



Prologue

Past

"I never should've trusted you!" As her words travel through the air around them, she saw a small hint of a grin spreading across his face.

"No, my dear, you shouldn't have." He moved about 30 feet within the blink of an eye. Now, standing so close to her face, she could smell the reek of his ego filling the inches between them. "I told you not to trust me, not to have faith in me, in us." A small sigh escaped his throat. He took a minute to regain his posture and took a low and grunting breath. "In yourself!" he yelled. She felt her cheeks grow redder with pain and sadness, trying her hardest not to let it show. But he saw, of course, as he smiled once again.

As he walked away without looking back, he added, "I think it's time for you to find that little door of yours and return to where you belong." With one look back, he snapped his finger, and a large brown door appeared behind her. A moment of fear came over her. He wouldn't. He won't. Right?! She thought, and with nothing but a smile, he waved his hand. Making the door swing open with a gust of wind, she was forced through the entrance, and within a split second, she was lying in a huge field of grass. She felt the tears streaming down her cheeks as she realized where she was. The one place she never wanted to return to. *Home...* she thought. As she sank her head between her legs.



Her grandmother had mentioned many, and many times that she did not want to be called Ruth; as a result, she was called mother, grandmother, or Mrs. The only thing she had explained was that her first name, Ruth, was given to her at birth, but the person behind the name was created by a life long lived. They knew she had lived a long life, but what kind nobody knew. Therefore, the name Ruth had always been and may even be forever a subject of mystery. Her grandmother was a beautiful woman, with long grey hair and dark green eyes. She always wore these old hippie, Celtic dresses, and she always had one necklace around her neck. If her grandmother walked into a room, you'd feel the warmth in an instant. Her aura was worth many lifetimes, compared to the impact it had on one's mind. Elodie had never seen her without it. Elodie remembered that her grandmother had lost it once, and she was looking over and over. Through the whole house, the garden. Under the couches, behind the books. She was in such disarray as if the world were ending. She did find it again, but where it was, Elodie did not know; she was not there when her grandmother found it again. It was a green, emerald stone entwined with silver thread, hanging on a silver chain. Elodie loved this necklace; it was the most beautiful piece of jewelry she had ever seen. Sometimes if you looked at it from a certain angle and the light was shining on it, it almost looked like it was glowing.

One day, Elodie would get it, her grandmother Ruth always said. Her grandmother had been gifted with the necklace from someone dear, Elodie had asked many times who, but always got a vague answer. A necklace that exquisite had to have a story, Elodie had thought. The necklace was as much her as her name was. Her grandmother loved her given name



as much as her necklace, but she had associated the necklace only with her name. As if her name would cease to exist when the necklace does. "Ruth was me in another life, my dear El." She had always said. She said that she had lived many lives and did not always know what the present was, and the past, of all the lives, worlds, and experiences, would fade together sometimes. It was all very confusing what she said. Anytime Elodie would ask for more information, her grandmother would change the topic.

She had been re-reading one of her favorite books while out on the patio that evening. *The Tale of the Seven Rings* was part four in a series of seven books. She had asked her grandmother if there were any books she might enjoy and could read from her library upstairs.

"There are thousands of books to be read, my dear, you can read anything you like. But remember, not every book should be read, all right?" She always said this, every time the subject of books came up. As if she knew more than the rest. It was hard to go against her words because of this. She always seemed to have evidence of every belief she held. If you were to go against her, you would automatically be wrong. Elodie did not understand what she meant, but since she just wanted to see the beautiful library, she nodded with a bright smile.

"Yes, I understand!" she said, while already halfway through the door.

As she looked through all the volumes in the library, she looked around and was amazed at what she could see. The library was a colossal space; the whole place was dark oak wood with walls made of bookcases, with four seemingly large tables in the middle. On the opposite side of the door was a huge wall