly curious.

“Yes, she claimed to have foreseen the destruction of their entire town of Kalapana on the big island of Hawaii in 1990. I didn’t meet the girl until several years later. I tried to explain to her that such ‘premonitions’ are usually based on facts we observe around us. The fact is their town was in a potential lava path and sooner or later the town would be affected by the volcano. I told her our brains are quite powerful and can formulate possible future outcomes based on the facts at hand, but she defended herself to no end, saying she’d seen the same images in her mind prior to the event happening. The mother was torn between believing her daughter and wanting to help her believe she imagined it.”

My father puts his fork down and wipes his mouth with his napkin. “Well, that’s completely understandable. If Calli came to us with information that our town was going to be destroyed, I’d listen. I might be a little hesitant, but I know her well enough to know she would never lie about something like that.”

“I feel the same, Allen,” my mother says.

“Thanks, Dad.” I smile and he raises his glass to me. My thoughts travel back to Charles Rhondell and what might happen when he arrives at the office next week. I look at my mother and wonder if she will be blown away when Charles refers to my “injuries.” I deduce I should tell her right now that I know the man.

“Mom, I think I met this guy while I was in Montana. One of the athletes was having the same symptoms as your patient, and Mr. Rhondell was brought in to help.” A little white lie. *Sorry Dad, but I’m a seasoned liar.*

“Well, he is the best in the nation. I don’t doubt they would be anxious for him to help a

potential Olympic candidate,” my mother says.

“Mom, just out of curiosity, what type of premonition *would* you believe to be of the paranormal variety?”

“It would take something earth-shattering, something unpredictable, so out of the norm that heads are scratched.”

“Like predicting the winning lottery numbers?”

“No, that’s just dumb luck. I mean something like, ‘On such and such a date, at such and such a time, aliens will land at a particular place.’ Something like that isn’t predictable and is highly unlikely to happen. If someone foresaw that happening, it would certainly catch my attention.”

“Calli,” my father interjects, “what do you want for your birthday?”

Oh yeah, my birthday is next week—the big seven-teen! “I don’t know.”

“See, I can predict the future. I knew you’d say that.” He smiles at me and says, “We’ll surprise you. How about that?”



Charles Rhondell enters the office, and right off the bat his eyes meet mine.

“Calli?”

“Hi, Mr. Rhondell.”

“What are you doing here? How do you know Charlotte?” My presence has clearly caught him off guard.

“Dr. Courtnae is my mother, Charles. How’s your wife?” I ask, knowing they were reunited following the eradication of the Death Clan.

“Good. She’s good.”

My eyes are drawn to his neck and to the peculiar necklace he wears. The leather cord around his neck is attached to a glass encasement shaped like a teardrop. A piece of the Sanguine Diamond floats gently inside, suspended in a way that defies gravity.

“I’ll let my mother know you’ve arrived.” I lift the phone and press button number one. After announcing his arrival, my mother asks he be shown in. “She can see you now, Charles.” I stand and walk him to the office door.

“Calli, how are you doing since . . . well, since what happened?”

“All back to normal, Charles. Thanks for asking.”

He leans close and whispers kindly in my ear. “It’s too bad you lost all your abilities.”

As he does this, I experience a sharp pain within my heart, almost as if my shard moved. I keep calm.

“I don’t feel that way at all, sir. By the way, my mother doesn’t know anything about what happened to me or about the world of powers and abilities.” I smile and open the door.

“Well, Calli, I’ll keep my tongue in check.” He walks past me and closes the door behind him.

I walk back to the front desk, rubbing my chest, trying to heal it with the willpower of my mind. The pain subsides almost instantly. I sit in heavy contemplation in the not-so-comfortable chair at the desk. Did Charles’s shard react like mine? Did it move also? I don’t have the answer.

The door to the clinic opens, and Sasha and her mother enter. Sasha skips over to my desk and smiles.

“Hello Sasha, do I have a brain today?” I ask, smiling.

“Nope,” she says as she fidgets with the cup holding assorted pens on my desk.

“Leave those alone, Sasha.” Her mother directs her daughter’s shoulders toward the couch and sits her down.

I pick up the phone and speak to my mother, informing her Sasha has arrived. Soon, my mother comes to the waiting room and invites them back to her office. I wonder what will happen to Sasha. Will Charles drop a bombshell on the mother, or will he skirt around the issue for now?

I keep myself busy for the next hour until everyone exits the back office and enters the reception area.

Sasha bounces her way into the waiting room like a jackrabbit.

Mr. Rhondell hands Sasha’s mother a packet of information and explains his treatment plan, which, not surprisingly, includes sending Sasha off to his therapy clinic for two months.

The mother isn’t very excited, but she’s obviously at her wit’s end on how to deal with her daughter.

Sasha approaches me. “Mr. Charles has a brain, but he won’t let me see it.”

“What’s the difference? Maybe I have one too and won’t let you see it, just like Mr.

Charles.”

“Nope, your head is empty like the lady doctor.” She points to Charles. “I can feel his brain, but it’s wrapped up like a present and I don’t know what’s inside.”

I smile at her and realize her mother will gladly hand off her daughter to Charles in the hope of taming her thought processes.

“That’s enough, Sasha! How many times have I told you not to talk to people like that?”

Charles intervenes. “Sasha, would you like to come to my office and meet other kids who can see brains too?” He winks at the mother.

“Yes, but not at night.”

“You know Sasha, I don’t like the dark either. It makes me feel unsafe.”

Sasha’s eyes open wide in agreement. “My mom says there’s nothing to be afraid of in the dark, but she’s wrong.”

Before Sasha’s mother can scold her, Charles interjects again. “Sasha, not everyone is afraid of the dark. My mom wasn’t afraid of the dark either, and she didn’t understand why I was. At my clinic, I’ll help you understand why, all right?”

“Okay. Why won’t you let me see your brain, Mr. Charles?”

“Sasha!” her mother scolds.

“It’s all right, Sasha, you are not the first person to ask me that. What if another girl your age came up to you and asked why you wouldn’t let her see *your* mind? What would you say?”

“I’d say it’s right there,” she thumps her fingertip on her temple. “If you can’t see it, then you’re not looking hard enough.”

Mr. Rhondell smiles and thumps his fingertip on his temple. “Sasha, it’s right there. If you can’t see it, then you’re not looking hard enough.”

I must say, Charles certainly knows how to downplay the emergence of powers.



The whole Sasha/Charles Rhondell episode raises my curiosity about the Shadow Demons, and I decide to conduct a few experiments. What I know so far is the Demons were Healers and are now stuck in our world, preying on people with powers, or at least that’s all Ms. Winter knew about them. I could see them when I had the whole diamond in my possession, but come to think of it, I haven’t seen any since arriving back home here in Ohio. Do I need the entire diamond in

order to see Demons?

I decide I'll venture out into the night and try to find them. I'll have to do it tonight because tomorrow night is my birthday party.

My cell phone rings and the display shows Suz calling.

"Hey Suz."

"You want to go to the mall? I hear Brand will be there tonight."

"Who?"

"Brand Safferson! Where have you been, girl? He's only the hottest guy ever!"

"Oh, right, Mr. All-star quarterback. I don't think he's all that good looking, Suz."

After being around the Runners Clan, no guy in my high school can compare to the looks of those fine specimens, especially when compared to Chris.

"That's just fine. One less girl I have to compete with. Will you come with me, please, and um, would you drive?"

"Sure, I'll pick you up around seven." I'm excited to have an opportunity to hunt for Demons, and I haven't hung out with Suz in quite a while. The sun won't be down until around ten, so we'll have to kill some time till the Demons come out.



My experiences of a few months ago have changed me. The diamond inside my heart has altered my perceptions, and not just because I can see into every person around me at will, but because I see intentions, both honest and deplorable. I see the rising generation's low self-esteem and the current generation's frustration.

It doesn't take long to realize Suz asked me to take her to the mall because her other friends were there with Brand, and she hadn't been invited. I normally don't like entering Suz's mind, and I make it a practice not to, but something is bothering her, and I can't tell what it is . . . well, besides being left out of the circle.

I look for her current thoughts and find she's ex-tremely attracted to Brand, but he won't give her the time of day anymore. Just two months ago, they were good friends, even to the point that they'd hang out together—alone. But then something unexpected happened and their relationship ceased. From Suz's perspective, I can't determine what happened. All I can see in

her memory is Brand and Suz were in his room getting a little hot and heavy, and then suddenly Brand pulled back and pushed her away both physically and emotionally. He never got close to her again after that, and Suz has been heartbroken and desperate to find out why.

I pull out of her mind and turn my focus across the food court to Brand.

This boy couldn't be more average looking. His height is probably five-feet-eight inches, and he's neither fat nor muscular. His hair is reddish brown, short and wavy, and his eyes are hazel. His eyelids seem a bit inflamed, and he has a few noticeable acne splotches. His one redeeming trait is, at least in my opinion, his dimples when he smiles. Apparently he knows how powerful his dimples are because he smiles all the time. Brand has always been a mystery to me. Girls seem to flock to him for no apparent reason other than his sports talent. Well, now I have the ability to see what's going on in his head. Maybe I'll be able to figure out why he dumped Suz and also figure out why so many girls like him.

Entering Brand's mind is an assault on my senses, sending me this way and that. I can't focus on the images, thoughts, and emotions that are screaming through my mind, but I know every one of them belongs to Brand. I pull out of his mind, shake my head, and try again. This time I only look for the outermost edges of his current thoughts, but again, I am bombarded with confusion—it's like turning on fifty different radios to fifty different stations. What in the world is going on? I decide to simply read his lips and leave the powers of the diamond alone. The conversation is difficult at best to watch because of all the passing bodies, so I give up.

I look over at Suz and enter her mind with ease. I turn my attention to one of the other girls by Brand—Deb is her name—and enter her mind with ease. Eww, I have to get out of that one quick. Her mind is filled with designs on Brand—well, designs on any breathing male who will take her. Still, I easily entered her mind, and Suz's mind, but Brand's mind is different.

A sudden thought occurs to me: I wonder what Sasha would say about Brand's mind? She'd probably say he has a crazy mind, or maybe that he has too many brains, and I'd agree with her.

The girls surrounding Brand are pathetically falling on their faces trying to catch his attention. He seems more interested in the time, as he checks his watch often. Maybe he has someone to meet?

He stands, says goodbye, and leaves, much to the dismay of his adoring fans.

“What? He's leaving?” Suz asks, scooting to the edge of her seat. “At least he didn't take anyone with him. Let's follow him, Calli.”

“No. I’m not doing that.”

She jumps up and grabs my arm. “Come on, your Cooper is perfect for tailing someone. Pleeease?”

“All right.” I cave, not merely to satisfy Suz’s curiosity, but to satisfy mine as well.

We hurry out the large doors and spot Brand walking at a fast pace through the parking lot to his vehicle. My car is located nearby, fortunately, and following him is made easier because of that. We tail him straight to his home and watch him park his car inside the garage.

“That’s it? He was going home?” Suz asks, exasperated.

“I guess so.” I drive past his house to the next main road. “Suz, do you want to walk around town with me?”

“Walk? It’s almost dark. Why not drive around town?”

Good point. “Yeah, all right.”

With darkness setting in, we drive all over town, up to the heights where all the rich people live and down to the tracks, but not beyond. *No sense placing ourselves in danger.* Suz chats the whole time, and I search for Demons. All I have to do is utter an “Uh-huh” or “Really?” every now and then to satisfy her need to be heard. Not once do I spot a Shadow Demon in the dark. What a let-down.

Later, I drop her off at her house and remind her of my birthday party. She says she wouldn’t miss it for anything. I enter her mind, almost accidentally, and find a most disturbing fact: Suz is the one who set off the firecracker in the girl’s bathroom in middle school. When she realized how badly she’d hurt me, she became my friend out of guilt, and she still holds onto our friendship because of her remorse.

Well, that sucks!

I drive home to my house in a state of shock, memories rushing through my head. Suz was the least likely person to have befriended me while at the hospital. That should have been my first clue. I remembered feeling thrilled I had made a friend—a popular girl to boot—but it was all a lie.



Today, August seventh, is my birthday. The day comes and goes without much of the over-

the-top cheesy ridiculousness that so often accompanies a birthday.

My parents give me a new laptop to help with my studies, plus a few other smaller gifts. Suz gives me a gift card that is good for any merchant in the mall, which is nice, but most likely given out of her perpetual guilt. A bouquet of roses arrives late in the afternoon from an “anonymous friend.”

Suz excitedly suggests maybe they’re from a boy. I have to admit, a small part of me hopes Chris has sent them, but I dismiss the notion upon reading the message in the card: *You are perfect, Unaltered in any way.*

I figure this is Maetha’s way of announcing her arrival. Finally, I can ask her some burning questions. The first on the docket will be about Freedom.