

She was magnificent.

She had always been, with her wild, untamed mane of dark-purple hair flecked by shining stars that floated around her like a halo, her eyes infinite obsidian orbs that seemed as deep as an endless pit, ready to suck you in, if you so much as glanced at her.

Her gleaming black skin was draped from shoulders to ankles by glittering clouds the mixed color of various shades of blue, hues of red and a tinge of purple.

She was standing with her back ramrod straight, her head, poised and chin slightly lifted, a defiant flame in her adamant eyes as her full, crimson-red lips stretched into a roguish grin.

She looked regal, like a queen. Like an *empress*, eternal ruler of the Universe, the very creator of life and destructor of galaxies.

I watched her walk towards me in the feline grace that only she possessed. Tears pricked at the corners of my eyes, threatening to glide on my cheeks.

After all this time, we were finally meeting.

She joined her hands, colorful planets from all sizes swirling around her wrists like bracelets, opened her palms skywards, and I watched in awe as memories from my childhood poured out of her hands, being projected around us.

I watched my two-year-old self when I glanced at the starry sky in a cold November night for the first time in its life and immediately fell in love with it.

I watched as, at six years old, I received my first plastic model of the V-2 rocket, one I treasured all my life.

I watched as my life unfurled before me, seeing myself surrounded by small plastic renderings of planets and rockets, before the toys led space to books, and the books led space to piles of papers, computers and expensive telescopes.

She closed her palms and the memories sputtered a last time before disappearing, and it was just her and I again.

Again, her beauty took my breath away.

She lifted a hand towards my cheek, and brushed a stray tear that had fallen. Her touch was gentle, as soft as a feather.

But I knew better. After all, I had seen her annihilate entire galaxies without so much as flicking her fingers.

Her lips parted and, when she spoke, her voice was as soft as honey, nor old nor young. "I have waited for you, my child, my lover, my brother, my subject. For you are a part of me as much as I am a part of you."

This time, I couldn't stop the tears that flowed from my eyes. She grazed her index and middle finger to her lips before pressing them to my brow.

Before everything faded, I took her in a last time. And though I was gone, she remained. Eternal.

Space.