

THE SHADE RIDERS AND THE DREADFUL GHOSTS

Written by

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INT. -MIDDLE SCHOOL WEST WING HALLWAY- DAY

Entering the Bardsville school, NOVA 11 almost gets hit as the wind slams the door shut behind her. She grabs her stomach and looks around. A ghost is in front of her just vanishing from view.

NOVA

Not those damn ghosts again. I don't care that they are someone's ancestors they have got to go!

Bell rings and startles her. Nova hustles to English class.

INT.- AUDITORIUM- AFTERNOON

Nova meets up with her classmates: TAKEESA 11, MAX KIM 10 and BENNY 11. The old vending machines rattle horribly when she walks past. They are in front of what used to be the kitchen. Nova walks past a crowd of kids near the stage. Then walks to the rickety table where her friends are and sets down her brown lunch bag.

NOVA

Hey guys, I think I saw a ghost out in the hallway this morning. It happened so fast I'm not sure. I don't know about you guys but I want them gone. Thing is I'm not sure I can fight them alone.

TAKEESKA

Something happened with a pirate ghost this morning.

Max Kim looks scared as he gulps his chocolate milk.

NOVA

What? What happened?

TAKEESHA

Dayton was carrying a science book when he was attacked by the ghost. Remember ghosts don't like science

NOVA

Is he okay?

Takeesha stuffs her sandwich into her mouth. She gestures "give me a minute" A chair drops. Everyone jumps. Nova looks around the room.

BENNY  
 He went to the hospital  
 screaming.  
 Takeesha sputters her milk  
 and wipes her chin with a  
 napkin.

TAKEESHA  
 Nova's my friend. I should  
 tell her. You know what I  
 mean?

NOVA  
 That's probably the same  
 ghost I saw. Benny, you  
 actually believe you saw  
 something?

BENNY  
 Yes, but it could most likely  
 be explained. Paranormal  
 stuff needs proof. And  
 there's such a thing as mob  
 mentality.

TAKEESHA  
 Aw, come on Benny. You know  
 ghosts exist now.

BENNY  
 I don't want to discuss it.

Takeesha climbs off the table. Benny pops the last of his  
 sandwich into his mouth.

INT. HALLWAY NEAR LOCKERS-AFTERNOON

Girls are getting books out of lockers.

TAKEESHA  
 I still want to do the seance  
 in the library.

NOVA  
 Even after seeing the pirate  
 ghost?

TAKEESHA  
 I can handle myself. I'm a shaman.

Takeesha holds up her African medallion necklace.

NOVA  
 Well, I want to try out my  
 psychic powers too.

TAKEESHA  
 So, let's do it. Maybe we can  
 tell the ghosts to stop. They  
 haven't hurt anyone. You know  
 what I mean?  
 Meet me at the school library  
 at about five after two.

The bell rings. Nova goes to Study Hall. She takes the  
 library pass. Nova heads out. Squeaks from her holey old  
 sneakers echo off the brick walls of the hallway. she notices  
 a red banner stretched across the corridor. Bardsville  
 Banicoots Bite Back 2046. Another sign put up reminds  
 everyone about the visit by the Great NOCTURNAL NED 28 on  
 Friday in the auditorium. The psychic has red hair done up in  
 a pompadour style. The picture is created to look mysterious  
 and a little spooky, representing Ned's supernatural power.  
 Nova carries five heavy paranormal school library books with  
 no problem.

BRENDA(bully) 13 is in the principal's office to Nova's left. Nova hurries. The office door begins to open. Brenda is coming out. Takeesha waits near the library entrance. She carries a few books and an Ouija board with planchette.

NOVA

Let's go inside. Hurry I just saw  
Brenda, my bully.

Nova skids on the waxed floor and grabs for the door handle.

INT. SCHOOL LIBRARY--AFTERNOON

They enter and close the door. Nova puts her ear to the door. Footsteps are fading into the distance.

NOVA

What a relief.

Nova looks around the book-stuffed room. They have the entire place to themselves along with MRS. MUNROE 56, the librarian. The girls return their library books into the drop off box.

NOVA

I can't wait to see the foal  
today. Hopefully it will be  
white like it's father.

TAKEESHA

Oh I know.

NOVA

Takeesha, here's a book you'd  
like. I put it in the science  
section so no one would check  
it out. You get first dibs.

TAKEESHA

'Sewing for Money? Say, I  
like the looks of this! Thank  
you.

Takeesha hugs the book.

NOVA

Where's that pattered outfit  
from the African Heritage  
days?

TAKEESHA

Oh, girl, I'm just waiting  
for the right time, you know  
what I mean?

Suddenly, Nova jumps in excitement.

NOVA

Quick, let's do the seance.

They grab a corner table near the windows. From her hip pack, Nova brings out a handful of strong smelling sage, eucalyptus, and wormwood. Takeesha wrinkles her nose and smiles.

NOVA

These smells will get us in  
the spiritual mood.

TAKEESHA

Let's close the curtains.

Nova and Takeesha race to close the curtains and darken the corner. They skip back to the table. Takeesha brings out, from her fanny pack, three battery powered tea lights and turns them on. They flicker like real flames. Their faces pulse in the lights as Nova crushes the herbs together with her fingers and waves them about. Takeesha places the Ouija board in front of them on the table and they put their hands on the planchette. Again, Nova glances at the rain against the window to her right missing a dark shade. The rain sluices down cascading over the ledge in the center creating a sheet of water. Nova sees a man RALF 44 with cropped white hair, white beard, and mustache moving his hands as he rotates them over a basin. Unruly colorful geometrical shapes (fractals) in 3-D rise up from his hands.

NOVA

Holy chaos.

Nova blinks her eyes and he is gone. In the library, the planchette moves over the letters on the Ouija board, even without questions being posed. It spells out N.O.V.A. Suddenly, the planchette begins to speed all over the board. The girls couldn't keep up with it.

NOVA

Something just grabbed my hand and I can't lift my other hand. Takeesha, I need your help.

TAKEESHA

I can't move my left hand either.

Takeesha bites her lower lip as she struggles to pull away from the planchette. She yells at the board.

TAKEESHA

What do you want from us?

Then the mysterious presence abruptly releases Nova from the planchette and forces her from her chair. Nova is pulled and pushed to an aisle of books. Finally loose, Takeesha runs after her.

NOVA

Takeesha help me. It's hurting my wrist. Holy chaos! What did I get myself into?

Nova's hand searches the book shelves—as if it could read by itself. Finally, it reaches out for a chewed up tome. The book is like a vacuum. Attached to the book Nova removes it from the dirty shelf. Takeesha catches up to her.

TAKEESHA

What's happening?

NOVA

I don't want this stupid book.

Nova is going to fling it down but her hand clings to it.

TAKEESHA

Hang on. We wanted the ghosts to talk to us. Maybe they are. What is that book?

Nova begins to calm down a little, mostly because she is regaining the use of her hand. She looks at the title.

NOVA

"The Legends of Gods around the World."

When Nova tries to open it, she can't. The pages are stuck together. Nova catches her breath and shrugs.

NOVA

But what does it mean?

Suddenly, Nova dances in a circle then races across the room. She almost ran over Takeesha.

NOVA

Fricken! Something's got a hold of my arm again.

Nova disappears down another dark aisle. Takeesha runs after her.

MRS. MUNROE

There is no running in this here library, young ladies.

Beat

That is what I want and that is what I shall have.

With glassy eyes, Mrs. Munroe put her finger in the air. She turns to go into the back room. Meanwhile Nova is searching for another volume. She scans the titles. Her hand came to another book.

NOVA

Oh of course, Neanderthals.

The book, all chewed--up and dusty, came off the shelf and hovers in front of her face. Without the help of her hand this time.

TAKEESHA

Holy chaos!

NOVA

Why not? Go ahead and give it to me.

The book lay down on the pile in her arms. Then the herculean force that pulled her around the library suddenly let her go. Nova groans and drops to the floor like a rag doll. The book about Neanderthals flops open to page 236 in her lap.

NOVA

What happened to me? Was that a ghost?

Takeesha shrugs. Nova looks at the book in her lap of the artist's rendition of the cave man and women. Nova rubs her cheek bones and brow ridge. No wonder they look familiar.

NOVA

Do you think I look like a Neanderthal?

TAKEESHA

Let me see.

Takeesha grabbed the book and looked closer at the pictures then gazed at Nova.

TAKEESHA

I don't know, maybe. What would you do if I said yes?

NOVA

I guess I might be sad... and maybe I might be relieved because that would explain a lot about...

TAKEESHA

Oh what do you think happened to us?

NOVA

I don't know about you, Takeesha, but I'm calling that encounter a visit by a ghost.

School bell rings out.

MRS. MUNROE

Are you two ready to check out?  
That was the final bell.

Nova closes the book, gets up with her load, and picks up their things at the table.

NOVA

Hmm. Mrs. Munroe didn't say anything about the ghost.

They start to shuffle to the counter.

TAKEESHA

Do you think it will bother her?

NOVA

Her library is now haunted.

TAKEESHA

Well, it is our own fault, you know.

Then Mrs. Munroe stops what she is doing, blinks rapidly, yawns, and seems to notice the young women. She pushes round glasses up her nose. Nova puts her books down on the counter creating a dust cloud. As they stand at the checkout, Takeesha turns to Nova.

TAKEESHA  
I was thinking---

NOVA  
You can do that?

MRS. MUNROE  
Oh, that's not very nice,  
Nova.

NOVA  
Sorry.

Takeesha grabs Nova by the arm.

TAKEESHA  
You have got to stop with  
that joke. It was only funny  
the first time. You know what  
I mean?

NOVA  
Oh, all right, I guess.

MRS. MUNROE  
And you've also got to stop  
running in the library.

NOVA  
But I was pulled all over the  
library by a ghost. It took  
me to these books. Do they  
mean anything to you? And one  
of your books is glued  
together.

MRS. MUNROE  
Oh really? There's still no  
running in the library.

NOVA  
But my hand was grabbed by a  
ghost and I couldn't get away  
from it.

MRS. MUNROE  
Maybe I should tell the  
school principal, hmmm?

NOVA  
Do you believe in ghosts?

MRS. MUNROE  
Doesn't everybody? However, ghosts  
can't pull you around. They have no  
substance to grab with.

Nova looks at Takeesha who shrugs. Nova gazes upon the librarian.

NOVA  
What do you think of these  
books?

MRS. MUNROE  
They don't seem to have any  
significance.

Mrs. Munroe picks up the stuck together book and examines it.



MRS. MUNROE

It looks a little water-damaged,  
but it's okey dokey. Do you still  
want it?

Mrs. Munroe opens it to a page of a flying horse.

NOVA

Oh, definitely.

Nova and Takeesha hand over their hall passes and the temporary library cards to Mrs. Munroe. She smiles pleasantly as she checks out Takeesha's books. Mrs. Munroe flips through a drawer of 3x5-inch cards

MRS. MUNROE

Nova Nowak, you have a ten  
dollar fine for a late book.

NOVA

Oh, okay...

Nova swallows, digs in her pockets and pays for it.

TAKEESHA

Say, when did the library  
lose the beat up old computer  
this place used to have?

MRS. MUNROE

Last week, it died and we  
couldn't find anyone who  
could repair it. So we  
recycled it and then couldn't  
find anyone to sell us a  
used or new one. Fortunately,  
I'd been moving to cards for  
some time. Never really  
trusted or kept current with  
the thing.

NOVA

Wow, I thought technology was  
a good thing.

MRS. MUNROE

If it wasn't for President  
Hayden Radford and Reverend  
Corbin Heller, we couldn't go  
back to the basics of life.  
Computers and other  
technology are bad for the  
United States.

NOVA

That's not true. I want to  
live in the past. Just think  
of all the electronic toys--

MRS. MUNROE

Technology was getting too  
advanced. Some people were  
getting so technically  
illiterate they couldn't  
figure out how to work the  
different gadgets. It was  
time for a change.

MS. CHILLDRESS 45 clears her throat. She hesitates at the door, then strolls toward the librarian, slamming some books on the counter.

MS. CHILDRESS  
Carol, that attitude is precisely why we are not able to compete in the world and make scientific discoveries.

MRS. MUNROE  
Noreen, Have you ever noticed that scientists make so many mistakes with their data? It's no wonder no one trusts their discoveries.

Mrs. Munroe takes the books and put them in an old dented metal cart.

MRS. MUNROE  
The old folk cure and remedies have stood the test of time and still work.

MS. CHILDRESS  
Don't be ridiculous. We need to change to fit the times. When our knowledge grows, the infomation changes and we advance out of primitive times.

MRS. MUNROE  
I'll accept primitive times because it must be a divine plan. Things happen for a reason.

MS. CHILDRESS  
(rolled her eyes)  
Nova and Takeesha, how are you?

NOVA  
Hi, Ms. Childress. We... communicated with a ghost in this library.

MS. CHILDRESS  
Did it bother you? Were you doing anything with science?

TAKEESHA  
No, we just wanted to talk to it.

MS. CHILDRESS  
Well, I'm glad you're not hurt. I don't think you know what you are dealing with. Dayton died before he made it to the hospital. Please be careful!

Ms. Childress tromps out the door.

MRS. MUNROE  
Poor family. Dayton had a heart condition on top of it.

NOVA  
(Whispering in Takeesha's ear)  
The ghost didn't kill him.

Nova picked at a library book corner. Then yanked her hand away.

NOVA  
Mrs. Munroe, why did they get rid of Ms. Childress' science classes?

MRS. MUNROE  
English is more important.

NOVA  
 (disgusted)  
 Come on, Takeesha, lets go.

Nova hugs her books and starts for the door. The two friends head out of the library into the din of loud talking, slamming locker doors and shuffling of feet.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY--AFTERNOON

TAKEESHA  
 What do you think the ghost was trying to tell us?

NOVA  
 I don't know. At my house, we can use the Ouija board again. Hopefully, it will open more book pages.

TAKEESHA  
 And while there, we can see if Chocolate had her foal yet, ya know.

They sprint down the hallway full of kids to get their books and homework. Takeesha's locker was on top and three over from Nova's on the bottom. Nova stands near Takeesha's locker to wait while another student finishes getting her stuff. A decorative strip of wood spans the school hallways. Takeesha knocks on it for good luck.

TAKEESHA  
 This is to make sure the foal is a filly.

Nova looks at pictures of horses of every size, color, and shape taped to the inside of Takeesha's locker door,

TAKEESHA  
 Nova, I changed my mind, I want to go home.

NOVA  
 But Takeesha...

The halls became much quieter. Nova sees only two kids getting their stuff.

NOVA  
 Fine, I'll go without you.

TAKEESHA  
 When she finally has her foal, please call and let me know if it's a colt or filly.

Takeesha puts her raincoat over her bookbag. She leaves the building grabbing her bike from the rack and rides away in the heavy rain.

NOVA  
 (alone)  
 Man, I think I saw lightning.

Nova got on her hands and knees and digs around in her locker.

NOVA  
 Ugh, why does everything get buried  
 in here?

Deep in thought, Nova didn't notice the two shadows blocking the florescent lights until it was too late. Brenda and AMANDA 10.

BRENDA  
 Hey! Stand up you ugly freak.

Nova stands, using her books as a shield. She inhales and holds it squeezing her eyes shut. Brenda is grinding her fist into her palm.

NOVA  
 Leave me alone.

BRENDA  
 It's time for you facial.

Brenda grabs Nova's arm and yells into her face.

BRENDA  
 You...you stupid retard. Why  
 don't you do better in beauty  
 class?  
 We know exactly why you're so  
 confused, right Amanda?

AMANDA  
 Yeah, we sure do.

Brenda tromps down on Nova's wide feet. Nova winces. Brenda laughs.

BRENDA  
 It's because you can't figure  
 out if you're a boy or a  
 girl.

NOVA  
 I'm an individual and I'll be  
 whoever I feel like.

BRENDA  
 You're a liar, an idiot, and an  
 alien from another planet.

Brenda grabs Nova's cheeks and squeezes hard. In spite of the pain, Nova presses her lips together and glowers. Brenda grabs Nova's books and papers and tries to pull them downward. Nova pulls them upward and hangs on. Some of the books slip and Brenda kicks them aside.

NOVA  
 Hey! Some of those are  
 library books.

BRENDA  
 Tough.

Nova bends to pick up her books and papers but Brenda kicks them out of her hands.

BRENDA

Stand up. I'm talking to you.

Brenda grabs Nova's grizzly t-shirt and pulls up. Amanda helps to push Nova up against the lockers.

BRENDA  
 You aren't going anywhere  
 until we settle this, weirdo.  
 You're a boy, aren't you? So  
 why don't you fight back? Oh  
 I get it. You're a boy who  
 won't hit a girl, huh?

NOVA  
 I don't hit anyone!

Brenda reaches back with her fist to let it fly into Nova's face. A loud crackling sound is heard near-by. Nova feels like throwing up. Two adult male cowboy ghosts haunt the hallway. They are mirroring the girls fight. Nova is just about to yell at them when they vanish. Brenda and Amanda look green and scared. Nova tries to slip away but remembers her books. She hesitates. Brenda grabs Nova's shirt again and pushes her up against the lockers.

BRENDA

You're not going anywhere.

Nova sees movement out of the corner of her eye. Instinctively, she puts her arm up to protect herself. A green remote control robotic autogiro dive-bombs the two bullies. It is the size of a bread box, with an airplane body, a front propeller, and propeller on top. It has on the bottom landing skids. An evil face with grin is on the nose cone. Nova sees color shooting out of the bottom. The Autogiro launches 20 missiles, which upon impact explode multi-colored paint into the bully's long brown and blond hair. Both girls scream, pulling out what is left of the yet unexploded missiles as fast as they can. Out of no where, Max Kim and Benny race down the slippery hallway to Nova's rescue. Max Kim carries a periscope as though he were spying on the fight. As he runs he slips it into one of the many pockets of his black trench coat. Benny's battery-powered wheelchair, flame-painted, is moving so fast that it rears back on it's two main, dirt bike wheels. Benny leans forward with a control box in his lap. He gives commands using a microphone at his mouth.



NOVA

Damn it. I hate this stupid school.

Nova rounds a corner that put her out of their sight. Nova throws her raincoat over herself and back pack.

EXT. SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

Nova goes outside and stands under the long roof. Various bikes splash through puddles near-by. Nova can see her breath. The cold doesn't bother her. Nova makes her way to the bike rack. She unlocks her bike, wraps the chain around the seat stem and swings a leg over. She rides away from the school. She pulls over and cries. Nova spots a puddle to check her reflection. Except it wasn't her in the puddle. It is the man with the closely cropped white beard. Then it disappears and it is just her in the puddle. She looks around. No one is near her. She looks back at the puddle. Still nothing but her own flat nose face.

NOVA

It couldn't be the man from the library. It must just be the clouds, reflecting oddly on my face.

On the way home, Nova pulls over at the bike shop in the town square and bought a candy bar. She takes a sip of water from the bottle on her bike. She envisions herself punching Brenda and Amanda's lights out. She scans the various shops in town-- little grocery store, a place that sells bedding and a shoe repair place. The rain begins to pour down again over the green-striped canvas awnings above the antiquated buildings that lined the sidewalks. Across the road, past the tulips coming up around the gazebo in the town square, she could see the blacksmith/veterinarian shop where her mom works. Nova pockets half of the candy bar for later, picks up her wet bike and rides as fast as she can toward home. She sees horses hitched to buggies tied to posts and bike of various kinds locked to stands.

Then the rain abruptly stops. Moving black and grey clouds reveal the sun. The road ahead is already drying out except for a few small puddles. It looks almost as if all the rain has fallen over the town itself, and the suburbs didn't get any. Not the suburbs. But wait. She didn't remember riding through the suburbs. Nova glances down at herself. No yellow. Her raincoat is gone.

NOVA

What's going on? Oh, my book bag seems heavier.

Nova pulls over and checks-- there is her raincoat, dried now, and packed neatly inside. Her bangs that are dripping wet a few minutes ago are now dry. Nova's jeans and sneakers are only a little damp just enough to prove that they had been wet minutes before. She tries to say something but her tongue dances in and out of her mouth. She grabs it with her fingers but it didn't do any good. Nova feels a shiver go up her spine. She glances around for walkers, bike riders, motorcycles, any other kind of vehicle. There aren't any. Nova mouths the words "Mom!" Nova checks her watch it says, 3:10. Nova mouths the words, "What the...? The second hand is still moving and the watch seems fine. Nova is just about to hop back onto her bike when she hears a whisper from LEANDRA CONTRAST 47.

LEANDRA CONTRAST

Remember, ghosts ain't exactly  
paranormal. Have a safe trip home,  
mate. See ya.

Nova's face said, Huh? She looks back and sees an enormous rainbow that ends right on the road. She flips her bike around to face it and sits on the bike seat to gaze at the brilliant colors.

NOVA

Psycho physical synthesis is the  
booboo of the air nautical cosmic  
energy field?

Nova can't believe what she said and slaps a hand over her mouth. She stares at the rainbow then notices it was still raining in torrents on the other side of the rainbow. The clouds are moving farther away down the road, toward Bardsville. Nova follows the rainbow with her eyes which goes up and up farther and farther until it disappears. Nova almost falls off her bike. Each of the different colors shimmer with wavy lines. There is a clear wavy place to the far left--even though it is clear, it ripples and waves like the ocean tide. Next was a red place, then orange, yellow, a green place where she rode her bike through, blue, indigo, violet and then another clear wavy place. Each color is 3 feet wide.

NOVA

So this is what a rainbow looks  
like up close? Wait, I have my  
voice back?

Nova whoops and dances.

NOVA

How incredibly clash!



A lopsided vacuum business bus called Final Frontier splashes through a puddle. Employees hang onto the sides for dear job dressed in three piece suits, helmets, and pads.

NOVA

What the...?

She shrugs.

Nova stretches her arm out as far as it could go with her fingers horizontal above the horizon under the sun. The number of fingers she could fit under the sun show how much time is left before the sun is all the way down.

NOVA

If one finger represents 15 minutes  
then it's about 5:45. Holy chaos!  
How did I lose 2 hours?

A large group of bike riders pulling rickshaws and pedicabs ride past her as they try to get their passengers somewhere on time. Some of the carts have roofs and some have them folded down. Nova rides hard now and gets sweaty as she watches the sun sink. She stares at her front tire, and then changes her thoughts to the rainbow. Suddenly the front bike tire pops!

NOVA

Dear Vulcan.

Nova gets off and pushes her bike along the shoulder of the road.

NOVA

Something like this had happened before. I concentrated on one thing, and my mind shifted to something else and weird things happened. Can I shoot lasers from my eyes?

Nova picks up a dead maple leaf by the side of the road, concentrating on making a hole in it. Nothing happens. Nova throws down the leaf and grinds it with her tennis shoe into the muddy gravel next to the road.

NOVA

I wonder if I'll ever show any  
promise in anything I do.

After trudging up the final hill, Nova came to her family farm's gravel driveway. She runs her bike all the way down to the white washed century old barn, where she drops the bike and her books and runs inside.

INT. RED BARN-- DUSK

Nova stumbles past the milk house door to her left. Lambs and a steer in separate stalls are on the right. Down the corridor she runs, throwing open the two doors, one right after the other. Behind her the lambs bawl. Blue Belle, the family's Australian Shepard, rushes to greet her wagging her entire rear end. In her excitement, the dog jumps up to lick a bit of sweat from Nova's face.

NOVA

Hello Blue Belle. Oh, hi, Mom. How can you stand the smell?

MOM 43 is in the barn shoveling out a horse stall.

MOM

Where were you, young lady? Wilha and Scott are out looking for you on their bikes.

Mom puts her hand up, leaning the pitch fork against the wall.

MOM

And please don't run in the barn. How many times do I have to remind you?

NOVA

I'll explain later. Did Chocolate have a boy or girl?

MOM

It's a little filly, honey. Now, where were you?

NOVA

I was at school...and I...I...The stupid Monarch gang was bullying me again.

Nova chokes back tears and stares inside the semi-dark stall where chocolate, the mare, and her new foal are going to stay temporarily. The filly came out of the shadows behind her mother and into the light.

NOVA

Hello beautiful.

The filly nods and mumbles to Nova. Nova gasps. Also she sees tiny golden wings on the filly. Then the shadow of wings disappears like the face in the puddle, When the filly walks into the light that shines into the stall. Nova blinks, frowns, and rubs her eyes.

NOVA

Wait a minute, the experiment where I talk to Chocolate's belly to get the foal to respond to my voice worked!

MOM

Oh.

Nova starts to open the sliding stall door.

MOM

No Nova! She'll bite you

Chocolate lunges forward and bares her huge yellow teeth. She arches her neck to rip and tear Nova or anyone who wishes to harm her filly. Blue Belle rushes over, jumps up, and bit Chocolate hard on her sensitive nose. The surprised mare backs up and cries out in frustration. Nova uses her leg to hold back the dog as she slams the door shut and latches it.

MOM

Chocolate is just protecting her young. Come over here Nova.

Mom grabs Nova's arm just as Chocolate attacks the bars on the door. Belle barks a warning; then Chocolate huffs. Mom led Nova to a couple bales of straw, and they sat.

MOM

Okay, what happened with the Monarch gang that made you late?

NOVA

They called me a boy. When I wouldn't fight back, they pushed me up against the lockers, then knocked my books out of my hands, and kicked them down the hall.

MOM

You know, I've just about had it with that bunch of girls. Will you want to stay at home for a couple of days?

NOVA

No, I'll be all right.

MOM

You sure? Last time you got pretty sick.

NOVA

I'll manage somehow. I think.

MOM

What else happened in school?

NOVA

Well, this morning, a boy named Dayton was rushed to the hospital because of his heart. He died.

MOM

I'm sorry. Did you know him?

NOVA

Naw, kids say it was because of a pirate ghost.

MOM  
 What? Between ghosts and the  
 Monarch gang...I'm calling  
 the principal. That school is  
 out of control. I won't have  
 my daughter walking around in  
 a fog. Your school work is  
 too important.

NOVA  
 No Mom.

MOM  
 Now, not another word. I'll take  
 care of it. I'll also radio Scott  
 and Wilhelmina and tell them that  
 you're home safe.

Mom's rubber boots squish as she stomps toward the house.  
 Nova cries a little. She punches the hay bale over and over.

NOVA  
 I should have kept my big mouth  
 shut!

Nova took out her half-eaten candy bar and took a huge bite.  
 Through her tears, Nova watches the sunset out a side barn  
 door, sees a flash of rainbow. Nova swallows hard.

INT-MILKHOUSE-DUSK

Nova goes into the heated milk house and lets the puppies out  
 to run all over the floor as she cleans the puppy pens with  
 old newspaper. She puts out some puppy food and gives them  
 fresh water. When she is done playing with the puppies she  
 puts them back into their pens. She cleans the floor and goes  
 inside the farmhouse.

INT- FARMHOUSE- DUSK

Nova takes a warm shower to wash away that dog smell. She  
 dries off, dresses, and opens the bathroom door. She found  
 Mom standing over the stove top stirring spaghetti sauce.

NOVA  
 Hi Mom, that smells so good.      Yep.  
 Is it Grandma N's secret  
 spaghetti recipe?

MOM

Mom removes the noodles and drains them in the sink. In a big  
 pot she tosses the sauce with the noodles, then carries it  
 out to the dining room. SCOTT 15 and WILHA 13 tackle her  
 trying to get the phone. Three Bodies are tangled on the  
 floor with spaghetti everywhere.

Soon everyone sits down around table with cleaned up clothes. They eat for a while what's left.

SCOTT  
So Nova, why were you so late getting home?

NOVA  
I had trouble with the Monarch gang and a pirate ghost maybe scared a boy to death. But I don't really believe that a ghost can kill a person though 'cause Dayton had a heart condition and I don't know of anyone who has died.

MOM  
Speaking of someone who will die, why didn't you feed or water the dogs, Scott?

SCOTT  
Oh I did.

MOM  
Then why were the bowls all bone dry and not a dog food morsel anywhere?

Scott throws the napkin down on his plate, shoves his chair out with a squeal, and stomps away from the table. He pounds the stairs as he goes up to his room, slams the door, and turns the hard rock music way up.

MOM  
What's the matter with that boy? Can't he help out more around here? All he can think about is girls and cars.

NOVA  
Maybe you need to pay him more.

Mom glares at Nova and picks up Scott and her own plates and takes them to the kitchen sink. Nova shrugs and turns to Wilha.

WILHA  
Want to play Monopoly tonight?

NOVA  
After we clean the table and do the dishes, I guess. Mom speaking of cars, didn't we have a lot of them on the road like twenty years ago?

Mom comes out of the laundry room and stands in the doorway with a mound of wet wool in her arms.

MOM  
That's a long story. I think it started with the gas rationing, which drove people to drive electric cars.

(MORE)

MOM (CONT'D)

But then electric training went overseas, so that fewer and fewer engineers were trained in the US anymore. Then those that did went to work with the electronic industry in India and China. In the end we have lost all of our cars and other vehicles we have learned to make do.

Nova wipes down the table.

NOVA

So Scott may never get the car of his dreams?

MOM

It doesn't look that way. Make sure you get all the spaghetti over there.

Nova brings her bike into the house and is patching the tire. Later Nova goes to bed. Wilha is already there with three pillows behind her reading a book. Nova caught a glimpse of someone carrying a bloody axe on the back cover.

NOVA

What are you doing reading that kind of book again? They give you nightmares and you kick me out of bed.

WILHA

Oh you're being silly I don't do that. Look, you interrupt me I'll never get to the end and find out how the two housewives survive. Then I'll have nightmares.

Wilha turns a page and eagerly reads. Nova grabs the book and looks around, trying to find a place to destroy it.

WILHA

You little brat, you give it back.

Wilha jumps out from under the blankets and lands on Nova smashing her to the bed. Wilha reaches for the book. With a muffled cry, Nova slides out from under Wilha, still hanging on to the novel. She tries to open the window but changes her mind when she notices it is raining. She runs through the doorway and out into the living room, where she throws it into the cold ashes of the fireplace. Wilha screams.

WILHA

Mom, look what she did to my book!

Wilha retrieves it from the fire pit and holds it up in the light. Ashes cover the pages. Mom is on the couch reading. She lowers her book onto her lap.

MOM

Well, you can hardly blame her. You always manage to kick her out of bed. I don't know how she puts up with your shenanigans over and over. Now you two go to sleep.

Wilha shrugs and goes into the bathroom off the kitchen to clean up her book. Nova goes to the queen size bed with a grin and then falls asleep. That night she sees dreams about the rainbow. In the dream, she wakes up to the strong smell of what she thinks is ammonia, like someone is holding smelling salts under her nose. She is wet and shivering from the rain. Her bike is nearby on it's kickstand and there is three bearded, big boned men standing together. They remind her of the Neanderthals pictured on the cover of one of the books she borrowed from the school library. Then Nova feels Wilha's feet press up against her back and the dream disappears. Nova shoves her feet aside but a minute later they are on her back again and Wilha begins to violently kick and groan in her sleep. Nova lies there fuming as her back takes a pounding. Finally Nova sits up. She opens the door quietly and sneaks out into the living room. Her mother had gone to bed. Nova tiptoes through the living room and enters the kitchen. She opens the door leading to the garage and grabs a long horse's lead rope that was on a hook next to the door. She goes back to the bedroom. Nova jumps on Wilha's legs and struggles to wrap them with the rope. Just when she thinks she succeeded, Wilha knocks Nova off the mattress. Nova lands on the floor with a thump all tangled up in the sheets and blankets.

NOVA

Well that didn't work.

Wilha still thrashes about. She pants, sweats and moans in her sleep. Nova tries to sleep on the farthest side of the bed, but Wilha continues to kick her. Nova finally gives up and lies on the floor. She slowly falls back asleep. She is back with the rainbow, and there is a fireball hovering in front of her. But it isn't scary. It has fractal shapes floating inside and feels warm and inviting. She reaches out to touch it, but the woman from her dream puts her face into Nova's.

LEANDRA

Stop! Fire balls are not to be trifled with.

Nova wakes up again and rolls over. She tries to get comfortable on the hard floor.

NOVA

Oh, that was my missing two hours.  
Wilha I'm going to get you back.

Nova is in her bed sleeping soundly. A rooster could be heard outside but Nova doesn't hear it. Mom comes in the room to wake her up.

MOM

Wake Up Nova. It's time to do your chores.

Nova sits up and rubs her eyes. Her mom is collecting dirty clothes off a red plastic chair and starts to head out the door. Nova looks around their room. Wilha's walls had all the girl stuff you can imagine and Nova's side has three running horses in water. She looks at the dream catcher her mom had bought for her and frowns. She folds her arms over her chest and humphs.

NOVA

Mom?

MOM

Hmmm?

Mom stops in the doorway.

NOVA

About that horse stall you finished yesterday for me, do I still get the hundred dollars for it? I could sure use that money.

MOM

Don't worry there are other stalls for you to clean.

NOVA

But I put two whole hours into that one. I was almost done.

MOM

Tough honey. I needed another stall ready, right then for a pregnant sow.

NOVA

Why is \$100.00 All we get for a stall anyway? The farm down the road pays us much more for cleaning one.

MOM

Look, Nova, That's all I can afford to pay you kids.

Mom swings her arms, letting some of the laundry fly. Nova laughs. Nova tries to keep a straight face. Mom slumps and sighs as she bent to pick up the clothes at opposite walls. Nova puts on her best pouty face.

MOM

Nova, I really don't have to pay my own kids to do work around here. You get a roof over your heads and food in your stomachs.



NOVA  
 (sighed)  
 Fine.

MOM  
 All right I'll see you at  
 breakfast.

Mom turns and leaves with the clothes. Nova dresses and goes into the laundry room to check the dryer for socks. She tries to find a pair of her own but they weren't washed yet. Nova finds Scott's and Wilha's socks each one missing it's twin. One was a pink ankle sock with pick roses on the side and the other one was a white Nike tube sock. So Nova couldn't use them either.

NOVA  
 Mom, can I wear your socks  
 today? I can't find any to  
 wear but yours.

MOM  
 I guess you can.

Nova puts on a blue pair of soft cotton socks. She walks up behind Wilha.

NOVA  
 You kicked me out of bed  
 again.

WILHA  
 I keep telling you, you  
 must've been dreaming.

Wilhelmina pours blueberry pancake batter in a skillet on a wood-burning stove. Nova licks her lips and watches the bacon sizzle.

NOVA  
 I'm not dreaming, Wilha.

EXT. - RED BARN-MORNING

Nova sees her breath when she heads out to do the puppies. Scott now did just the pigs, cows, and horses. Hard rock plays loud in the barn on a window sill. Mom feeds the dogs, sheep, and chickens. The ice had to be broken out of the rubber water bowls. Mom comes around to supervise her kids and examine the animals when needed. After the animals are taken care of, Nova takes a quick shower and blow-drys her hair. Nova's farm has a generator for the water and a few outlets. She walks to the dining room table where her brother and sister sit and eat pancakes and bacon.

SCOTT  
 I have dips on the last  
 pancake and strip of bacon.

WILHA  
 No way, I get them. I slaved  
 over the stove.

SCOTT  
 You purposely didn't make  
 enough.

WILHA  
 Why don't you cook then,  
 moocher?

The argument continues. Nova smirks. Throwing on her warm denim jacket, a scarf, and a wool hat with a chin strap, and she put her bookbag over her back.

EXT. -FARM HOUSE-MORNING

Nova rides her bike to the top of the driveway. She cruises toward school. As soon as she is on the road, peddling mindlessly through corn fields covered in stubble, Nova tries to recreate the dream she had the night before. She can only see a bit at first. Nova is in a dark place that looks like the inside of a big tent. She is lying on a black bearskin rug. She continues to pedal her bike just moving along as she remembers what was left of her dream. A tall muscular woman crouches over her. Her brown wavy hair is tied back in a ponytail. She offers Nova a warm, red towel. Nova accepts it and dries her face. Three barrel-chested, bearded men stand behind her. They look much older than the woman.

LEANDRA  
Nova, are you okay?

NOVA  
Where am I?

LEANDRA  
You're safe for now.

Leandra offers Nova a bottle of cold water, but Nova declines, because she didn't know if she can trust this woman. Nova hears what she thinks are howler monkeys like those she had seen at the Madison Zoo. She also notices the chirps and songs of birds and insects. Mosquitoes buzz around her head. Foreign smells tease her nose.

NOVA  
Is this a circus? Or a zoo?

LEANDRA  
Neither one.

As Nova watches, the woman creates a fireball inside her hands, which warm up the tent. For some reason, Nova isn't afraid. In fact, the fireball makes her feel much better. But Nova still has to wonder how she did that. And what is she going to do with the fireball? Nova reaches for it and the lady quickly holds her back at arms length. At that moment, the three men sniff the air, open the tent flap and plod quickly outside into the bright sunshine. Nova catches a glimpse of a little bit of blue sky and some green-leafed trees branches. She looks at the woman again and thinks she sees alarm on her face. Then Nova hears voices outside the closed tent but she can't make out what is being said. Nova realizes who the three men are. They are friends of the tall woman. And they are Neanderthals.

At that point, she is forced out of her dream and the bed by Wilhelmina's kicking. She sighs and rolls her eyes.

Nova pulls up to the whale bike rack at the school that the metalworking shop had made a few years ago. Takeesha is already there, trying to lock hers to one of the whale's ribs. The happy whale spews a stream of crumpled sheet-aluminum water out of it's blow hole. Takeesha is pounding one of the links of her bike chain with the back end of a wrench.

TAKEESKA

The chain came apart again.

She throws down the wrench into her bookbag, making a large clanging noise, tugs on the chain, then wraps it around her bike wheel and locks it. She wipes her greasy fingers on a paper towel.

NOVA

Guess what? I saw a ghost in the hallway when I was leaving school yesterday.

TAKEESKA

Really? What did it do? Were you scared? Did you throw up?

NOVA

Naw I wasn't scared. I didn't have time. It went away so fast. Do we want to meet in the library again to contact the ghosts?

TAKEESKA

Oh shoot, I left the Ouija board at home. I think at the assembly today we can ask Nocturnal Ned.

NOVA

That's right. I almost forgot.

INT-SCHOOL-MORNING

The first bell rings and they ran for their lockers. Nova and Takeesha go to English class. They sit down at rickety desks near the back of the room. Nova sits behind Brenda and Amanda takes a seat behind Nova. Ms. Childress walks to the board and writes "RESEARCH PAPER DAY." A loud crackling made the hair on Nova's neck stand up and her stomach churn. Two ghosts in dark suits and fedoras entered the classroom. They stood in the front, their arms cross over their chests, and glower at the teacher. Ms. Childress glances at the ghosts, then turns her gaze deliberately on the class. The only sign of worry was the way she plays with the erasable marker in her hand.

MS. CHILLDRESS

I propose that we have a great science fair in May. What do you think, people? After all, the principal is allowing this to take place because we have no actual science in the whole entire school.

<p>AMANDA (moaning) We don't want to irritate the ghosts.</p>	<p>BRENDA (whining) We need to have a psychic fair. It said so in the horoscopes, you know.</p>
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Most of the students agreed. Some were holding their stomachs and making painful looking faces. Despite the way the ghosts were making her feel, Nova stood up.

NOVA  
No, you guys, science is a good  
thing. Besides, Benny is going to  
enter and I support his inventions.

All the students started talking back about how the paranormal was a good thing too. Nova felt drowned out. She frowns and sits down. Brenda makes fists like she was wringing something out under her desk. Amanda gives Nova a scowl.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
Yes, some of you have worked very  
hard on a science experiment of  
some sort already.

Ms. Childdress hands out a paper.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
Here are some science fair ideas.

Behind the teacher, the ghosts grab her desk and drag it across the floor toward the wall. Her chair crashes back. Ms. Childdress whips around with a pinched face and threatens the ghosts with a hard stare. She turns back to face the class and strolls to the back past the bullies. Brenda looks around the room whistling and Amanda buries her face in one of her books. Some of the kids wad up their papers. Another loud crack. Three more ghosts appear wearing dark suits. They enter the classroom stand in the back and stare at Ms. Childdress. Nova bites her nails.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
Fine students, you think about it.  
And as for the rest of you...

She mets the ghost's stare.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
I'm standing firm on the science  
fair. Now let's have your research  
papers.

Nova smiles with relief. As the students came up one by one to read their reports in front of the class, Nova scribbled possible names for her filly in her notebook. Her eyes brighten as she comes up with the perfect name.

NOVA

Shade.

Nova put her pen down and looked at the desk still shoved against the wall. She became so mad and grunts. All of a sudden, one of the ghosts falls back and hits its head on the floor. Nova wasn't sure she should laugh or not. A loud Rrrrrriiiiiiiiiiiiiippppp like a sheet tearing echoes off the walls. The ghost disappears in a burst of greenish vapor. The other ghost look worried so did the class. Nova tries to do the grunt again, but it never sounds right. Ms. Childdress laughs.

MS. CHILLDRESS

Class did you see that? We lost one of the ghosts. Well, I'll be.

Some of the students are moving and shifting in their seats. Others are watching the clock and whispering to each other.

MS. CHILLDRESS

Does anyone know why we are having the problems we are having today?

Ms. Childdress strides back and forth in front of the class, a huge smile on her face.

MS. CHILLDRESS

We need to know science! You could be a millionaire if you invented a new gadget.

This didn't seem to impress the class as much as she hopes.

MS. CHILLDRESS

Okay, let's have two more papers then we will quit for today.

One is about ghosts the other about witches. The bell rings.

MS. CHILLDRESS

Write on a sheet of paper a list of projects that you could do for the science fair. It's due when I see you again next Friday. Choose three ideas. Put them in order: one is your favorite, and three is your least favorite.

Students moan as they shuffle out the door. Some reach into the wastebasket by the door to retrieve their balled up sheet. When the ghosts disappear, Ms. Chillardress lays her head on her desk. Nova runs to her.

NOVA  
Should I get the nurse?

MS. CHILLDRESS  
That's all right, Nova. I just wish the ghosts would let me teach science.

INT. HALLWAY NEAR LOCKERS—AFTERNOON

Nova leaves auditorium with Takeesha after watching Nocturnal Ned. The teachers are handing out the fliers.

NOVA  
(dreamy)  
That's why I want to be a psychic.  
Wasn't he the greatest?

TAKEESHA  
(shrugs)  
I thought he didn't do very good.

Nova, Takeesha, Benny, and Max Kim met up in the hallway near Benny's locker.

NOVA  
You guys, let's go on a picnic tomorrow. It would just be the four of us.

BENNY  
Can't we do this over the phone?

NOVA  
It's better if we meet somewhere.

BENNY  
Fine. I'm doing this under protest.

INT-FARMHOUSE -MORNING

Saturday is warm and humid late in the morning. Nova waits for her friends and sits on the living room couch. Scott is still in bed and Nova's mom was at the vet's office until two. Wilha lies on the floor in front of her, eating oatmeal with raisins and watching her favorite show on Paranormal TV—the one about the animal communicator.

NOVA  
How'd you get the TV channels to stop flipping?

WILHA  
I don't know. They just did.



NOVA

Whooh, boy am I glad it's you two. I thought the knock on the door was a ghost. It really scared me when I noticed no one there.

MAX KIM

Sorry, that was us. Did you like our magic trick? Can you figure out how we managed to knock on both doors almost at the same time? Was that your dad leaving the driveway?

NOVA

Max Kim, take a breath. Hmm... that was pretty amazing. Nope, I can't say I can figure out how you did it.

MAX KIM

(deep breaths)  
So, was that your dad?

NOVA

He's not my father, thank goodness. He's Wilha's and Scott's though. My last name is Nowak from my mom. It's Polish and means: "new one". Scott and Wilha's last name is Weckerly from their dad.

BENNY

I see, Um, wow. I brought some soda. It's in my pack.

Nova takes the two-liter bottle of Pepsi from the back pack draped on the back of Benny's chair and fills up sixteen ounce plastic Mason jars with handles in four colors: blue, red, yellow, and green, with soda and ice.

NOVA

Thanks, Benny. Speaking of names what should we name our group

BENNY

I'm open to a cool name.

MAX KIM

Me too.

This time a small rap came on the front door. Nova strolls into the living room and opens the door. Takeesha is holding a skateboard and her dog Boomer's leash.

NOVA

You skateboarded?

TAKEESKA

Boomer pulled me most of the way.

She bends down to pat her black lab and scratch behind his ears.

TAKEESKA

You're a goooood dog. Aren't you?  
Yeah, you are.



NOVA  
Here I'll take those chips from  
you.

Takeesha pulls barbecue flavored chips out of a cloth bag she has on her shoulder. The bag is deflated and the chips are all broken.

TAKEESKA  
What? I fell down.

BENNY  
Did you sit on them?

TAKEESKA  
Heck no.

MAX KIM  
Did you feed some to that fat  
dog of yours?

Takeesha looks around surprised. Max Kim didn't usually joke along with the gang.

TAKEESKA  
No, but I let him lick the  
salt off my fingers as I  
reached for more.

NOVA, BENNY AND MAX KIM  
Ewww.

BENNY  
You can eat those, Takeesha.

MAX KIM  
Uh uh, by the way, we were  
discussing a name for our  
group

TAKEESKA  
Sounds like a plan.

Takeesha came inside, strolls past Nova and Max Kim, and munches on the potato chips oblivious to her dog's involvement in the process.

NOVA  
Well, anyone have any ideas?

Takeesha, Max Kim and Benny are quiet as they look around the living room.

BENNY  
I guess Ghost Busters is  
already taken.

NOVA  
Okay, I have a suggestion. I  
really like the name: The  
Shade Riders.

The kids are quiet as they mull it over.

NOVA  
See, the word 'Shade' represents  
darkness or secrecy. The word  
'Riders' says we pursue that.



INT-RED BARN-AFTERNOON

The barn looks cleaner. Chocolate grumbles aloud when the kids peek into the stall. She presses up against the door trying to squeeze her nose through the bars on the upper half. Max Kim and Takeesha jump back. Takeesha approaches timidly, finally peeking inside again.

TAKEESKA

The filly's dark. I read that horses that color are considered unlucky.

Nova decides to ignore that comment.

BENNY

What are you going to name her.

NOVA

I'm naming her Shade.

TAKEESKA

That's not a good name, you know what I mean? It's not like we are going to use the horse to chase ghosts, are we? How about Shiner?

NOVA

Naw, I like Shade.

Takeesha snaps her gum.

TAKEESKA

But Shade sounds evil.

NOVA

But Shiner sounds like a black eye.

MAX KIM

A name is just that. Nothing more nor less.

Nova wants to hug him so she punches him in the arm. They grin.

BENNY

I think it fits her nicely, even though I can't see her yet.

NOVA

Oh yeah, we could use some bales of hay and make a ramp for you. Okay? Let's do that.

Nova jumps up. With four bales of hay lined up side to side for a runway and a piece of plywood for a ramp, Benny could wheel onto the top and see into the stall.

BENNY

She's a beauty.

Chocolate stamps her foot angrily and huffs out a massive breath. She tries to stick her nose through the bars again. Benny gulps and slowly backs down the ramp.

NOVA  
 Anyone else besides Chocolate  
 hungry?

EXT-RED BARN-AFTERNOON

They go through the catch pen down the tractor path, leaving a dust cloud behind them. Nova enjoys the warbling of the orioles and the plaintive calls of the catbirds. Once outside the pen they travel a ways to the woods on their right side. The grass is short from too many visits from horses, though it was easier for Benny's chair to handle. Among the tall trees in the woods was a picnic space that was big enough for all four of them. Fallen logs were plentiful. Benny just locks his chair in place on the path. Takeesha looks at the various logs on the ground that surrounded a fire pit.

TAKEESKA  
 This one's mine.

She drapes her cloth bag over it and sits down stretching her legs in front of her. Nova didn't know what she did with her gum, but it was now gone. Max Kim examined the logs.

MAX KIM  
 Ug, bugs.

He kicks one over and chunks of half-rotten wood fly into the grass. Blue Belle and Boomer run into the distance to explore the woods.

MAX KIM  
 Hey, there's deer poop.

He points near a young oak sapling.

BENNY  
 Do you see any tracks?

MAX KIM  
 Yeah, do you want to follow them?

NOVA  
 Guys, guys, we need to figure out what we can do about these ghosts. Every time someone talks about science the ghosts always have something to say about it.

TAKEESKA  
 I, for one, have no idea what we might do to stop them.

NOVA  
 If they are threatened by science, then maybe that's what we need to use to get rid of them.

MAX KIM  
But what is their weaknesses?

BENNY  
(sighs)  
I don't know. Maybe we need to find some ghosts and hold up different things in their presence until we find their Kryptonite.

Nova finds a log, sits down, and opens the picnic basket.

NOVA  
You have all the science stuff, Benny. Can you bring some things to school?

BENNY  
You know, now that I think about it, that could take forever. There has got to be a better way.

Nova passes out the wipes, sandwiches and soda pops. Takesha offers the chips around, but there are no takers.

NOVA  
Benny your idea is so far the only way we can do it. No one else has made any suggestions.

Takesha and Max Kim nod. Benny picks out a strawberry from the picnic basket and eats it.

BENNY  
Max Kim has a surprise.

MAX KIM  
I've got to show you my new magic tricks with this mirror.

Max Kim reaches into the back pack behind Benny and pulls out a foot-long mirror in a wood frame. That in itself seemed like a magic trick. Benny holds it up so Nova and Takesha are reflected in it. Then Max Kim proceeds to pull scarves, branches, and rocks out of it. But, after a moment, Nova is distracted as another scene begins to unfold inside the mirror.

INT-LEGISLATIVE CAVE-NEXT DAY MORNING

It is the man with white hair, Nova saw in the library, whom she now recognizes as another Neanderthal. He seems to be standing over her, with a fishing rod, dangling it over her head, although she couldn't see that it had a line on it. A strange rocky rim surrounds the scene. Then she realizes she is looking up through the basin/mirror he has rotated his hands over when she saw him last time. Nova almost calls out, but she didn't want to disturb the... whatever is happening. The white-haired man's fishing rod bends over, and he pulls out what appears to be a huge invisible fish.

His rod and line jerk, even though there is apparently nothing on it, and he watches the hook with a look on his face so hungry he was practically drooling over it. He wore a shimmery white tunic. Maybe silk? Then the white-haired man turns with surprise toward something Nova couldn't see. Suddenly he tips the basin up on it's side. And that's where it stays. A little water sloshes out, and Nova could see the floor, but for the most part she could see what is going on. The first thing that happens is a soldier ghost walking into the room and leans up against the wall. A smaller and dirtier man AHLON 34 with black hair in long spikes comes into the room. He also wears a tunic made out of spider web? Nova isn't sure. He used sign language for the laser beam and pretends to pull his eye out in a straight line toward the white-haired man. Somehow, Nova knew this was the sign language symbol for a laser beam. The beam is red with fractals changing inside. The white-haired man manages to block the laser beam by making a two-dimensional box with his fingers in front of his own eyes- the mirror sign. The laser beam hits the mirror, also full of fractals, and ricochets off, almost hitting Ahlon, who rolls away just in time. Nova couldn't believe what she saw. What did it mean? Ahlon makes three wavy lines with his hands, and a giant 'u' shaped magnet appear in his hands. The mirror the white-haired man is holding is yanked out of his grasp, crashes into the magnet and shatters into a thousand pieces. Two large spotted cats that must have belonged to the men are cut from the pieces. The cats huddle together and lick their wounds. That seemed to really tick off the white-haired man and he uses a sign like liquid dripping off his hand. He throws it at the dirty man who yelps as it instantly burns the top of his head.

NOVA

Go, white-haired man.

The dirty man runs behind a pipe organ stalagmite and does some sign language opposite to the last one- creating a base to the acid spell. Meanwhile, the white-haired man pelts him with cylindrical gold weights. Then the dirty man creates a catapult with a fist and flinging arm sign. The catapult came with a handy set of rocks which the dirty man flung at the white-hair man's head. One of them hit and Nova could see blood gushing out. Nova has her hands over her face by then and was peeking out of her fingers. She glances at her friends. They stop what they are doing and stare at her strangely. In the mirror, the white haired man creates a spring board by jumping in place five times. He jumps and heads for the dirty man. Who circles his hand creating a hurricane spell. Everything starts to blow around the room. The dirty man grabs onto a stalactite and holds on. A chair hits the white-hair man's head knocking him unconscious. His body swirls around the room. Ahlon calls to the ghost something Nova can't make out.

The ghost flys after Ralf and pushes itself into his body, shoving all the man's bones out through his hands and feet.

NOVA

Ewww.

Nova squirms and covers her eyes again. Two seconds later, she looks into Max Kim's mirror again. The dirty man stops the winds, grabs the white-haired man's body, tilts the basin back up, and both men peer inside. It startles her. Could they see her? The dirty man shoves the white-hair man aside and leered into the basin/mirror so close Nova saw every hair and zit on his face. He yells something to Nova about sending ghosts after her.

Then the mirror went back to reflecting Nova's and Takeesha's faces, with trees in the background.

NOVA

Holy chaos, I think I had a remote viewing.

TAKEESKA

I didn't see anything in the mirror.

BENNY

That's impossible, Nova. Maybe you were hallucinating.

NOVA

I don't do drugs.

BENNY

No, but you could be mentally unstable.

NOVA

Thanks.

BENNY

Well... it's possible.

The wind picks up and starts howling through the trees.

MAX KIM

Do you think the ghosts can hear us out here?

BENNY

Maybe.

Nova looks around anticipating the arrival of a ghost or two. That's when they heard moaning.

TAKEESKA

Was that just the wind in the trees?

BENNY

No, I think it's something else.

Benny whirls around in his wheelchair. In the shade of the trees to the north they could make out ghostly images floating closer and closer--skeletons dressed in flowing gray robes. Their mouths scream gibberish and their hands are stretched out to grab them. Suddenly, the gibberish began to make sense.

## GHOSTS

We have your father, Nova. We have him and he will be ours forever.

An evil laugh sends chills up Nova's spine. She shivers. What did they mean by that?

## MAX KIM

Run!

Max Kim points toward the farm house. Nova hears herself swear as she stumbles to get away. The kids take off headed for the tractor trail, then turn left and run toward the catch pen. Nova is in the lead, then Max Kim and Takeesha and Benny. The commotion spooks the horses and they take off after them. The two excited dogs chase after the horses. The Shade Riders make it into the large catch pen still ahead of the ghosts. Breathless, they head toward the farm house. Some of the horses run around the kids and the ones behind are breathing down the kid's necks. The gang is soon enveloped within the herd of fifty horses. The horses and kids skid to a halt right in front of the metal gate. The kids open the gate and leave the catch pen and head up the tractor trail toward the house. Nova looks back and notices the horses grunting with displeasure and breathing out relief. Nova and her friends Max Kim and Takeesha are pale and breathing hard, grinning, and coughing periodically from the dust. The ghost are nowhere to be seen. Nova laughs.

## NOVA

That was a close one.

Max Kim and Takeesha nod. Benny laughed, coughing too.

## TAKEESKA

What was that all about, that they had your father, Nova?

## NOVA

You heard that too? I have no idea. I just hope I'm not next.

## MAX KIM

Maybe your dad is still alive?

## NOVA

How?

Nova shrugs. Tears come to her eyes. She looks back in the dust of the catch pen for the ghosts. They seem to have vanished.

## NOVA

I don't know, but I'm just glad they're gone. Hey, where are you going?

## BENNY

I'm going to see if my Autogyro can fly as fast as a horse.



Benny hears a noise and looks up the driveway. Benny's family van is just pulling into the drive. Behind it was a tandem bicycle with Max Kim's dad in the front seat.

BENNY  
Well, there's my ride. I'll see you at school.

MAX KIM  
There's my ride too.

Both boys leave. Nova turns to Takeesha.

NOVA  
We're going to let Shade out into the pasture tomorrow. Do you want to stay the night and help?

TAKEESHA  
(nods)  
My mom will be here soon to get Boomer.

Their family's motorcycle, which is towing a large dog crate on a wagon comes down the driveway. They put a reluctant Boomer inside.

TAKEESHA  
Can I spend the night?

KAREN  
Sure. We probably should get some stuff from home.

MOM  
(To Karen)  
We're going to get groceries and we'll meet you back here in an hour.

Takeesha and her mom nod, wave, and slowly go up the driveway.

INT-STORE-AFTERNOON

Nova goes to the cat food aisle to get a couple of things for her kitten, Hazel. She checks to see how much money she has. Suddenly the lights go out. Nova looks around. A tall woman walks up to her.

LEANDRA  
Hello, Nova, our paths cross again.

NOVA  
Dear Vulcan, you're the lady from my dreams.

LEANDRA  
Hum? Yes, you could say that, I suppose. My name is Leandra Contrast. Here, this is for you.

She hands Nova a small brown lunch bag.

NOVA  
What is it?

Nova takes the bag and gives it a shake.

No response beyond a suspicious glance. Nova puts her dollars away and watches the lady's silhouette as she moves about in front of her. Suddenly, a magical red light appears in Leandra's hand-- shines it onto the various cat food bags.

LEANDRA

Ah, chicken, fish and beef.

She grabs a bag of cat food off the shelf, then carries it to what looks like a green star floating in space to Nova's left. It hadn't been there a moment ago, but now it is bathing the pet aisle in a pale green light like a glow stick. Leandra steps up to the star, sets the cat food at her feet, and waves her hands in front of it. It isn't just waving though. She is making shapes and symbols with her hands, like the sign language those two men used when Nova was looking in Max Kim's mirror. Then the green star begins to grow, stretching from side to side until it looks like a half-melted doorway. The light is now so bright Nova has to shield her eyes. Leandra picks up the cat food, waves to Nova, then steps into the green light and disappears. Seconds later, the green light goes out like a blown light bulb. The store's fluorescent fixtures turn back on. Everything looks normal again. Then Nova's mother trots around the corner with her grocery cart.

MOM

Nova, is everything all right?

Nova steps up to where the doorway had been and reaches past it to touch a display of fuzzy catnip mice.

NOVA

Um... yeah, Mom, I guess.

Her mom touches her shoulder.

MOM

Are you all right?

NOVA

Yeah, I'm just trying to figure out if I should buy Hazel a toy and a can of cat food.

MOM

Did you buy something already? What's in the bag?

NOVA

Umm, Leandra -- friend, stopped by and gave this to me. Let's see...

Nova opens the bag and finds a brand new wrist watch with brown leather band. There is also a receipt for the bag of cat food Leandra walked out with.

MOM  
Wow! That's nice of her.

Her mother starts to walk toward the registers, and Nova fell in along side of her, slipping the watch onto her wrist.

MOM  
Is this Leandra a new friend?      Um hmm.  
I don't recognize the name.      NOVA

INT-FARM HOUSE-AFTERNOON

That night, Nova's sister grabbed her sleeping bag.

WILHA  
I'll be over at Jarva's house. See  
ya.

Wilha leaves the room.

NOVA  
Takeesha, I got to tell you about  
this lady named Leandra Contrast.

Takeesha sits up in the queen size bed listening to every word.

NOVA  
I had this dream where.....

FADE OUT THEN IN

TAKEESKA  
..That can't be true.

Takeesha rolls under the blankets and didn't say another word. Nova rolls her eyes, frowns and sighs. She pulls the covers up and lies with her back to Takeesha. She falls into a fitful sleep.

INT. DREAM. NIGHT

LEANDRA  
I'm a true sorceress, Nova. My name is Leandra Contrast. I can go back and forth between the Lower Echelons and the Upper Echelons and the nine segmented ports, using the rainbow portal. The Idealites, who are Neanderthal, live here.

Leandra points to three burly, lank-haired men that stood quietly behind her.

LEANDRA

They're always excited using the true magic. It's up to you to fight for the Lower Echelon people as their representative. A special heroine has to come forth and defeat the greedy Idealites.

NOVA

Noooo!

EXT. DREAM. NIGHT.

Nova throws the blankets aside and sits up. She is breathing fast and dripping sweat. Nova lies awake, listening for Takeesha's snoring. It was still dark outside the window. Nova's new watch said 6:10 am.

NOVA

Ugh. Stupid watch, you got me in this mess.

TAKEESKA

Oh morning. What did you say?

Takeesha rubs her eyes and sits up. Mom calls from the kitchen.

MOM

Girls, Scott. Breakfast. I need everyone's help moving Chocolate and Shade into the far pasture.

INT- RED BARN- MORNING

Mom slides Chocolate's door open and gives her some grain. Nova and Takeesha turn to each other and smile.

NOVA

Wow, Mom, how do you always manage to do that without getting bitten?

Grinning, Mom closes the door so the horse could munch for a while. She grabs Blue Belle's collar.

MOM

Scott, here, take her and tie her up so she doesn't get hurt.

Scott grabs the dog's collar and pulls. Belle reluctantly goes into the other part of the barn dragging her back feet. Scott comes back.

MOM

Remember, Chocolate will try to escape with her filly, and catching her would be almost impossible. She will try to get to the far pasture with the other horses anyway she can, even if she hurts herself and the baby by wrapping herself up in barbed wire. The grain is there to keep her head near the front of the stall, near the door.

Then quick as a whip Mom opens the stall door and clips on two lead ropes to Chocolate's halter. Mom wipes grain and saliva off her arms using a quick swipe of her hands. The lead ropes dangle onto the straw covered floor outside the stall. Scott holds the door closed as far as possible. Meanwhile, Shade stands next to her mother's flank. Mom slides the door open and goes into the stall again. Mom puts her right arm through the nose pinch until it rests on her elbow. The vet grabs Chocolate's upper lip with her right hand and holds on tight. Nova sees the dam's ears go way back. She tosses her head up and tries to bite Mom. Then she puts her head way down to break Mom's grip. But the vet is in control as long as she holds Chocolate's sensitive nose. Mom slips the nose pinch down her arm and over her hand onto the horse's nose. She pinches Chocolate's nose and twists the rope tight around the long handle. The mare rears up and kicks out her front legs. Mom moves to the side of the horse.

NOVA

Are you sure you won't hurt her  
Mom?

MOM

The clamp won't inflict any damage to her nose. And it only hurts her if she fights it. That's what it's for.

Mom pulls Chocolate out and Shade follows behind acting shy and scared. Wearing her gloves, Scott and Nova stand on either side of Chocolate holding the lead ropes.

MOM

Let's go.

EXT-RED BARN- MORNING

Mom leads the way. They tromp out the door on the side of the barn and down a thirty yard rectangular concrete slab. They travel down a cement ramp to a sixty by sixty yard slab of cement that ran in front of and under the dog runs.

NOVA

Mom, what color would you say Shade is? Is she a dark grey? Or a light black? She's like maybe, a chocolate color? Which is so clash.

MOM

She's liver... huh...chestnut with flaxen mane and tail. Nova, grab more rope, yes that's good. If you look at her face, she has a dish like a good Arabian horse should have.

The horse tries to rear.

SCOTT

Nova, she's going to...pull down Nova.

The group leaves the cement slab and struggles toward the driveway, where the tractor trail to the gate starts.

NOVA

Are YOU pulling down?

Nova pulls down with all her strength. If she isn't careful the horse might fall over on her. Takeesha grabs some lead rope to help Nova.

NOVA

Watch your feet Takeesha. She'll stomp on them if you give her a chance.

Chocolate's head rears back, and her mother loses her hold of the nose pinch though it remains attached to Chocolate's nose. The horse shakes her head but the pinch stays on. Scott and Nova are still pulling the horse down as hard as they can. In a few moments, Chocolate comes back down on her own. She looks tired. Mom takes hold of the nose pinch again. She squeezes it shut, regaining control. Soon they start walking toward the gate once more.

NOVA

Is Shade going to be unlucky Mom?

They leave the driveway and start down the tractor path to the gate.

MOM  
Nova, don't believe everything you see, hear, or read.

NOVA  
Why not?

MOM  
I thought you wanted to be a leader.

NOVA  
I do.

MOM  
Well, then you need to use your brain and reason to think for yourself.

They are at the gate. Scott and Nova take off the lead ropes first. Mom releases Chocolate's nose and quickly gets on the safe side of the gate. As horse and filly gallop to the back pasture, causing a huge dust cloud, Chocolate screams for the other horses repeatedly.

EXT. SCHOOL. DAY

Takeesha and Nova are chaining up their bikes.

NOVA  
Let's go to English.

Ms Childdress enters the room just as the bell rang. She writes the word 'test' on the marker board.

The desks squeak and thump as the students prepare. Brenda passes back the test papers over her shoulder to Nova.

BRENDA  
(to Nova)  
Takeesha is mine, forever.

Nova is shocked. She swallows hard. A lot of the students chant or rub trolls or rabbits feet over the test for good luck. Nova rolls her eyes and gets to work. After half an hour Ms. Childdress stands up.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
Time's up.

The bell rings. A blood-curdling scream splits the air. Outside the classroom door is an executioner ghost piling large boulders on top of a young girl ghost crushing the life out of her. The victim passes out. Her body is splayed over a roughly cut-out rectangular slab or rock with her arms and legs tied to the four corners. The executioner ghost laughs as he lays down more and more rocks that he plucks out of thin air.

EXECUTIONER

If a dead person sees someone, you  
will be next.

A boy with black hair to his shoulders vomited white, yellow, and brown breakfast in the hallway. Little clumps of unidentified food inched its way toward Nova and Takeesha. They frown as they try not to step in it. Nova shudders. The ghost's eyes, however, looks right through her.

On the way to her next class, Nova wasn't thinking and walks right through a ghost in the hallway. She could feel the static electric shock. The feeling of dread almost knocks her to her knees. Sweat oozed through her pores-until she is drenched. Nova looks back and sees a girl her age tied to a thick tree trunk with a pile of burning sticks surrounding her feet. The smell of burnt flesh and hair gag her. Covering her mouth, Nova turns away and began stumbling down the hallway. Then her watch begins to vibrate and the red crystal face lights up. A live eye with a blue pupil peers out of it and Nova hears a voice with a New Zealand accent.

LEANDRA

Nova, dear, are you all right? You  
didn't get the willies did you?

The bell rang. Nova is late to study hall. Still struggling to feel better, she talks into her watch.

NOVA

Yes and yes. I'll be fine in a  
minute. Thanks for asking.

When Nova looked down at the watch the eye was gone. This is great! Leandra is watching over her. She sits in a desk next to Benny feeling a bit better. Benny grins.

BENNY

Hey Nova, who ordered so many  
ghosts?

He sits in his wheelchair at a side table that was up against the wall. He is fiddling with some gadgets he brought in.



NOVA  
You think it's a bit over  
board too?

BENNY  
Oh yeah.

NOVA  
Yeah, I'm getting too  
distracted.

BENNY  
I never get distracted. As a  
matter of fact, I can  
concentrate on two ideas at  
once.

NOVA  
Show off. And besides, you  
never have to study. You seem  
to know everything. You'll  
probably be skipped up to  
seventh grade next year.

BENNY  
Not if I can help it.

Nova pulls a quarter from her pocket.

NOVA  
Who do you think the Principal will  
hire this time? Heads-psychics, or  
tails-priests?

BENNY  
Well, let's  
see...hmm...wasn't it  
psychics the last time. They  
did such a lousy cleaning job  
getting rid of the ghosts  
that the Vice Principal ended  
up doing it herself. I don't  
think she did a very good job  
either.

NOVA  
I can't help you guess which  
way it will go, Benny.

BENNY  
I guess, priests this time.

Nova flips the coin into the air and tries to catch it before  
it hits the floor, but it rolls away. Brenda comes into the  
room, her big foot stomps on it.

BRENDA  
Oh a lucky quarter.

She puts it into her pocket and sits down in her seat on the  
other side of the huge room. Benny digs around in his bag and  
pulls out a small cookie, hiding it in his palm.

BENNY  
Are you going to get it back?

He brings the cookie to his mouth.

NOVA  
 (TO BRENDA)  
 Hey that was my quarter you found.

The substitute teacher gave Nova a long hard look and put his finger to his lips. Nova gazed back at Brenda.

BRENDA  
 Prove it.

Nova shrugged and turned back to Benny.

NOVA  
 It's just a quarter.

She looked over the things he brought from home.

BENNY  
 You should try one of my gadgets on some of the ghosts.

Benny holds up four small black, technical-looking things, with small windows for digital readings and various wires and antennae. Nova picks one up.

BENNY  
 That one's a pocket voltmeter.

Nova twists it around in her hand, set it down, and looks at the next one.

NOVA  
 What's this? Oh, it's a small laser.

She points a red circular light around near the floor. She picks up another one.

NOVA  
 So then what's this?

BENNY  
 It's an ammeter for measuring electric currents. You can clamp it onto things, see?

He pinches the trigger part of the long triangle and opens the red clamp at the top. It has a dial on it and a reading display window near the bottom.

NOVA  
 That wouldn't work with ghosts. There's nothing to clamp onto.

Nova puts it down with a thump.

BENNY

Shhhh! Nova.

They both turn to watch the substitute teacher. He continues to read his newspaper. Nova picks up the final gadget.

NOVA

Oh, wow. What's this?

It is a rectangular box that has a digital display window and two wires at the top. It has buttons in the center.

BENNY

It's a moisture meter.

Benny reaches for another small cookie.

NOVA

Let me have a cookie... please?

Benny rolls his eyes as he slips her one. She took it and pointed to the moisture meter.

NOVA

Hmmm... out of all of them, this looks the most interesting. I'll try it, thanks,

Nova munches on her cookie.

BENNY

Here, I'll show you how to work it.

Benny shows her how to turn it on and set the dial to zero. Then all Nova has to do is point it at a few ghosts. Nova picks it up and puts it into her hip pack.

BENNY

I want it back when you are done.

Benny looks deep into her eyes. Nova swallows her cookie and nods.

NOVA

Do me a favor and let Takeesha have the next pick. She hasn't been herself lately and if she is stuck with the last one she might get really mad.

BENNY

I'm not afraid of her. Besides, first come, first served. That's how I did it with you.

NOVA

(shrugs)  
Oh okay.

She turns around and starts going over her history notes.

INT- AUDITORIUM- AFTERNOON

Nova and her friends come together at their favorite cafeteria table. They all hand back the instruments.

BENNY

Max Kim, you look all excited. What did the ammeter tell you?

Benny opens up a bag that had a pickle loaf sandwich in it.

MAX KIM

Well, I was only able to try it out three times. But the meter jumped whenever I got near a ghost.

He grins as he fiddles with a milk box and straw.

BENNY

Okay, so they DO give off an electrical field. Takeesha did you have any luck with the laser?

TAKEESKA

No, I even tried to see if reflected light off a mirror in the girl's bathroom would do something, but it didn't. I also held the laser up inside the ghost, and it didn't do anything. I was only able to try my tests on one ghost.

BENNY

I tried the voltmeter on two ghosts, but it didn't do anything to either one of them. How about your test with the moisture meter, Nova?

NOVA

The meter didn't do anything, and did you notice that the ghosts being killed all look like me?

BENNY

What? The ones I saw didn't. That's just your imagination going over- board.

NOVA

I don't think so. Look at that one over there.

Nova points to a ghost getting her hair pulled as she tries to get away. She is screaming as the two ghosts drag her in opposite directions.

NOVA

See what I mean? The victim looks like me even though she has long hair.

Benny studies the ghosts.

BENNY

Yeah... maybe she does. So what does that mean, if Nova is being depicted in these... what? ...tortuous skirts?

Max Kim and Takeesha shrug. They pack up their uneaten lunch in silence - apparently none of them feel like eating now.

INT-HALLWAY-AFTERNOON

Outside the doorway of the auditorium Brenda and Amanda wait as The Shade Riders pass.

BRENDA AND AMANDA

The ghosts picked the right victim.

They laugh. The word 'victim' really stung Nova. That makes her so furious she wants to punch Brenda's lights out. Brenda continues to laugh as she points out the various ghosts hurting a 'Nova' ghost. Nova tightens her right fist. Before she was really aware of what she was doing, she pulls up her arm and lets it fly, right into Brenda's jaw. Brenda stumbles back, eyes wide. For the first time she looks terrified. In the fraction of a second while she is throwing her second punch, Nova remembers she is above the bullies. She pulls back in time. Her fist only touches Brenda's cheek lightly. The bullies didn't say anything more. They just turn around and run down the mostly empty hallway. Max Kim grabs her arm.

MAX KIM

How did you do that, Nova?

What?

NOVA

MAX KIM

How did you turn your eyes from blue to white to red!

What?

NOVA

EXT - SCHOOL - DUSK

During the peak hours of dusk-a sliver of a moon is just visible- Nova travels with her mom in the vet truck toward school. In the parking lot, a glorious aurora borealis billows above the darkened school building. Waves of red, blue and purple light stretch across the vast sky. Back on the pavement, three silhouetted horses stand at a hitching post with their carts behind them. Fifteen bikes are locked to the bike rack. Mom pulls to the curb.

MOM  
I'll pick you up in a couple of  
hours.

Nova closes the truck door and mom drives toward a farm. A few kids goofing off near the entrance run inside when they see Nova approach them.

NOVA  
What is their problem?

INT- AUDITORIUM- DUSK

Nova strolls into the school and heads to the gym. She finds her friends at one of the folding tables.

<p>NOVA Hey you guys, I decided to come and haunt you.</p>	<p>MAX KIM You didn't have to. We're already being haunted.</p>
--	---

Nova looks around and sees about ten ghosts harassing the science fair exhibitors.

NOVA  
Great.

She notices all the ghosts are staring at her.

Benny tries to finish off a hamburger and fries from a local fast food place. He looks bound, and determined to eat, and miserable with the ghosts there. He rubs his stomach. As soon as he swallows the food he turns to his friends with a flushed and beaming face. The booth sits between the volcano that was oozing red chunky stuff and the story of evolution display. Nova sits down next to Takeesha and Max Kim. Nova bites a finger nail.

<p>NOVA They're staring at me. What's up with that?</p>	<p>TAKEESKA (mumbled) Wow, if it's not one thing with Nova, it's another.</p>
---	---

Takeesha half closes her eyes and looks away. Nova recoils. Even Max Kim stares at Takeesha as if she is a stranger.

NOVA  
I'm going to walk around and look  
at the other people's work.

Nova stomps away. She counts twenty white-faced and sweaty exhibitors all trying to deal with the ghosts' presence. Maybe thirty more people milled about looking over exhibits. It didn't take long for her to look at everything.

And where ever she went, the ghosts are defiantly watching her. She scans her surroundings and notices that one of the students not only displays his exhibit but is selling it after the show. She hurries back to the table, where Benny is exhibiting to tell them the news.

NOVA

Hey, you guys, there are four walkie talkies for sale over at Jomo's table They cost six hundred dollars. If we pool our money, we can get them. Of course, I'll have to give you an I.O.U. For now. My mom's not here.

MAX KIM

Yeah, cool!

Max Kim jumps up and strolls over to ask his dad, who sat on the far side of the table talking to other parents, for some money.

BENNY

Let's do it.

Benny calls his mom over and asks her to write out a check. Takeesha raises an eyebrow when Nova looks her way and holds out a hand.

NOVA

How about it Takeesha?

TAKEESKA

I'm not getting a stupid walkie talkie.

NOVA

Why not? It'll come in handy. You know, for The Shade Riders.

Takeesha huffs and puts her head down. Nova figures she could get Takeesha to cooperate later. Nova looks at the boys.

NOVA

Can you guys afford to buy two each? You know we're good for them.

BENNY

You're lucky you caught me on a good day.

When Nova kept staring at him with a question on her face he sighs.

BENNY

Fine.

Max Kim nods and grins.

NOVA

Thanks guys.

Nova takes their checks and strolls over to Jumo's table. Jumo hands them to her. Nova goes back to the table. Takeesha is resting her head on her arms. She lifts her head to see what is going on. Her eyes are puffy as though she just woke up.

NOVA

Wow, Takeesha, you look tired.

TAKEESKA

I was out late last night.

Nova doesn't want to pry. She finds a scrap of paper in her jeans and, borrowing Benny's pen writes: I.O.U. Seventy-five bucks. She gives one to Benny and one to Max Kim. Nova looks around the gym. Two ghosts dressed in cowboy clothing stare. Those are the same two she saw in the hall when she fought with Brenda and Amanda. When Benny, Max Kim and the autogyro came to her rescue. Nova chews her lower lip. Her watch vibrates and the red crystal face lights up. A live eye with a blue pupil peers out at her.

LEANDRA

Don't worry, mate, I'll handle this.

Leandra's voice booms from the watch. The science fair judges approach Benny's table. They tell him to fly his model autogyro in an area roped off for it. Benny grabs his machine and wheels over to the special place. He sets it onto the tile floor gently and gets ready with the controls. Benny's autogyro rises from the floor. The propeller quickly and noiselessly chops the air. It hovers. Benny, handling the controls, shoots the missiles at the target. Nova races over curious to see what would happen. Two ghosts watch her with angry faces.

LEANDRA

Watch this, you'll be good as gold!

A huge FIZZZZ splits the air as a red rocket from one of the tables takes off. Nova ducks as it came by her. Flying past Benny's autogyro, it hooks onto the footpads and knocks it into the two ghosts and against the white brick wall, slamming into the school speakers. A static sound fills the room. Nova hears the sound of a torn sheet.----rrrrriiiiipppp. The ghosts in the room scramble to grab on to the tables to stay in the gym, but to no avail. They all disappear, pulling down various experiments onto the floor with a crash. When things have settled down, everyone checks their exhibit. Some survive and others didn't.



Benny, Nova, Max Kim and Takeesha race over to the area where the autogyro crashed. Benny checks it over for damage.

NOVA  
Is it all right?

BENNY  
Yeah, she took a spill, but she's okay. She bounced and landed on her feet.

NOVA  
Whew, that's...really lucky.  
Hmm...I wonder where the ghosts went.

Nova looks at her watch. The eye is gone. She feels much better without the ghosts staring at her.

NOVA  
Was that Leandra's doing?

Nova walks away from her friends and presses one of the buttons on the watch.

NOVA  
Leandra are you there?

Nothing. Nova presses two more buttons. Still nothing. Nova looks toward Benny for help with her watch but then decides against it. She turns toward Benny's table to head back.

LEANDRA  
Well, that was weird.

Nova looks at the watch. Her eye was back.

LEANDRA  
What happened? I was trying to scare them not make them disappear. Not that I'm complaining.

NOVA  
So, you don't know how to defeat the ghosts?

LEANDRA  
No. At least, not yet, sorry. I've got to go. Bye, love.

The science fair ends. As soon as everyone starts packing up to go home, Nova picks up the walkie talkies - they have escaped damage. She hands them to her friends. She notices Takeesha's eyes narrowing as she reaches out slowly to take a walkie talkie like it is going to bite her. Nova's stomach, which is still upset from the presence of the ghosts, lurches with Takeesha's suspicion. The gang call their parents from a pay phone outside the school office. Nova calls home.

NOVA

Hello Scott? Yeah, could you please  
radio Mom and have her pick me up?  
Thanks.

She hangs up. She leans against the radiator in the hallway where she could watch the dark street outside as she waited for her ride. Nova sighs. A tear rolls down her cheek.

INT-FARM HOUSE-MORNING

There is a family and friends get-together the next morning.

MOM

Time to stack bales of hay in  
the haymow.

NOVA

Great, just great.

SCOTT

Well, I can bench press 200 pounds.  
So I can carry a bale in each hand  
and walk all the way to the catch  
pen.

Nova flexes her biceps. Her large muscle stretched the fabric of her shirt.

NOVA

I'm stronger than you and I  
don't need to work out.

SCOTT

Yeah right.

WILHA

I'll make punch and bring it  
out to you two tough guys.

NOVA

You know, you can help us  
stack bales.

WILHA

I can't even lift one.

NOVA

Oh, yeah.

INT-RED BARN-MORNING

Nova and Scott go out to the barn, climb up to the haymow, and wait. Minutes later, the sound of an old tractor huffing up the road announces Mr. Kincaid and his two sons, towing a wagon overflowing with hay bales. Nova opens the barn's side window so their neighbors can put up the escalator. Then they attach the tractor's power take off - a big pulley that stuck out the side and is run by the tractor's motor - to the escalator with a wide, leather belt. Soon Mr. Kincaid and his sons begin unloading the wagon and the bales creep up the hay escalator and through the window, where they hit the top of the tall grain bin. A huge dust cloud hang over everything, making Nova and Scott sneeze.

Nova stands at the grain bin and toss bales to Scott to stack for a while, then they trade places. As the Kincaids find their rhythm, the bales came faster and faster up the escalator. By then, the neat stack reach half way to the rafters, and it is harder to heave a bale to the stack on the top. They have to be carried. Nova grabs the next one and the twine holding it together falls off. Nova jumps down from the pile of stacked hay bales, kicks the broken one down a chute into a stall, then grabs four bales at once and hauls them up to Scott, who raises his eyebrows. He tries to take them all himself, falters and falls down. He tries again but can't do it. Finally, he gives up and just takes two at a time and stacks them.

NOVA

(Smirks)

I can't help it if I'm weird.

Nova throws another bale up to the top of the stack. Scott shrugs. Soon Mr. Kincaid has to get more hay from the field. Wilha brings in a cooler with a spigot on the side and some plastic cups. Nova and Scott climb down the mountain of hay bales and blow hay dust out of the cups. They pour red juice, eager to cool off. Soon Mr. Kincaid chugs back with more bales, which start the process all over again until there are none left in the fields and the haymow is stacked full.

MOM

(yells from below)

You kid's better clean up for the get-together.

SCOTT

Let's get rid of the juice.

Nova and Scott take the remainder of the punch in the cooler and toss it out the top window without even looking below.

MOM

Hey! Now I have to change my shirt and wash my hair. Thanks-a -lot.

SCOTT AND NOVA

(to mom)  
Sorry.

Nova and Scott duck their heads back inside.

NOVA

(laughing)

Oops. She must've moved. Oh, I bet she gets us back for that.

SCOTT

(laughing)

I'll be ready.

## INT-DAY-HOUSE

Nova walks out of the bathroom after showering. A horse and buggy are clopping down the long driveway. They are followed by Nova's Uncle Pete and Carol and their three cousins on three wheel bikes with baskets on the back. They park, get off, and set their food on one of the two picnic tables. A small roller skate of a car comes down next. More people arrive as Nova goes to get the food out of the kitchen and set it out.

## EXT-NIGHT-FARM YARD

Parents talk and play cards, Kids are active with volley ball and a tire swing and a barn swing. Soon the people pick up the remainder of their potluck, grab their kids, and head home. People have flashing strobe lights on their bikes and horses now that it is dusk. Nova stays in the driveway to wave goodbye to her friends and family. Then she helps clean up the tables and chairs-- folding them and putting them into the garage.

Finally, they trudge inside the farmhouse. Exhausted but still excited from the party, Nova hangs around the living room and kitchen as everyone else proceeds to get ready for bed. Through the open windows, Nova hears the loud chirping of crickets and songs of the pond frogs in the horse pasture. She grabs her unfinished rug, yarn, and rug hook and sits down at the dining room table. She jumps up grabbing carrots from the refrigerator and goes outside.

## EXT-NIGHT-PASTURE

As Nova approaches the catch pen gate, two owls hoot. She feels a cool breeze brush against her face. Something is wrong. Alone in the catch pen, Shade runs back and forth against the fence trying to get in with the other horses. She seems alarmed, almost as if she were afraid of Nova. It was very dark. Nova could only see a silhouette of Shade, and it looked odd, with extra bulges across Shade's back. Nova's imagination goes into overdrive. Nova runs over the uneven grass, falls, and twists her ankle. She crawls toward Shade on her hands and knees until she comes up against a burdock bush. She rises, testing her legs to see if they'd hold her. They did, so she limps on. Nova hobbles over, patting Shade's shoulder. She gives the horse carrots to try and calm her down. Shade gobbles them up instantly. Nova reaches for what she thinks is a post on her shoulders. She felt soft feathers.

NOVA

Holy chaos! Hey girl, So I really  
did see wings that first day we  
met.

Nova starts to dance around but winces in pain from the ankle. Instead she hoops and hollers. Blue Belle runs out of the barn when she hears the excitement. Since she is a herding dog, Blue Belle naturally began to chase Shade. Shade takes a running start, then sails right over the fence. Her golden brown wings tipped with black glisten in the moonlight. Nova couldn't move.

NOVA

Clash!

Blue Belle crouches low and squirms under the barb wire out of the catch pen and into the far pasture. She runs after Shade in a frenzy, even though the horse is gliding a yard off the ground. A large dust cloud blooms in the distance. The nanny pygmy goat that is keeping Shade company for the night also manages to crawl under the wire and then trot behind, bleating to her friend.

NOVA

I can't believe it, I just can't  
believe it.

She opens the catch pen gate so no one would be the wiser. Dark gray clouds appear in front of Nova, then transform into two ghosts hovering in flowing robes. Nova watch one of them change into a grim reaper, who swings down his scythe to cut the other one, now a "Nova" ghost, in two. Her likeness releases a blood curdling scream. Nova turns and runs as fast as she could with her ankle. A rut in the dirt jolted her to the ground, twisting her already sore ankle again.

NOVA

Dear Vulcan. I don't know if I can  
make it.

Nova gets up. She limps and skids toward the garage door, grabbing the doorknob and twists. The door is locked.

NOVA

Let me in!

She bangs on the door, watching over her shoulder as the ghost draws closer with a floppy "Nova" in its claws. Ignoring the pain in her ankle, Nova runs to a window on the opposite side of the garage. The cats have clawed their way through the screen long ago. She tries to open it. Locked.

NOVA

Dang it, Mom! We're in the middle  
of nowhere. Who's going to rob us?

Her only choice is to run around to the other side, but that meant running through the ghost and she hates doing that. She tries to skirt around it but it keeps in front of her. She dashes through the ghost and is suddenly - sick with dread. She limps to the window. She is able to lift it open a half inch-- at least it is unlocked. Nova looks for something to stand on so she can lever it the rest of the way up. There is nothing. The ghost float toward her and throw the "Nova" ghost against the garage. When the victim ghost hits the building it evaporates, moaning in pain.

NOVA

Holy chaos!

In desperation, Nova jumps and pulls herself through the window just as the ghost is grabbing for her.

INT-NIGHT-FARM HOUSE

Nova slams the window shut, ran inside, and never looks back. She races into her bedroom. Her sister is snoring under the covers. Nova scrambles over to the lamp table, grabs her Walkie Talkie and runs into the closet.

NOVA

Come in, over, over. Anyone there?  
Over, over. Please someone answer.

She shakes the radio. Finally, the speaker crackles.

BENNY

Hey, what's up?

NOVA

Two ghosts had me in their sights  
again. I was in the back pasture  
with my horse and I saw... I saw  
myself getting killed again.

There is silence on the other end.

NOVA

Benny, I'm so scared. I can't get  
those ghost butchering thoughts out  
of my head.

BENNY

Take some deep breaths, Nova. Did they come into the house?

She waits. All she hears is Scott's muffled alternative rock music playing upstairs and Wilha's snoring.

NOVA

No, I don't think so. Not yet. Benny, I don't know if I can sleep tonight...

BENNY

I'm thinking, Nova. But... have patience. I need to try more experiments. I have a sort of idea, but don't want to promise anything. Let me know if they harass you more tonight. At least I can talk you down, I guess. Now, I just want to get some more sleep. Over.

NOVA

All right, and thanks. Over and out.

Nova sighs. She puts the walkie talkie back and sat on the edge on the bed. Ten minutes go by and still no ghost. Nova crawls into bed, and covers herself with some blankets. She falls into a fitful sleep in her bed next to Wilhelmina. Morning light comes through the window.

LEANDRA

Nova? Are you awake? Leandra's bright voice sounded close by. Nova groaned and then her eyes flew open. She ran for the closet, closed the door, grabbed the watch and placed it to her mouth.

NOVA

Yes, I'm awake, but I'm tired and I'm scared.

LEANDRA

I'm sorry I couldn't be there, but I was busy before," Leandra said, "but I'm here now and, I'll help where I can. I want you to bring your horse over to my house as soon as you can. She is weaned isn't she?

NOVA

Yes, she is weaned. And Leandra she has wings.

Nova whispers the last part then peeks out the door and watches Wilhelmina to see if she is still asleep. Her sister continues to snore and rolls over away from Nova.

<p>LEANDRA Yes, I know. She's a gift to you from people who support you in Ordin, the good Neanderthals. How soon can you bring her to my house? I live a couple of miles from you.</p>	<p>NOVA How about ten this morning? Can my friends come?</p>
---	--

LEANDRA  
That will be fine. I live at the fire number N4567 on Barnacle Road. And Nova, I can't wait to show you something marvelous.

Now curious, Nova gets up and squints out the window. She sees Shade with no wings with the other horses. She smiles.

EXT-DAY-ROAD

Nova, Takeesha, Max Kim, and Benny walk and wheel over to Leandra's long driveway with Shade in tow. They can't see any buildings from the road. "No trespassing" signs are tacked to all the trees near the road going down the driveway.

NOVA  
Should we even go down there? She seems pretty serious about trespassers.

BENNY  
Hey, she invited us!

Benny rolls forward ten yards ahead. Suddenly, Shade lunges forward, tugging on the lead that Max Kim is holding. He slides on the loose gravel making dust.

MAX KIM  
Shade wants to see what's down there too.

Nova grabs the lead as Shade drags by them and pulls her up.

TAKEESHA  
Come on.

Takeesha starts down the path after Benny.



NOVA  
 (sighs)  
 Fine, let's go.

They walk for about twenty minutes, keeping an eye on the oak, hickory, willow, maple, and box elders near the edges of the woods.

MAX KIM  
 I wonder how long this driveway is.

TAKEESHA  
 What if she gave us the wrong address?

NOVA  
 I'm nervous. She's probably famous.

Squirrels, chipmunks, birds, and rabbits scamper and flit among the trees and bushes. Shade, ears forward, shakes the horse flies off of her body, and neighs loudly. The Shade Riders come to a clearing. The grassy area has a vegetable and herb garden and a few dirt paths meandering in all directions to the left of them. No sign of a house.

NOVA  
 What, does she live in a hollow stump?

Then an invisible door opens just enough to let out two cats. Light escapes from inside. Nova thinks she sees paneling on the walls. One cat is solid black and the other cat is a calico. The cats stare at Nova and her friends then panic and scamper in different directions.

NOVA  
 I smell oranges with strawberries.

Benny motors up to where he thinks the door is and feels around with his hands. When he reaches forward, his arms disappears up to his shoulders.

TAKEESHA  
 Benny! Are you all right?

BENNY  
 Yeah, I think so.

Benny pulls his arms out and examines them. Both look normal. The door opens and Leandra pokes her head out.

LEANDRA  
 Oh there you are, darlings.  
 Come on in.

NOVA  
 Where should I put Shade?

LEANDRA  
 (pointing)  
 Oh, tie her to that U-shaped tree branch over there.

## INT-DAY-LEANDRA'S HOUSE

Paneled walls have pictures of deer, bears and owls on framed canvas. Nova can also smell that Leandra has been cooking. Leandra puts a plate of finger sandwiches and red juice on the coffee table in front of a flowery overstuffed-couch. Wall-to-wall green carpeting on the floor, Nova looks closer, it isn't carpeting at all but closely cut grass. Small manicured bushes stand out against the paneling. Where a ceiling would be, blue, cloudy skies stare back at Nova. Yet tables, chairs, couches, and recliners fill the living room. On the table in the kitchen sits a pile of 'no trespassing' signs, and on top of those is a box of nails and a hammer.

LEANDRA

Make yourselves at home.

Nova fidgets as she stands there. Her friends don't take a seat either. No gadgets or electronics of any kind are within view. The interior of Leandra's house feels like a park.

LEANDRA

I grew up on a sheep farm in New Zealand. I guess you can't take the country out of me.

Nova nods and puts her hand on a wooden rocking chair.

NOVA

I know how you feel. I love our farm.

Benny wheels forward into the large living room.

BENNY

Country life isn't for the likes of me.

Takeesha still stands in the kitchen doorway.

TAKEESHA

One day I'll be getting a horse, so our family needs farm land. We hope the government will finally give us some soon. We've been on the list for five years so far. You know what I mean?

Nova and her friends slowly take chairs around the room - they all seem real enough -- as the conversation continues about farms. They do not take any food or drink Leandra offers. Then the conversation changes.

NOVA

I saw you do some sort of magic in the grocery store. What were you doing with your hands?

She tries to mimic what Leandra has done.

LEANDRA

Oh, that, once my parents put me to bed each night, three Neanderthal magic users took me to Ordin and taught me a thing or two about logical magic.

Max Kim, Benny, and Takeesha lean forward in their seats.

NOVA AND TAKEESHA

What's logical magic?

Nova and Takeesha said at the same time. They look at each other and laugh.

LEANDRA

Logical magic uses scientific methods rather than ESP, telekinesis or telepathy.

NOVA

Are you part Neanderthal?

LEANDRA

I'm Modern Human for the most part but have Neanderthal blood. That's the only reason I can do magic.

NOVA

I was wondering if you could help me with my own magical powers.

TAKEESHA

Can you help me too?

Benny and Max Kim roll their eyes.

LEANDRA

I can help Nova, but I'm sorry, I can't help you, Takeesha.

Takeesha lets out a huge sigh, falling back on the couch next to Max Kim.

LEANDRA

Now, Takeesha, don't pack a sad. I was given Neanderthal blood to help mentor Nova, so she can fight the uprising going on in Ordin. Those are her people and she has hybrid vigor which is more powerful than the Idealite gods.

NOVA

Hang on, I think we need to go back to the beginning. What is Ordin?

LEANDRA

Okay, it's one of the last Matriarchal societies in existence. They haven't been changed, yet. The Seven Sages keep the people there, ruling with consensus in the cloud forest. It went by many names in the past like Mount Olympus or Valhalla. The inhabitants used to be considered gods like Thor. Or Hercules.

When she said Hercules, she said it with a slight emphasis and stares into Nova's eyes.

LEANDRA

It's very beautiful there with waterfalls, kettle moraines, valleys and lots of wildlife. Also, a Speaker and a Prime Minister is all the government there is. Most of the people are hunter-gatherers.

A wild turkey jumps, wings flapping, into Leandra's house and looks around the living room.

NOVA

Dear Vulcan.

But the turkey doesn't act afraid at all, as though it can't see the people in the house. None of The Shade Riders move. A short blond man—a hunter— follows close behind in bright orange carrying a shotgun. He must have lost the bird when it enters the house, because when he sees the bird, he starts back like he'd just stepped on a snake. The turkey sees him and jumps, flapping quickly, and runs fast through the invisible walls and vanishes from view. The hunter rubs his eyes and blinks. Nova could only guess it seems as though the turkey disappears again. It seemed the hunter could not see them, as he would have said something if he did.

LEANDRA

The hunters just don't know how to read my 'no trespassing' signs. Okay, no one make a sound.

The hunter levels his gun and starts to follow the turkey like he was going to shoot at any minute. Leandra takes some purple powder out of a blue velvet pouch on the bookcase, follows on the heels of the hunter, and blows the powder off her palm and into the hunter's ear. Leandra speaks American.

LEANDRA  
 What's the matter? Can't you read  
 my 'no trespassing' signs?

The hunter turns white, lowers the weapon, and swallows hard.

HUNTER JOHN  
 Peggy is that you?

LEANDRA  
 No, this is not your friend's  
 game. Leave the premises or  
 I'm calling the cops.

The hunter runs out of the house. From the kitchen window  
 Nova watches him run down the driveway. The kids look at each  
 other a moment then burst out laughing.

LEANDRA  
 (New Zealand accent)  
 Come, I want to show you something.

Leandra waves her hand. Still chatting about what happened,  
 the kids walk out the front door.

EXT-DAY-LEANDRA'S HOUSE

Leandra shows them the dirt paths.

LEANDRA  
 These are my ley lines that I  
 send all my bad magic down.  
 They're safe to walk down, if  
 you want to experience  
 something new and different.

MAX KIM

I'll go.

Max Kim starts down a path.

BENNY  
 If the path is wide enough  
 I'll go too. Benny said.

LEANDRA  
 The paths will accommodate  
 you. You should have no  
 trouble.

Max Kim saunters down the path. Every step he takes creates  
 fractals at his feet. He goes about thirty yards over a hill,  
 then Nova couldn't see him anymore.

LEANDRA  
 Benny, go down the same path as Max  
 Kim if you want to see something  
 really strange.

Benny followed. As soon as Benny was out of earshot, Leandra  
 grabbed Nova's shoulders.

LEANDRA  
 Listen. Ralf, the Speaker of  
 the Idealites from Orin, is  
 your father, your real  
 father. And he has been  
 controlled. His bones were  
 knocked out, and a ghost has  
 been forced into his body.

NOVA  
 What? What do you mean? My  
 father is dead.

LEANDRA  
 No he's not, but he will be  
 soon.

NOVA  
 We have to help him, Leandra.

LEANDRA  
 That's why you're here. Ahlon, the  
 Prime Minister, wants to make Ordin  
 into a Patriarchal society and rule  
 the Neanderthals. Then order them  
 to kill the Modern Human people. He  
 was hoping we would die of  
 stupidity from the superstitions,  
 like with the witch trials, that  
 they've been injecting into our  
 world for decades now. But it's  
 taking too long, so he wants to  
 hurry it along. Also Floret one of  
 The Seven Sages is leading an  
 uprising against Ahlon. There will  
 be a deadly war and we've got to  
 stop it. Now pay attention to what  
 I will show you with these paths.

Max Kim comes back up the trail, but it seems he didn't see Benny. He walks right through Benny's body as though he was a ghost. Benny, apparently not seeing Max Kim, continues down the path. He goes over the hill and is gone. Max Kim approaches, waving to the three women waiting near the start for him.

MAX KIM  
 Where's Benny?

Leandra points behind him to where Benny comes back over the hill with a confused look on his face. He saw Max Kim, laughed and points at him.

MAX KIM  
 That was weird! How did Benny use  
 the same path I did, and I didn't  
 even run into him?

Benny wheels up to the group.

BENNY  
I chased after you for a whole hour and I could never catch up to you. What was the deal with that?

TAKEESHA  
You were only on the path for a few minutes.

BENNY  
But my watch tells me that I've been moving for an hour and it feels that way.

LEANDRA  
You'll have to change your watch back. It was all caused by the path.

NOVA  
Wow, that's amazing.

Nova tries to jump up and down but found her ankle still hurt a bit.

MAX KIM  
Why didn't I see Benny on the same path?

LEANDRA  
It's just my bad magic affecting everything on the path. Now on to other things.

Leandra walks over to where Shade is tied up and lead her to the path.

LEANDRA  
Nova take her down the path and hold tight. She will get much stronger as you go.

Nova doesn't like the sound of that. She remembers how Max Kim and she could hardly hold her coming down the driveway.

NOVA  
I think I'm going need help. Max Kim and Takeesha can you please come with me?

Nova's friends grab hold of the halter and lead rope and walk down the path. To Nova's surprise her horse begins to grow until she becomes a full sized mare. When she comes back to Benny and Leandra, Nova can't stop grinning. She can ride her horse now. Training with weight on her back could officially start. She can't wait. Nova ties Shade back up to the tree branch.

NOVA  
This is so clash. Just look at her! She's beautiful!

Nova jumps without thinking . Her still sore ankle makes her wince. Benny is studying the mare and grinning.

BENNY  
How long does the effect  
last?

LEANDRA  
About three hours. If you  
want to reverse the effect...  
Nova go back down the path.

Nova, Takeesha, and Max Kim walk down the path again with  
Shade. She turns into her filly form again.

LEANDRA  
Let's have some lunch, okay?

Nova ties Shade to the branch and they go inside the house.

INT-DAY-LEANDRA'S HOUSE

Wildlife roams freely without harm as they eat lunch.  
Leandra has prepared finger sandwiches with chicken, mandarin  
orange spread, and strawberry juice. The Shade Riders leave  
and travel back to Nova's farm. Nova soon waves goodbye to  
her friends as they left for home with their parents. Later,  
Nova brushes out Shade, gives her some grain, and puts her  
out to pasture.

NOVA  
(ecstatic)  
Father is alive and I'm going to  
save him.

INT-DAY-FARM HOUSE

After school the following Monday, Nova is excited she looks  
at the flyer she got from Nocturnal Ned. It's a half price  
off coupon for The Psychic Experience. As soon as her mom  
walks through the door, they hop into the vet truck, drive to  
town, and come to the strip mall. They leave the truck and  
look over the various psychics services -- a ghost hunter  
service, an intuitive coaching service, a clairvoyant  
service, and Nocturnal Ned's spiritual service. Mom puts a  
hand on Nova's shoulder.

MOM  
Nova, I thought we could take  
the opportunity to speak to,  
Chayton. What do you think?

NOVA  
You mean Dad? I'd like to see  
if Grandma N. has anything to  
say.

MOM  
How about we do Chayton  
instead?

NOVA  
But, Mom..

Mom reaches into her purse.



MOM  
 Okay, let's flip a coin. Heads  
 Grandma or tails Chayton.

She flips and it rolls on the floor. Nova runs after the coin  
 and stomps on it stopping it on the spot.

NOVA  
 It's tails.

MOM  
 Sorry, honey. Chayton it is.

When Nova examines the quarter, she discovers that it has two  
 tails.

NOVA  
 Aw, Mom that's cheating.

MOM  
 I'll show you more cheating,  
 come on.

NOVA  
 Wait, what? Ned cheats?

MOM  
 Watch what I do.

Nova and her mom stride to Nocturnal Ned's parlor. They open  
 the glass door, and walk through into a small waiting room  
 with a tiny woman behind a receptionist's desk.

MOM  
 We would like to see Nocturnal Ned  
 please for a psychic channeling.  
 The receptionist nodded and  
 shuffled behind the beaded curtain.  
 Mom and Nova sat down on cushioned  
 chairs.

Ned's assistant soon enters. She perches on a stool and  
 offers them cinnamon herbal tea. While Mom takes a mug and  
 blows on the hot brew, Rose took pen and paper in her hand.

ROSE  
 Who are you hoping to contact  
 today?

Mom took a sip.

MOM  
 The dead.

Nova grins slyly.

ROSE  
 Well of course, can you give me a  
 name?

Rose starts to fidget.

MOM  
It's someone I know.

ROSE  
That's not funny.

Rose puts her mug down a little too hard.

MOM  
Okay, we're here to speak to Chayton.

ROSE  
Chayton? That's an unusual name.

MOM  
Yes, he was Sioux.

Rose pauses her scribbling.

ROSE  
Sue? Oh, you mean he was Native American?

MOM  
(winks at Nova)  
Yes.

Then the woman slams her hand down on the counter. Nova jumps.

ROSE  
Ma'am, this is a mutual endeavor. We will need your help with honest answers to these questions for this séance.

NOVA  
Yeah but...

Mom taps Nova on the knee, gives her a wink, and shushes her.

NOVA  
...Ned's supposed to be psychic.

Rose sits very still on her stool, and stares at Nova. Nova smirks. Were they going to get kicked out? Rose frowns. She reluctantly takes the coupon and cuts the payment in half before ringing a bell to let Ned know his guests are ready. Nocturnal Ned - comes out from behind a dark curtain and asks Mom and Nova to follow him into his chambers. Nova watches Ned and Rose give each other a hand gesture, then she follows her mom. Right before she is out of sight of the assistant, she pauses and watches her to see what the lady will do next. Rose grabs a headset with microphone and the pen and paper she wrote her mom's information on. Nova shakes her head and catches up with her mother. Nocturnal Ned sits at the end of a round table with a red vinyl cloth thrown over it, and Nova and her mom sit on either side in comfortable chairs.

Nova looks around the small room, where candles and incense burn, tickling her nose. Ned has a pad of paper on the table and a pen in his hand.

NED

I see you're here to speak to Chayton? And he died recently?

MOM

No, about eleven years ago.

Nova notices an almost invisible ear piece in Ned's ear.

NED

I shall try to summon up Chayton, who will take possession of my body. He will use my hand to write in the notebook.

Ned leans back in the chair and takes several deep breaths.

NED

Yes, yes. I feel his presence.

He hangs his head, unrolls his shoulders, then his hand with the pen begins to shake and write. Ned grits his teeth. The pen looks like it was out of control. He grabs the pen with his other hand and tries to master it. What is he doing that for? Nova almost laughed. She covered her mouth with her hand.

NED

Ah, Chayton is a strong one.

Ned grins, looks puzzled, then his face turns red. Nova gazes askance at him and shifts in the chair. Why is he doing this? He couldn't really be possessed, could he? She notices her mom is rather enjoying herself, chuckling quietly. Finally Ned lifts up his pen. He looks at it strangely and hurls it onto the table. Ned grabs another pen from a holder near-by and begins to jot more notes. Nova watches Ned staring at his hand as it continues flowing and writing over another page. He looks genuinely scared. When he finally stops he puts the pen down - his armpits have large wet stains. Ned does the same ritual he did when he went into the trance. He has puffy eyes, slack jaw and tousled hair, like he just woke up. He blinks rapidly as though surprised Nova and her mom were sitting there. As Ned examines his papers, he makes a strange twisted face. With shaky hands he rips off a portion that he has written and tosses it on the other side of his chair. Then he hands the other part to Nova and Mom. Mom hands it back.

MOM I don't understand this. It's all chicken scratching.

NED Okay, okay, I'll translate.

Ned takes five minutes to read the paper silently, moving his lips, before he responds.

NED  
Chayton said he is glad you came today.

Mom gives a mischievous grin.

NOVA  
He wrote a whole lot more than that.

NED  
(irritated)  
Are you Chayton's daughter?

MOM  
Yes, she is.

NED  
Was he there at the hospital?

MOM  
No, he died before she was born.

NED  
He said he was there at the hospital with you and that she turned out to be beautiful.

MOM  
She was born in the divorce court room with my ex-husband.

NED  
(amazed)  
You mean you delivered her without going to the hospital?

Mom nods and touches her necklace.

NED  
He also acknowledges the necklace you're wearing.

MOM  
What about the necklace?

NED  
Chayton gave that to you, didn't he?

MOM  
No, Nova gave it to me on my birthday.

NED  
I'm sorry, what I meant to say was that Nova had spiritual help from Chayton picking it out.

Ned sticks his finger between his neck and his shirt.

NED  
He gave you one of those rings on your fingers?

MOM  
No, he didn't believe in any type of decoration or jewelry. What exactly did Chayton write down on that piece of paper? How about that piece you tore off?

NED  
Sorry, time's up. Have a nice day. Oh, and here are some flyers to pass along to your friends because you had a great séance.

MOM  
It wasn't a great séance and you can forget about a tip.

Mom and Nova leave the booth and enter the waiting room. Mom said to Rose,

MOM  
I want my money back.

Rose shakes her head. It seems pretty final -she'd probably have a lot of practice with the demand. Nova and her mom leave through the curtain. Mom is ticked off. Ned chases after them. He grabs Mom by her shoulder and whispers angrily into her ear.

NED  
Either you tip me forty percent, or I call the police.

MOM  
Just you do that, and I'll let the public know, you're a fraud with my own flyers. And a letter to the editor.

She and her mother continue toward the truck. Nova has never sees her mother like this. She actually is a pretty good actress. Behind them Nova hears Ned cussing and the door slam.

INT. FARM HOUSE EVENING

The family sits down for Bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches.

MOM  
What are your plans tonight everyone?

NOVA  
I'm going to meet Takeesha in town.

MOM  
Do you need to meet her? Can't you stay home?

NOVA  
We already made plans, Mom.

MOM  
 Ask Takeesha if her mom can  
 take you home. Take a radio  
 and Wilha can ride with you.

WILHA  
 I wanted to go to Jarva's  
 house.

MOM  
 Okay, after you drop her off, you  
 can go to Jarva's. It should still  
 be light out. Scott what are you  
 going to do?

SCOTT  
 I'm going to barrel race and  
 ride Chocolate in the back.

MOM  
 Belle will like that.

EXT. TOWN. NIGHT.

As soon as the two girls arrive, Wilha takes off. Nova goes to find her friend. She rides around, but Takeesha is nowhere to be found. She goes to get a drink at a gas station. Nova waits for a while then she strolls to the girl's bathroom. The doorway is blocked by a tall skinny girl's body.

ROBIN  
 Where do you think you are going?  
 This is a girl's restroom.

Nova pushes her way through anyway.

ROBIN  
 DON'T GO INTO THE GIRL'S BATHROOM.  
 THERE IS A BOY IN THERE.

Robin stands in the hallway. Nova uses the washroom, but she can't look at herself in the mirror when she washes her hands. She peeks into the mirror for a second and sees Ahlon staring at her with a vicious face. She jumps back. When she looks again, he is gone. Nova gets on her bike and rides through town hoping nothing else would happen to her. Then she turns a corner and stops short. Takeesha is with a gang of older kids, running and spray painting stuff on the walls and windows of stores.

NOVA  
 Dear Vulcan.

Nova winces and hunches down further on her bike seat and backs up into the shadow of an alley. Suddenly, a huge greenish glowing muscular man runs onto the street in front of her.

NOVA  
 What the...?

The monster reaches under a lone red car and flips it over with ease. He picks up a bike stand and throws it through the drug store window. Shattered glass flies everywhere. He grabs a bicycle taxi and throws it down hard against the pavement causing it to twist and break. The gang members under the streetlights stare, their faces white. The huge man strides toward them. Then Nova blinks and the man is down on the road, a dark pony or young horse with wings stands on his chest, breathing in his face.

NOVA

Shade!

Nova almost whistles but stops herself. If she did that, Shade would come to her and possibly bring the green man with her. That was a scary thought. Nova could hear the greenish glowing man talking loudly to someone but she didn't know who it was. He seems to be talking to his bandaged finger. What is that all about?

NED

I'm trying to catch the horse but  
it now has my arms pinned.

He tries to kick the horse off himself but his legs aren't strong enough. Nova hears a huge crash of garbage cans behind her, and a couple of fighting cats growl and scream at each other. Then the hair on her neck stands on end. She feels cold and an utmost dread. Nova slowly turns. Sure enough, five ghosts are staring at her. They soon begin to crowd around her. The ghosts change from peaceful looking people in old fashioned pioneer clothing to skeletons in robes. Nova could feel the blood drain from her face.

LEANDRA

Nova, I'm here for you.

It is Leandra speaking from the watch.

LEANDRA

You need to ride to Benny's house  
as fast as you can. I'm on the  
trail of Nocturnal Ned and...think  
I have him finally.

NOVA

Oh... okay.

Nova hesitates, then decides to go around the monster. Taking off on her bike, she takes one last look at where Shade and the man are. Shade takes off into the night sky. The man is back to normal size, and a woman that looks like Leandra in a long gray coat, tackles him with shiny, silver handcuffs clutched in her hands.

Nova races passed buildings and can no longer see the arrest attempt. She wishes she could have watched it. But the ghosts are on her tail. They scream like banshees as they float around her, trying to get in front of her bike.

NOVA

Bike don't fail me now.

Nova goes down an open ended alley to escape the flying banshees. She is sweating, her legs are burning something awful, and she doesn't think she can keep up the pace. Suddenly a dark Buick pulls into the alley in front of her, making a horrible racket reeking with exhaust. The owner must have tried to come up with an alternative fuel. Nova swerves and skids to turn around and shot some pebbles up onto the car. The driver JACK 22 yells as he half gets out of the car.

JACK

Hey, are you trying to get killed?

There is no other way around. Nova realizes she has to turn back and ride through the stupid ghosts. She starts out slow but gains speed until she rams them with all she has. She feels the cold and the horrible feeling of fear as she passes through them. The ghosts scream and reach for her. Nova clutches her stomach, falters and falls off her bike, scraping her knee on the pavement and her ankle on a petal. She can feel the blood rolling down her leg when she stands up to get back on. Nova looks back; the ghosts are almost on her. She starts to pedal. Her leg hurts a lot, but she has to get away. She puts out every ounce of energy she has into out running the ghosts. She is pretty wiped out. She takes a turn down a road toward Benny's house, rides in the gutter near the curb, and ends up running over something sharp. Her front tire blows.

NOVA

Crap.

Just when Nova thinks she is doomed, somewhere she finds a reserve of energy and keeps going until she gets to her destination. She drops her bike and staggers to the door. To her surprise, Max Kim opens it and lets her in.

INT-BENNY'S HOUSE-NIGHT

Nova is out of breath.

NOVA

Ghosts... chasing me.



She plops down on the couch in the living room and pants. Her chest feels like it was going to explode. Then Nova notices pillows all over the room. Like they had a pillow fight.

BENNY

Turn out the lights.

Benny disappears into his room then rushes back out. Max Kim makes the room dark.

BENNY

I've got a magnetic meter, here.

In his hands, Benny has a gadget that uses a compass and a bar magnet. He rolls to the door and took a reading. Nova and Max Kim look outside just in time to see the ghosts vanish in wisps of white.

NOVA

What is causing them to go away?

BENNY

I don't know. But it looks like they are made of plasma from an aurora borealis right above this house. Here look. Right up there.

Benny points upward out the window.

NOVA

Yeah, I saw one above the school the other day. "That's what's causing them. It has to be.

MAX KIM

Well, how do we fight them?

BENNY

Infrasound can't be fought. It's a sound that we can only feel, not hear. It makes people think they're seeing ghosts. Elephants, whales, and tigers use the special sound waves because they carry a huge distance. Even the Inuit people fear the deadly Aura Borealis.

NOVA

(Collapsing on couch)  
But it's not deadly for us. I think Leandra knows something. Too bad she's busy arresting Ned.

EXT-FARM-DUSK

It is humid and drizzling a little. The flies and mosquitoes are buzzing about Nova and Max Kim's heads. Nova holds onto the long lounge rope. Shade circles around her about four yards away. The other horses are in the back pasture.

Darkness approaches, and Shade's beautiful black and gold glossy wings expand. Still on the lounge rope, she flaps twice, then glides around a yard off the ground.

MAX KIM  
What is that? Are those... wings?

NOVA  
Yeah, I've been meaning to tell you about that.

Max Kim walks toward Shade, ducks down low so as not to get into the way of the rope. He prances right into Shade's tail, then he gets swept up into the air behind the flying horse and is riding above the ground in a slipstream force.

NOVA  
Holy chaos! Be careful.

Shade continues to fly in a circle. After a moment of panic, Max Kim begin to laugh and tries out a couple somersaults in mid-air.

MAX KIM  
Look at me, Nova, I can fly! Whee...this is so much fun!

NOVA  
I don't know about this...

After about half an hour, Nova lands Shade, dropping her to the ground. In the next minute, Max Kim's face is in Shade's tail again. He lands on his feet. Nova grabs him by the shirt.

NOVA  
Max Kim it's very important that you don't tell anyone besides Benny and Takeesha, got it?

MAX KIM  
Yeah, I guess.

NOVA  
I mean it.

MAX KIM  
I know. Man, that was fun. You want to try?

INT-FARM HOUSE-DAY

On the phone Nova is talking to Takeesha

TAKEESHA  
Hey Nova, I just heard from Max Kim that your filly has wings? That can't be true! How come you get to be so lucky? When can I come over to see this miracle?

NOVA  
Benny's coming over tonight. Why don't you join us.

TAKEESHA

Okay, I'll ask if Boomer and I can come over.

It sounds like Takeesha puts the phone receiver down and calls her mother. Then she hears quiet conversation between two people in the background. Takeesha picks up the phone.

TAKEESHA

I can come over after supper, but Boomer's staying home.

NOVA

Good, I'll see you then. Wait, you didn't tell your family? Did you?

TAKEESHA

Oh gosh, Nova, you should know me by now. I can keep a secret. You know what I mean?

NOVA

This isn't just a secret. It is a huge secret!

TAKEESHA

Come on, girl! I'm fine with it.

NOVA

Okay, see you tonight.

EXT. BACK PASTURE DUSK

Nova shows the kids Shade with her wings. They all look surprised.

BENNY

That's so clash. When can I ride her?

NOVA

We have to do it safely.

BENNY

Aww. But...

The communication device on Nova's wrist vibrates. She sees Leandra's eye watching her. Nova speaks into the watch.

NOVA

What's up?

LEANDRA

I want all of you to come over again. It's very important.

NOVA

Does Shade need to come?

LEANDRA

No, just you kids. It will only take five minutes.

Leandra winks then her eye disappeared.

TAKEESHA

Pass. I'm having some company over and need to get going. Tell me later what she says, you know what I mean? Can I use your phone to call Ma?

NOVA

Sure. We'll meet up with you later.

Nova un-clips the lounge rope and swats Shade on the rump.

EXT. LEANDRA'S GARDEN AT HER HOUSE- EVENING

Leandra is kneeling in the garden under a Will o' wisp.

BENNY

Whoa, what kind of light is that?

She stands up from picking mint leaves and puts them into a basket in front of her.

LEANDRA

It's a will o' wisp from the pond out back. Here's something you also need to see.

In her bare hand is a glowing fire ball with fractals in it.

NOVA

Aren't you going to burn yourself?

LEANDRA

No, I have Neanderthal blood running through my veins, even though I'm from the Lower Echelons.

BENNY

What is it? Is it pure fire?

Benny reaches out, then pulls back fast from the heat.

LEANDRA

Don't touch it if you're Modern Human. It's a pure fireball. No fuel, no substrate. You'll need to learn to defend yourself against it. That's why I asked you here.

MAX KIM

What do you mean? Ghosts don't throw fireballs.

LEANDRA

Ghosts don't, but Nocturnal Ned does. He got away from me the other night, and I haven't been able to find where he's hiding out.

NOVA

Wait. Nocturnal Ned is just a fraud, a charlatan who pretends to talk to the dead and takes people's money.

LEANDRA  
 It's a terrific disguise,  
 isn't it. There's much more  
 to Ned than there seems.  
 You'd be surprised.

NOVA  
 You mean he was that green  
 glowing monster I saw on the  
 street?

LEANDRA  
 Yep, that's him. I suggest you go  
 to a science supply store and get  
 equipment you'll need to build a  
 weapon to defend yourselves, at  
 least until Nova's magic is up to  
 snuff.

INT-FARM HOUSE-NIGHT

Nova invites Takeesha, Benny and Max Kim to a sleep over at her house. Benny, for the first time, left his autogyro at home and brought instead the not-quite-finished weapon against the fireballs. He sits at the pink homework desk in Nova's bedroom, tightening down some final screws. Max Kim and Nova go into the kitchen to make salted popcorn as a treat for Shade. Takeesha has dropped by, but she is wearing a frown.

NOVA  
 Why didn't you bring a  
 sleeping bag or change of  
 clothes?

TAKEESHA  
 Because I don't want to be  
 here.

She keeps wiggling and warily looking around. Nova feels hurt. Their friendship seems at an all time low now. Regardless, The Shade Riders go out in the dark to the catch pen. Shade did not fly away and is rolling in the moist dirt. A light rain is falling. Shade gets to her feet, shakes off the excess dirt and flaps her wings. She neighs to Max Kim and Nova, who hold out the popcorn. And that was when they found out what was bothering Takeesha.

TAKEESHA  
 I hate this! Why does Nova get  
 everything?

At first, Nova doesn't know how to respond to Takeesha's outburst. She let Max Kim hold the pan of popcorn as she approaches Takeesha.

NOVA

Look, Takeesha, a flying horse isn't that terrific. What would happen if I fell off or something? I could get really hurt. Leandra's paths only make her an adult horse for three hours. If I don't get off her in time we both could plummet to Earth and die. Not to mention, she gets out all the time and I always have to go look for her. What if she gets hit by a car? My mom would get sued.

TAKEESHA

Oh come on. You have a flying horse. And you get help with your magic. It's not fair. You know what I mean?

NOVA

Life's not fair. I've been bothered by bullies for years, and you used to want to hang around with me. I don't know what's going on with you, but I saw you hanging out with some street kids who were painting the walls of buildings.

TAKEESHA

They're my new friends. You'll just have to get used to it.

NOVA

If they're getting you to break the law, they're not your friends.

TAKEESHA

I'll do what I want, when I want!

Takeesha and Nova cross their arms in front of their chests, clenching their jaws, and stare at each other.

TAKEESHA

I'm never going to talk to you again!

NOVA

Fine with me.

EXT-FARM-DAY

Nova, Max Kim and Benny throw some ripped up newspaper in the bottom of a steel drum, light it, then try to extinguish the fire. The guns leak, making a huge mess. They all peer down inside. No smoke just lots of bubbles.

NOVA

Was that a success or not?

Nova pushes away from the barrel.

MAX KIM

How can we tell if the gun  
extinguished the fire or the leak  
did?

Max Kim laughs. Benny searches his bag behind his chair.

BENNY

Here, I got some o-rings. I'll just  
put them on.

They go to the picnic site which had a campfire pit, light a fire and fed it with sticks until the fire was big. Benny, five feet back, aims the bubble gun at the fire. The gun spits out bubbles full of carbon dioxide that float toward the fire and burst. The flames struggle to stay alive. He moves back and forth as he shot. The fire heaves a final farewell as it died. Nova and Max Kim jump for joy and Benny whoops and hollers.

BENNY

Well, you guys, I think it is ready  
to be taken over to Leandra's house  
and tried on some real flying  
fireballs.

Nova grabs the matches and left over newspaper and they start to head for the house. Before they go into the catch pen...

BENNY

Huddle up. I need to say something.

They stop walking and surrounded Benny.

BENNY

I wanted to say that we need  
a secret place like a fort to  
call Leandra now that the  
weapon is ready.

NOVA

I know. How about we build  
one out of hay?

MAX KIM

It can be a maze with hidden doors.

INT-BARN-DAY

When they are satisfied with their drawing, they go to the haymow.

Montage:

Removing the bales to get to the wooden floor.

Finding an old dusty rug which they beat until covered in dust.

Check drawing. Start stacking two bales high. Place boards on top then bales.

Last look at fort it looks the same from when they started.

End of Montage.

Nova runs down the grassy hill ramp next to the barn and into the front. She finds Benny working on an elevator that will lift him into the hay maze.

NOVA

Okay, the meeting room is ready for you.

Nova runs back up in the haymow and crawls through the maze into the meeting room, where Max Kim is and waits for Benny to come up. Below the platform is a stall that couldn't be used because it didn't have a door. Benny rolls onto the platform in the barn stall, reaches down, and places a rubber belt on the special metal wheel on the wheelchair motor and the motor lifts him through the chute and up into the hay fort. The platform covers up the hay chute opening so no one could see above their heads into the fort. Inside were hay benches and a table. Sometimes they had to open a big window to let fresh air in because inside it was stifling hot. Also the look out had to be on alert for any unwanted ears. The three kids put the digital watch on the hay table and called for Leandra. A beautiful blue eye looks out from the red glowing crystal.

NOVA

Hi Leandra, that's you, right?

LEANDRA

Yes, hello sprogs, do you have the weapon done?

BENNY

Yeah, and it works great! Now I want to try it on some real fireballs.

LEANDRA

Bring it down. I want to have a look. TA ta.

EXT. LEANDRA'S HOUSE GARDEN- DUSK

She looks over the guns and nods.

LEANDRA

They look impressive enough. Let's try them out.



She calls up a fireball in the palm of her hand. The fractals inside leap angrily. Leandra tosses down her driveway. Nova, Max Kim and Benny chase after it and put it out.

NOVA

Too easy.

INT- LEANDRA'S HOUSE-DAY

They go into her house.

NOVA

Did you find Nocturnal Ned yet?

LEANDRA

I've not seen hide or hair of him for a while, but... well his timing couldn't be any better.

Nova took a deep breath and swallowed hard. Nocturnal Ned comes down the driveway, and he didn't look like a harmless fraud. Nova and everyone else watch through Leandra's window as Ned rides down the driveway on a Harley. He is dressed in black leather his chap's fringe flapping in the wind. Then without warning, Ned transforms into the green glowing monster. Benny and Max Kim gasp. Ned's black leather creaks and tore asunder, flapping in the breeze.

EXT-LEANDRA'S HOUSE-DAY

NED

Crap! Ahlon, that was my good leather. Why did you do that?

Ned stops the bike, which now looks like a toy, at the end of the driveway and looks around.

NED

Damn, damn, damn.

Ned punches his now exposed muscular green leg over and over.

LEANDRA

Stay here and keep your eyes open.

Then Leandra leaves her house by the back way and made her way around Ned. Less than a minute later, she creeps out of the bushes behind him, got her arm around his thick neck, and slaps a sticky patch to his shoulder. Ned struggles, but his color and size are returning to normal.

LEANDRA

All right, kids, you can come out now.

They gather around, Nova stands in front of the bike.

NOVA  
Hey Hulk, looks like you're Bruce  
Banner again.

Ned stares her in the eyes. His face is so close she can smell his garlic breath. Leandra pulls him back by his shoulder.

LEANDRA  
So Ned, just how do you contact  
your master, Ahlon?

--Just then, Nova hears a tiny voice coming from Ned's left index finger.

NOVA  
Dear Vulcan, what do we have here?

She lifts Ned's hand and shows everyone.

NOVA  
There's a voice coming from the cut  
on his finger.

Ned yanks his hand away.

NED  
Don't touch me, girl. I cut myself.  
Your stupid mother still owes me  
respect and money.

Ned points at Nova's chest.

NED  
I know now you don't belong here.  
You're half Neanderthal and need to  
go back where you came from.

Nova puts her hands on her hips. Her brows furrowed and her eyes narrow.

LEANDRA  
So, that cut is how you throw  
fireballs and change into a  
monster?

But it was beginning to make sense to Nova.

NOVA  
He must have got a message from  
Ahlon when my mom and I went in for  
a séance.

(MORE)

NOVA (CONT'D)

He threw half of the message he scribbled under his chair and wouldn't let us see it.

They saw a slight nod from Ned.

LEANDRA

And he wants you to pay for that?  
Okay, What are you here for, Ned?  
What do you want?

The tiny voice coming from his finger is beginning to sound like a rant.

NED

Ahlon is watching and you will all die.

BENNY

Yeah, so what. Anything can kill you, what of it?

With a quick move that caught them all off guard, Ned reaches for the patch and rips it off. He burst into an even bigger green monster.

NED

So be it.

He tries to grab Leandra before she can apply another patch. Leandra ducks and burns his hand with a fireball. Ned's mad.

LEANDRA

Take cover now!

The Shade Riders with their bubble gun scatter into the trees. Nova, Max Kim, and Benny duck behind big oak trees that ran along the driveway. Nova never takes her eyes off the green glowing monster standing next to the skull-painted motorcycle. Oddly, Nova can hear the birds singing as she waits. Leandra moves so she is blocking the driveway.

LEANDRA

Do your worst, Ned!

NED

If that's how you want it.

Ned flings a fireball the size of a basketball at Leandra's head. She moves out of the way. The fireball flies down the driveway, flaming out near the road on the gravel leaving a pile of black ash. Leandra lobs another one at Ned and leaps over bushes in the woods. Ned throws one right toward her head and shrubbery caught on fire. Max Kim jumps out in time and begins shooting bubbles at it. The gun puts the fire out completely. Leandra throws one at Ned and it bounces off and hits the motorcycle seat. Whoosh! It bursts into flame. Ned cries and begins to bat the seat with his big green hands. Finally, he falls onto the seat to put it out. He stands up like a ram rod. His chest is charred black, blistered. He begins to throw fireballs again.

Nova saw tears running down his face. She began to have some compassion for him but a fireball came straight for her head. She dodges to the left, but the fireball clobbers her hand. She didn't feel anything but it knocked her weapon out of reach in the thistles in front of her. As she reaches for the gun, she notices Max Kim catch and magically levitate a fireball right in front of his face. Then he made some dramatic moves with his hands like he was petting the fireball. Then he reaches for his bubble gun like a cowboy, and the flame drops to bubbly black ash on the ground before him at his feet.

NOVA

Clash!

She has no idea Max Kim can do such amazing magic tricks. Leandra threw another fireball that hits the back of Ned's head. It oozes down his shoulders and back like lava down the side of a volcano. Ned turns around and erupts with a roar. He whips a fireball at Leandra who ducks, then moves to a better position behind a tree. Nova grabs her gun and runs to put out the fireball on the tree where Leandra has been standing a moment ago. Nova watches a fireball light a fire near Benny. He wheels over to it a little too close. One of his wheels catches on fire. He frantically rolls back and forth putting it out, but Nova hears the pop when the tire blows.

BENNY

Damn it. One of my wheels is gone.

Leandra throws another fireball at Ned, who blocks it with his forearm and throws one back. Nova puts out one near an apple tree. Leandra has the kids putting out fireballs everywhere as she ducks and weaves and throws fireballs from behind trees. The woods would have been ablaze if it wasn't for the bubble guns. Leandra is doing some damage to Ned too, as she stayed just inside the forest. His motorcycle keeps getting hit. He stamps around and throws his arms about.

NED

Hey, damn it, it's brand new.

Then Nova's watch buzzes.

LEANDRA

Nova, I'm pretty sure that motorcycle is going to explode, so take cover.

NOVA

Right.

Nova uses her walkie talkie to call the boys to get ready. Suddenly, Ned's hand goes into the air. Nova thought his bandage flew off but it happened so fast she couldn't tell.

Ned grabs his hand and winces as a burst of light slams out of his finger and flies into the sky. He brings his hand down and his finger bleeds freely. Ned's monster body beneath his tattered clothes has finally begun to shrink again. He is a dark grey color from all the burns on his body. He has enough. He stomps, kicks the gravel, and throws a fist in the air with a final rude gesture to everyone. And finally, he takes off down Leandra's driveway on his badly charred bike with two flat tires. The Shade Riders cheer.

LEANDRA

(pants and grins)

Okay, that concludes today's lesson. And I think you all earned A's.

INT. Haymaze. Day.

Nova is in the hay fort alone, holding the watch to her face.

NOVA

Leandra, are you there? Leandra come in.

LEANDRA

Arvo, mate. What's up?

NOVA

May I come to your house again today and age Shade so we can work together?

LEANDRA

Sure. I'm not going to be there, so be careful. Ned might stop by again.

NOVA

Thanks,... um mate.

Nova watches as Leandra winks at her and blinks out. Nova crawls out of the hay fort and runs to get her horse with a bucket of sweet feed. When she brings Shade to the hitching post and ties her up. Shade skitteres aside as Nova tries to throw the saddle and blanket onto the small filly's back. She is successful and tightens the cinch around the horse's ribs. Shade tries to pull back from the tightening of the cinch by jerking on the hitching post. Then she settles down when Nova gives her some grain. She hears the door creak open on the house. Wilha pokes her head out, then begins to laugh.

WILHA

Why don't you try that saddle on Belle while you're at it?

Nova sticks her tongue out and starts walking Shade up the driveway.

WILHA  
Where are you going?

NOVA  
I'm going over to Leandra's house to work on Shade.

WILHA  
Well, she's not big enough to take a saddle or bridle.

NOVA  
It's just the weight I'm concerned with right now.

WILHA  
Whatever.

Wilha sticks her head back inside and closes the door. Nova races over to Leandra's house with Shade and walks her filly down the ley line path to make her bigger. After riding they have lunch. Nova gives her an apple. When it becomes night they fly around looking at the Halloween decorations. Presently, Nova looks at her watch. She has been up in the sky for two hours. It is time to get off before they crash to the ground. By this time, Nova hates to stop. It is too much fun. But she presses down on the top of Shade's neck to see if she will go down and land. At first Shade pushes her head and neck up so she wouldn't have to go down.

NOVA  
I know you love to fly, but we need to go down before you fall.

Nova becomes persistent and continues to press down. Shade begins to glide down. Just before her hooves touch the ground, Nova stops applying pressure, and she surges back into the sky. Finally, Nova holds the pressure on her neck until Shade obeys and lands in a neighbors cornfield. Nova breathes a sigh of relief and gives her horse a big hug. Then she begins walking her back home. Shade grows smaller as they walk. When they got back to the barn, Nova takes the saddle and bridle off and puts them into the tack room. Then she brushes her horse down and gives her grain. She is going to let Shade loose to go to the other horses when something cold pokes her in the back. It is a handgun.

VIOLENT VIOLET  
Give me your horse, man.

Nova slowly turns around. One of Takeesha's street friends is holding the small handgun. Takeesha is standing behind her smiling. Nova didn't know what to say or do so she looks at her horse and thinks about the memories she had with Shade. Then she looks at the gun-carrying street woman. The street lady freezes. Simply stopped moving, didn't even blink. Takeesha runs up to her friend and waves a hand in front of her friend's open eyes. Takeesha even stomps on her friend's foot.



NOVA (CONT'D)

And Takeesha don't go anywhere. I need to talk to you too.

Takeesha kicks the ground.

TAKEESHA

I can't leave anyway. You just made my ride disappear. I have to use your phone now to call my ma.

Nova and Leandra walk Shade down to the catch pen gate.

NOVA

Leandra, I don't know what to do with Takeesha. I thought she could keep a secret, but she obviously can't.

Nova opens the gate and lets Shade go.

LEANDRA

The only thing for you to do is talk to her.

Leandra pats Shade on her rump to encourage her to go into the catch pen.

LEANDRA

Maybe the problem is something you can work out.

NOVA

Are you sure I shouldn't freeze her too?

LEANDRA

I suspect she will look up to you now and want to be a better friend.

NOVA

Don't you mean you think she will fear me now?

Nova watches Shade roll in the dirt, get up and shake, as she neighed, and ran to the other horses.

NOVA

It's not friendship if they are afraid.

LEANDRA

No, she'll still be your friend.

Leandra puts a reassuring hand on her shoulder.

LEANDRA

Ralf, your father, is going to try to get rid of the controlling ghost in his body using some calcium tablets Captain Palherd- she's helping me, too- secretly gave him.

NOVA

I hope they work. Are we going to rescue him?



LEANDRA  
Not yet. You're not ready  
with the cart.

NOVA  
The cart?

LEANDRA  
Ask Benny.

NOVA  
Um.. all right. But as soon as  
we are, I say we go.

They walk back up to where Takeesha is waiting.

NOVA  
Hello, Takeesha, long time no see.

Takeesha didn't say anything at first. She just watches her  
feet kick the driveway gravel.

TAKEESHA  
Can I call my ma now?

NOVA  
Okay, but first, I want to  
talk to you about hanging  
around those gun-carrying  
street kids.

LEANDRA  
I'll leave you two to hash things  
out.

With that Leandra goes over to where the green light flashes  
and she and the light are gone.

NOVA  
I guess if you blink you  
miss her.

TAKEESHA  
Yeah.

NOVA  
Takeesha, look, you're  
either part of this group or  
you're not. I'm going to give  
you another chance to be my  
friend.

TAKEESHA  
O...kay. Okay. What do you want  
me to do?

Takeesha is not able to meet Nova's eyes.

NOVA  
The Shade Riders need your skills.

Nova puts a hand on Takeesha's left shoulder.

NOVA

For starters, we need a person to sew the letters on a T-shirt and sweatshirt for our group. Are you ready to become one of us now?

TAKEESHA

I don't know. The Hooligans- that's what they call themselves- won't let me leave their gang. They've threatened to kill me if I do, you know. I only wanted to be a part of a gang that would go after the gang that killed my father in Milwaukee, but they don't want to tick them off. They said he was killed accidentally. Now, I don't want to be a part of that gang.

NOVA

Don't worry, I'm sure we can think of something.

Nova puts her arm around her shoulder and they stride into the house to discuss it.

EXT. FARMYARD. AFTERNOON.

Benny and Max Kim come over, bringing a red, two-wheel horse cart. Benny's mom and her van with her four wheeled trailer drive up the driveway and away. The two boys stay behind and saw off the left seat of the cart so that Benny's wheelchair can be clamped on. Nova and Takeesha come out of the house and examine the blue prints.

NOVA

How's it going?

BENNY

If this doesn't work, its eight hundred bucks down the drain.

Benny throws a monkey wench into the tool box making a clanging sound. Max Kim stops sawing to wipe sweat from his brow and grins up at the girls. Nova and Takeesha go into the milk house with the yipping puppies for a bucket of some sweet, delicious feed. Then they go out the gate to the catch pen and shake the bucket for the horses to hear. Meanwhile, Nova whistles to get Shade to come. Shade runs into the catch pen neighing.

TAKEESHA

This is too easy.

The young women grab Shade's red halter and take her back to the house. As they walk, Shade keeps forcing the bucket of grain to the ground. Nova has a hard time keeping it up. Takeesha laughs at the silly horse.

NOVA  
How are you feeling,  
Takeesha?

TAKEESHA  
I'm pretty nervous. How are  
you doing?

NOVA  
Are you sure you are immune  
to the drug?

TAKEESHA  
Yep. It won't affect me.

Nova gives a small grin. When they finally come to the barn, Shade has finished the grain. Nova puts the bucket away. The girls kick up gravel struggling with an eager Shade as they leave the driveway and head toward Barnacle Road. Soon they are at Leandra's house. It is dark. They find the path and go down it to make Shade fill out into a mare.

NOVA  
Are you ready to do this,  
Takeesha?

TAKEESHA  
Ready as I'll ever be.

NOVA  
Let's do it, then.  
Woohoo!

Nova kicks Shade. The horse gallops, sprouts her wings and flies into the cool air. Nova and Takeesha steer her toward the bad section of town. Nova pushes on Shade's neck so she would go down a bit and hover about a yard off the ground in shadows near some trees. Takeesha swings her leg over Shade's behind and slid off. She sneaks around a tree and a street light. Nova remembers Takeesha talking about their usual hiding place--hanging around under an overpass. Takeesha moves in that direction. Nova wants to get a better view of what is happening, so she slips her too short belt under Shade's neck and pulls up to get her higher in the sky. She soon spots Takeesha. The gang members come out to meet her and were clearly happy to see her back. The gang leader puts his arm over her shoulders and tells her something. Takeesha walks over to the pile of sticks that are already gathered. She pulls out of her hip pack a green flammable drug so that they all can stand around and get high from breathing the fumes. The gang, who is not used to it, would be stoned almost instantly. The motley group of teenagers gathers around and sat crossed-legged in front of the fire. They lean forward and breath in the smoke from the drug. It took only a short time. Some of the gang stare into space and some nod off and go to sleep and sprawl out on the pavement under the overpass. Takeesha nods to Nova. Nova pushes down on Shade's neck and the horse flaps just above the gang of kids. The flame dances and swirls. Takeesha waves her hand coaxing Nova down. The gang members shift their bodies around and groan. Nova worries they might jump her and Shade when she lands. Takeesha's waves became frantic.

TAKEESHA  
Hurry, girlfriend. We have to  
do this now.

NOVA  
Dear Vulcan, they might have  
heard that.

Nova has Shade land, then she jumps off and approaches the group. She checks pockets and socks and boots and belts and even their hair and jewelry, stripping them of their weapons.

NOVA  
Man, they stink.

TAKEESHA  
It's the smoke.

The girls put all the guns, knives and ninja stars into a bag Nova had brought along. Then Nova hops back onto Shade and takes off and waits in the sky behind a tree. Slowly, the gang woke up. They complained their heads throb. They sit up and rub their faces. AMY 19, RODNEY 24, VINNY 17.

AMY  
Nasty stuff. My head throbs.

VINNEY  
What happened? We could've  
been targets.

RODNEY  
What did you burn?

TAKEESHA  
It's not important. I want to  
quit the group.

RODNEY  
So you're trying to poison us? You  
are so dead.

The leader reaches for his gun but can't find it. He feels his boots.

RODNEY  
Damn, man, can't find my piece. You  
have yours?

His main man, Vinny, pats himself down and shakes his head.

RODNEY  
Search yourselves, homeys. Find a  
weapon. Any weapon. Ah, I can't  
think straight.

Then the leader's mouth drops open as he stares at an empty spot a little ways in front of him.

RODNEY  
What's that- a ghost?

Amy points at Takeesha, her hand trembling.

AMY  
What the hell was that? You  
some kind of witch?

TAKEESHA  
I told you I'm a shaman.

Takeesha smiles and folds her arms over her chest. Rodney and his gang start backing away.

RODNEY

You stay away from us! You hear?

They turn and run away from the street lights and deeper under the overpass and beyond into the darkness.

TAKEESHA

All clear, girl, come on down.

Nova lands and reaches her arm down for Takeesha to grab and pull herself up onto Shade's back. Nova clicks her tongue and Shade flies down the street. She flaps over buildings and trees. Nova steers her toward Takeesha's home. The young women should have been giggling and whooping it up about what happened. But they knew how dangerous gang members could be, and this might not be over for Takeesha. Nova lands Shade behind Takeesha's house in the shadows of the trees. The girls hug.

TAKEESHA

You're so clash, Nova! You know what I mean?

Takeesha pats Shade on her neck and produces a carrot for her from her back pocket. Shade gobbles it up and looks for more. Takeesha shows her empty hands.

NOVA

Thanks, but you did the hard work. I've got to get Shade home before she shrinks up again. I'll see you later.

Takeesha grins, waves and went inside. Nova runs Shade down the road and the horse flaps her wings and glides into the sky. Nova pats Shade in the moonlight.

NOVA

You were so good back there. I'll have to give you a big treat when we make it home. If we make it home.

They fly higher than thirty feet to stay above the telephone poles. They are almost home she can see the silo and barn light in the distance. Good thing it isn't foggy. On the ride over a corn field, Shade suddenly lurches and they begin to lose altitude fast.

NOVA

Dear Vulcan.

Sweat pours off of her and she feels chilly. Nova didn't know if she should put her feet up so she wouldn't break a leg or what. Shade's body is shrinking fast. Nova watches the cut down corn stalks and black earth approach. Shade's filly feet thump hard and then she collapses onto her side. Nova pulled her feet up in time. She tugs on Shade's bridle, trying to get her upright, but Shade spits it out. It is now way too big. Just as Nova is figuring out how to get help, Shade jerks her front legs out in front of herself and stands up. Shade gives one huge shake of her body and the saddle slides under her and hangs there. Nova pulls it back on top of the horse, cinches it up, and they slowly walk home. Nova has to wrap the reins around her neck to control her head. Knowing Nova didn't have good control, Shade stops to nibble on the grass near the side of the road.

NOVA

(laughing)

Come on, girl. You shouldn't eat to make you feel better, you'll get fat.

INT-FARMHOUSE-NIGHT

Nova brushes her teeth, puts on her pajamas, and crawls into bed. She hopes she can get some sleep and that Wilha will not kick her out again. With all the adrenalin from the gang and the fall, Nova can't sleep at first. She tosses and turns as her mind chews on her problems. The clock said eleven forty-four. She rolls around and soon gives up. She goes into the kitchen and makes some chamomile mint and valerian tea, which she gulps down burning her mouth. She blows on the mug, then sits at the kitchen table with the paper to sip it more slowly. While she is reading the comics, there is a strange noise behind her. She looks around the kitchen but couldn't see where the sound came from. Nova then hears a scratching at the window. She looks upon black glass and a design on the glass pane. It is a skull face. It laughs evilly, the sound echoing off the walls inside. Nova bolts to her bedroom, covers herself in the bed, and turns from the window. A shiver goes up her spine.

NOVA

Leave me alone. Dear Vulcan.

After a while her breathing slows down and she begins to feel the effects of the tea. She pulls the thin covers up to her chin and falls into a complete slumber. The next morning, Nova feels rested. She goes into The kitchen and pours herself a bowl of cereal.

NOVA

The cart.

She rushes out of the house and into the garage, then throws aside the tarp. The wheelchair they are going to use to test it out is clamped on and ready to go. She throws the tarp back on and scampers into the house goes into her bedroom and grabs her walkie talkie. She leaves the house.

INT-HAYMOW-DAY

She pulled the bale that covers the entrance aside. She gets down on her hands and knees and crawls through. She hits a wall with her head and turns left then right. She goes straight for five feet then turns left again. She almost falls down the trap door in the floor. She then goes right into the meeting room of the clubhouse. Nova sits down at the table and speaks into her watch at once.

NOVA  
Leandra, can you hear me?

LEANDRA  
Yeah deary, what's up?

Her blue eye sparkles.

NOVA  
The cart is done. Can we test it at your house today?

LEANDRA  
Okay, but I won't be there, so bring yourselves some snacks.

NOVA  
Thanks, Leandra you're the greatest.

Leandra's eye winks out. Nova snags the walkie talkie.

NOVA  
Hey, anybody there? Over?

Nova listens for a minute.

NOVA  
Hello, come in, anybody? Over.

BENNY  
Hey, Nova what's up? Over.

TAKEESHA  
Hey, girl. Over.

MAX KIM  
I'm here,over.

NOVA  
Can all of you come for a picnic today at Leandra's house? We need to get Shade used to the new cart. Over.

TAKEESHA, BENNY, MAX KIM  
Yep. Over.

NOVA  
 Okay, let's meet here at eleven and put a picnic basket together. Bring whatever.

TAKEESHA  
 All right, girl. Over and out, I think.

BENNY AND MAX KIM  
 Over and out.

NOVA  
 See you, over and out.

EXT-FARM-DAY

Soon the rest of the Shade Riders arrive at Nova's farm.

NOVA  
 Put your food in the basket there in the cart. Takeesha, let's get Shade.

In half an hour, they leave Nova's farm and go up the driveway. Nova and Takeesha led Shade ahead of the cart. The filly keeps looking warily back at it from time to time. Max Kim pulls the cart in the front where a horse would pull it and Benny pushes from behind using his powered wheelchair. When they arrive, Nova and Takeesha take Shade down the trail to make her bigger. When they get back, Max Kim and Benny sit under a maple tree eating out of the basket. Nova begins to put the harness on Shade. Max Kim gets off the ground and pulls the cart into position. He is up against her tail as he maneuvers the cart into the harness.

NOVA  
 Max Kim, get out of there. She might kick.

Shade keeps looking back at the cart, her eyes roll back, and her ears down. Max Kim crawls out from under the left arm of the cart just in time-- Shade throws her legs back in a jarring and ear splitting kick to the cart. She continues to dance around. She turns the opposite direction then kicks again.

NOVA  
 We have to let her get used to it. We might as well have some lunch.

She tries one last time to soothe her horse by patting her neck and talking to her, but it didn't help. They sit down under a tree and eat lunch. Nova goes over to feed her horse some carrots. Benny wheels over and Max Kim and Takeesha stride over to examine the horse and cart for any damage. There isn't any.



BENNY

The next thing for Shade is to see  
if she can pull the wheelchair off.

Nova ties rope to the wheelchair's vinyl back, then to the U-shaped tree branch and leads Shade away from the tree. Shade pulls a little but refuses to pull any further.

TAKEESHA

I think you need to slap her rump,  
you know?

Nova slaps it and Shade pulls harder. A crow flies out of the tree right over her head. She spooks and the cart fish-tails around. The old wheelchair stays on the cart. Nova breaths a sigh of relief. Suddenly, the vinyl back of the wheelchair gives way. Shade is loose with the cart galloping down the driveway. All four kids go after her. Nova and Max Kim run along side of the cart then jump into it. They grab the flapping reins and pull on them to get Shade to stop. The horse is upset and isn't going to stop easily.

NOVA

We're going into the field.

Benny and Takeesha slow down now that two kids had control. Nova and Max Kim ride through the trees and into a newly-plowed field.

It become dusk and the Shade Riders are still at Leandra's house.

A bright green light comes down behind Leandra's house.

They approach the house where Leandra comes out of the house and is drinking something from a coffee mug. Nova gets closer and could smell mint tea. Takeesha ties up Shade to the U-shaped tree branch.

THE SHADE RIDERS

Hey Leandra.

Leandra gave everyone a lunch bag.

LEANDRA

Here's dinner.

THE SHADE RIDERS

Thanks.

NOVA

Leandra, have you found out how to  
keep the ghosts away?

LEANDRA

I'm not sure. But, I bet Ralf would know. If we could get him from Ahlon's grip before the war starts in Ordin, we would get our answer. Once you get Shade grown up again and hitched to the cart, I'll create a rainbow portal to get us into Ordin.

Nova and Max Kim take Shade down the trail, transforming her into a full grown mare. They hitch her up, running the shafts under her golden and black trimmed wings. They had to fold one of the wings to get the harness on. Soon they are ready to go. Nova sits in front of Max Kim on Shade. Leandra sits on the left side of the cart with Takeesha next to her, and Benny is clamped on and ready for his first exhilarating flight in a long time. Behind Leandra's house are two trees that are about four yards apart. Their branches met in the middle forming a square that is wide enough to take the horse and cart. Leandra does some sign language and Nova can hear misting water coming from a sprinkler. Suddenly it becomes very bright. A rainbow portal appears in the framed tree area. The green wavy middle color is right in the center of the double doors -- yellow on the left and blue on the right.

LEANDRA

Go right into the green area to get to Ordin.

Nova trots Shade through the misty rainbow into a strange new world. They enter on a mountain top, with trees to their right and left. Nova shakes with excitement. Shade prances. Nova pulls on the reins. The sun is out and Nova can see most everything except in the fog that is close-by to her right. Then she realizes those are clouds, not fog. Nova scans around but so far it is quiet up in the mountains where they are. Leandra waves Nova forward, but there is a huge cliff in front of them. Nova thinks it is strange that Shade still had her wings in daylight. What if Shade puts the wings back inside herself or wherever they disappeared? She breaths deeply in and out urging Shade closer to the cliff. This is it. This is where Shade took them to their deaths or takes them all on a ride to remember. They are at the edge. Shade kicks stones over the side. Rocks bounce down the cliff but Nova didn't know how far because she couldn't see through the clouds. Shade is getting more antsy by the minute. Nova gives her one quick kick, secretly hoping she will ignore it. Shade plunges over the edge. Shade falls down half the length of the huge mountain before spreading her wings. Then her gold and black trimmed wings flap, lifting the whole lot of them smoothly into the sky. Nova feels relieved and looks behind her.

TAKEESHA

My elastic cord in perception is positive? Atlantis is my level of being? What?

BENNY

Prophecy is intuitive and on the other side of existence?

Max Kim says nothing just laughs and whoops. Leandra smiles satisfied. She leans back in the seat. Takeesha's face goes ashen. She keeps reaching over to the metal bars that surrounded the cart opposite her. Nova notices movement on the mountain behind her. Then she realizes there are caves of every size in the cliff face. They have ladders going up to each one. She sees Neanderthals going in and out and cooking over fires outside the caves. She didn't know what else they are doing because she is the one steering Shade so she has to pay attention to what is ahead. They break through the clouds, and Nova can see farther now. Beautiful large lakes appear as Shade flaps over the trees tops. Nova can hear many of the same animal sounds she heard when she first went through the rainbow and ended up in a tent with Leandra-monkeys, birds, frogs, and bats. Max Kim grabs Nova's arm, then lets go and uses that same hand to point to some loud waterfalls splashing into a large lake. There are trees on top of trees in the emergent layer. Beautiful green parrots flutter from branch to branch. Monkeys run above and dive under the canopy only to reemerge screaming. Benny and Leandra gab excitedly and point at things below as Takeesha grabs her stomach. Nova can see kettles and valleys full of trees and a long river. She wonders how many people actually live here. Nova sees movement below. A few men and women Neanderthals all -- run among the trees, carrying weapons. She catches a glimpse of them as they come out into an opening of grassland. Suddenly Nova hears a low thud and Shade screams and falters while in flight. She strains to stay above the trees.

NOVA

(patting Shade)  
What happen? Girl are you okay?

LEANDRA

Nova, Shade's been hit. Find a place to land so we can have a look at her.

Nova picks a clearing well away from people she'd seen and manages to guide Shade into it. Shade lands with a huge thump and exhale. Nova pushes Max Kim as she struggles to get off.

NOVA

I got to get down. Get out of my way.

Max Kim finally jumps down. Nova hits the ground, already feeling Shade's wings for a wound. Leandra, Nova and Max Kim check both wings and find nothing wrong.

NOVA  
Holy chaos! I smell it, but  
don't see where she got hit.

LEANDRA  
Hurry, we have to find it.

The injury is under one of the wings in the horse's ribcage--  
a bloody, dripping hole with an arrow sticking out.

NOVA  
Hang in there girl, we'll get--

Behind her, there is yelling, rustling of bushes, and four Neanderthal men come right at them. They hold up strung bows in which arrows are ready to fly. Nova swallows and looks at Leandra. She looks back and winks. The Neanderthals have blond and red hair and they wear what looks like clothing made from the yellow hairs corn silk and dried corn husks. Leandra does the sign language of shivering then throwing it at them. They turn into a block of ice. A group of five Neanderthal women come out of the forest and approach next. Their clothing consisted of large flower petals and leaves.

LEANDRA  
Are my friends going to try to harm  
us too?

Leandra has created a fractal fireball and is ready to start throwing.

ERINIKE  
Never wanted your head, Leandra.  
Don't trust the men though. There  
is a bounty.

They grin, approach Leandra and fearlessly hug her. Leandra quickly extinguishes the fireball and hugs back. The women looked behind their friend and notice Nova and her friends.

ERINIKE  
Squatter children need to watch out  
too. Is this the hybrid vigor?

The leader pointed at Nova.

BENNY  
Squatter? What's that?

The women smile and blush.

LEANDRA  
Slip of the tongue, Benny. I don't  
think they meant anything by that.  
It's just slang for the Lower  
Echelon people.  
(MORE)

LEANDRA (CONT'D)

And as far as the hybrid vigor is concerned, Nova, here, is the one and only.

Leandra puts her hand on Nova's shoulder as she peeks under Shade, who was breathing hard and sweating.

LEANDRA

Do you women have a healing worm?

A woman with curly bright red hair and freckles comes forward with a large gray round worm she pulls from a Nike pouch. Leandra puts it to the horse's ribs and it disappears inside the wound. Nova wrinkles her nose.

NOVA

Will it hurt her, Leandra?  
What will happen to the  
arrow?

LEANDRA

No it won't hurt her, and it  
should push the arrow out.  
It'll also stop the bleeding  
and ease the pain some. We  
can fly now and we have to  
hurry to get to Captain  
Palherd before the foolish  
war starts.

Leandra and Takeesha gets back in the cart, but something catches Nova and Max Kim's eye. Nova notices plants that are piggy-backed on the trees. Humming birds flitter from tree to tree drinking nectar from different colorful orchids—each more beautiful than the next. Nova breaths in the wonderful fragrances they produced.

TAKEESHA

Don't those orchids smell fine?

Takeesha took a deep breath through her nose as she sits in the cart. Humid wind ruffles Nova's clothing. A fast moving river churns in the near distance, sending up a cloud of mist. Max Kim points to a large lizard that has been basking but now took a plunge into the water. This is a beautiful world.

LEANDRA

Keep your eyes on the mist.

As Nova watches, sunlight hit the mist rising from the river and creates a beautiful rainbow. But it didn't... she realizes that it is a rainbow portal, like the one she'd seen on the road so long ago or the one they came through. A vampire saunters out of the violet color in a purple fog. She shows her fangs, then turns around and disappeared back inside her dimension. A unicorn gallops out of the green color on a plane of luxurious verdant grass.

He rears up, kicks, then he turns back around and trots back inside. Shade perks up her head, gave a slight neigh, and stamps her foot.

LEANDRA

You see, Whenever you create a rainbow with enough magic around, it opens portals into other dimensions. Most of the things that come through are shocked enough that they turn around and go back, but occasionally you get a little leakage. Like magic leaking into your dimension. Rainbow portals have various monsters showing themselves because the Idealites use them so much.

A mermaid swims out of the blue color in some splashing waters then dives into the waves and vanishes from sight back into the rainbow.

LEANDRA

Well, rattle your dags, ankle biters.

Leandra waves her arm to the Shade Riders while she sits in the cart, then waves to her Neanderthal friends.

LEANDRA

See you mates.

Nova jumps onto Shade's back and Max Kim jumps up behind her.

NOVA

Are you guys ready?

EVERYONE

Yeah!

Takeesha's voice sounds tiny. Nova turns Shade and coaxes her into a run to get lift off, but the clearing is not as big as Nova thinks. Shade climbs up the wall of trees. Nova whips off her belt.

MAX KIM

What are you doing?

NOVA

Saving us.

Nova throws the belt under Shade's neck and grabs both ends. She pulls up and back with everything she has. Shade grunts, flying upwards with all her might.

NOVA

Help me, Max Kim

Max Kim reaches around Nova, grabs the two ends and pulls up too. Shade fights for altitude.

Her feet begin to rattle the top most branches as she gains height. Then the cart axle hit a branch and hooks on.

NOVA

I was afraid of that.

Nova kicks Shade hard to keep the momentum going.

BENNY

Oh oh.

Nova looks back. Takeesha has turned white as a ghost. She starts to waver back and forth toward Benny, then Leandra. Nova thinks she is going to faint. Leandra throws an arm around her and pulls her close. Shade shifts suddenly and breaks the branch. Chunks of wood fly everywhere. Nova sighs in relief as she can see over the tree tops. They are on their way again.

LEANDRA

Keep going in the original direction to get to Captain Palherd.

Leandra spies the army camp and tells Nova to land. Nova presses on Shade's neck and the flying horse hits the ground with a loud grunt.

NOVA

Leandra, Shade still seems in pain.

LEANDRA

She'll get better as the worm does it's work. I'm sure your mother has told you animals don't feel as much pain as people. They have a higher threshold. We need to find the captain, and quick.

Nova tries to lead Shade but the horse wants to nibble the grass next to the path. Shade becomes stubborn and snorts as she tries to pull the lead rope from Nova and go wherever she wants to go.

LEANDRA

Hurry Nova. Benny are you coming?  
Max Kim why don't you help Nova.

Leandra starts out with Takeesha who seems to have her color back now that they are on the ground, striding behind.

BENNY

Yeah, I'm coming.

Benny unclamped his chair from the cart and followed behind. The cart, only having one wheel now was going to have to be left behind. They took her harness and cart off and pulled her along with them. Nova saw many tents that used fat-covered cloth and animal pelts to keep the rain out. Inside, the army slept on a pallet of blankets on the ground. Neanderthal people in what looked like green canvas tunics cooked meat or vegetables over fires, or relaxed and joked around. Some practiced their aim with either freezing or laser spells. Fractals were flying everywhere in the clamor. Nova and Max Kim finally caught up to the rest of the group and found Leandra talking with a woman with red hair also dressed in green canvas tunic but with a leopard skin that went from her right shoulder down to her left hip.

NOVA

(whispered to Max Kim)

I wonder if she is Captain Palherd.

Max Kim nods. The woman CAPTAIN PALHERD 43 looked in Nova's direction. Nova looked behind herself but saw nothing. The woman told a man FRAGON 32 to her left something and pointed to Shade. The man came over to Nova and smiled as he took the flying horse from her grasp and jumped on.

NOVA

Hey! What are you doing? Where are you going?

The man kicked Shade and she took to the air. It happened so fast even Leandra spun around with surprise. Leandra yelled at Captain Palherd, who yelled back, both in a language Nova couldn't understand. Leandra strode over next to Nova and watched Shade disappearing.

LEANDRA

They want to spy on the enemy. Hopefully Shade will be back soon.

NOVA

Tough, She's injured. I don't want her injured again.

Nova let out a huge, long winded whistle. Up above the trees, Shade banked around and headed right back. The man tried to get her to turn around, but Shade had the bit and she wanted some carrots. Nova held up the carrots for Shade to see. As Shade came in for a landing, she let out a huge neigh in response. The Neanderthal man continued to struggle, but he could not turn the horse around. Shade landed and grabbed up all the carrots at once into her mouth. Then the man did something unexpected. He grabbed Nova and threw her over his lap and took off again.

FRAGON

That will stop the whistling.





The man squeezes Nova's arms hard enough to bruise as he drags her up a steep incline and down a long corridor. They arrive at a place that didn't look like a political room at all. It is the same room that she saw in the mirror, when Max Kim was doing magic in the back pasture, when they had the picnic. The room is in an entirely different angle from what she saw in the mirror, but this is definitely the room. All the walls had eight inch lights going up vertically. The lights pulse gently like they are alive. The chamber has a fireplace and a large basin of water plus a waterfall in a corner across from the hole in the wall. She can see a dirty man hunched over the basin. He has been fishing and had caught a kind of invisible fish. Two big spotted cats beg for it, licking their lips. The filthy man with spider web clothing and two completely different dirty socks on quickly rip it apart and gulps it down.

NOVA

Hey, those are our socks.

The small man approached Nova, looking her over. Nova feels uncomfortable and she wrinkles her nose. He stinks.

AHLON

So Nova is here in Ordin.  
Hmmm- what girl want?

NOVA

Well, I don't think I want those socks now that you stole them from our dryer.

Nova is inclined to run for it, but then she saw movement over in the corner and notices the white-haired man. He has tears running down his cheeks. He is the one she'd seen in the school library reflection and is watching her.

AHLON

Answer Ahlon, little girl.  
Asked a question and want an answer.

NOVA

I don't tell my own mother everything. You think I would tell you?

Ahlon pulls the old man forward.

AHLON

Very well, does Nova see this man here? Ralf is girl's father. Too bad never got to know at all.

Ahlon laughs evilly. Nova gasps with relief.

NOVA

What are you going to do with him?

AHLON

Now that have Nova, Ralf is no longer needed.

Nova looks at her crying father. Suddenly she hears a whack against the side of the chamber, which catches her attention. Shade and Leandra are there at the window. Shade's wing hit the wall. Nova changes her thoughts. Ralf's body crumples to the floor.

NOVA

Noooo.

Nova runs to the blob of silk clothing on the floor. A loud "RRRRRIIIIPPP" could be heard from the pile. The sound echos off the walls.

AHLON

What happened?

Ralf's body springs up. He immediately moves between Nova and Ahlon, blocking her view of the dirty little man. Ralf speaks over his shoulder.

RALF

Thanks Nova, for exorcizing the ghost that was inside my body. Made new bones magically in an instant, thanks to the truck load of calcium tablets.

Ralf has his hands behind his back and Nova holds them tight. Leandra dives through the hole in the wall and into the room.

LEANDRA

I'm here. You two okay?

Ralf and Nova nod.

AHLON

Take first shot, old man. Blood stealer, Leandra, come for death?

LEANDRA

I've got nothing better to do.

NOVA

Leandra nothing against you, but I think my dad and I have this under control. Right?

LEANDRA

Nova, don't underestimate Ahlon. Your powers aren't up to snuff yet.

RALF

Listen to Leandra, Nova.

NOVA

By the way, Dad. How do we fight infrasound?

RALF

Use another sound to cancel it out.

NOVA AND LEANDRA

Ahh...

Ahlon throws a fractal laser spell at them, using the sign of two fingers in his eyes and pointing to the target, Ralf, Who pushes Nova away to safety. Leandra ducks to the side in time. But her father is hit. He drops to the ground, bleeding from his stomach. Thinking the worst, Nova runs over to hug her father one last time. But he isn't ready to give up. He throws his arm out casting a small asteroid at Ahlon, who hits the wall hard and smacks his head. Leandra leaps to the hole in the wall and grabs the worm that is slowly crawling out of Shade. Nova notices the arrow is gone, and the wound looks smaller. Leandra runs over to her father. The room begins to get colder.

RALF  
Going to freeze...

LEANDRA  
Give me a minute.

Leandra puts the worm to Ralf's injury. He growls. Nova looks up. Ahlon is doing the sign of shivering with his arms across his chest, then he throws it at Leandra and Ralf. Nova jumps to the left and under the guard's legs. Ralf and Leandra are instantly encased in a block of ice.

NOVA  
Noooo.

Nova hopes the worm gets inside. Now Nova is alone with this man. She feels scared and grits her teeth.

AHLON  
Looks like just Nova and Ahlon  
now.

He laughs. An idea starts to form in her mind. Nova runs to the pool, plunges her hand in, and feels around until she catches an invisible fish. It is a triangle shape. She taunts the two big cats then throws it at Ahlon. The two cats pounce on the man and knock him down. He hits his head on the floor with another resounding crack. While Ahlon growls and wrestles the hungry cats, Nova catches another fish and grabs a fishing pole that is leaning up against the pool. She feeds the hook through the fish's mouth, then she hangs it up in the hole in the wall on another hook that is used for a potted plant. The sunlight passes through the fish and it acts like a prism. It creates a rainbow portal in the waterfall. Good thing it is moving water or it might have froze too. An ugly troll with a big club stalks out of the orange light swung the club down with an enormous slam, then turns and swaggers back in. A ghost dressed in a train conductor's clothing saunters out of the ultra violet color. Nova heard Ahlon and changes her thought toward him. She grunts. She had to hurry. Suddenly there was a RRRRIIIIPPP sound, and the train ghost disappears.

A frightened woman ghost in a long puffed out dress from the sixteen hundreds immediately took its place.

MS. PETUNIA  
What-so-ever do you want?"

NOVA  
I want you to take over  
Ahlon's body. Now.

Ahlon is so busy fighting off the cats he didn't know what Nova is doing. Ahlon finally rips the fish in two and throws it into two opposite corners of the room. The cats bound after them and Ahlon stands up. When he did, his body is instantly invaded by the woman ghost, MS. PETUNIA 52 It pushes his bones out of his hands and feet like a ghost had done to Ralf. Ahlon lies on the floor and stares straight ahead, stunned.

MS. PETUNIA  
Lordy, Do I ever need a bath.

Nova runs to the window. Shade is still hovering there, but she is getting smaller. What is more important was that she had to get her father and Leandra out of the ice. She wants to ask for help from the guard who had been standing in the doorway, but he is already gone. She looks around the room for a sharp chisel or something. Could she drag the block over to the fireplace? Nova starts pushing the ice but it is frozen to the ground. Nova sees a flash of light. Leandra has her hand out, palm up, inside the ice. Nova can see a bright orange color on top. It looks like she is trying to form a fireball in her hand.

NOVA  
Come on, Leandra. Oh wait, Ahlon  
get over here and thaw this ice out  
too.

Nova drags his arm and body over to the ice.

NOVA  
Form a fireball and release them.

Ahlon does not respond.

NOVA  
Ghost, form a fireball.

Ahlon's body creates a fireball and with the two of them creating heat eventually the ice is melted off. Ralf and Leandra are released from their bondage. They breathe easier and shiver violently. Nova leads them over to the fireplace to warm up.

NOVA  
How are you two?

RALF  
Cold, but all right.

Ralf sits on the hot stoop in front of the fireplace .

LEANDRA

Freezing.

Leandra sits next to him. She talks with a slur so heavy Nova almost couldn't make out what she said. Ralf points to himself.

RALF

Miss Nova and Mom, Melanie, very much.

Nova gives him a hug.

LEANDRA

Well... worm... stopped... blood... you will live.

Leandra breaths hard and shivers.

RALF

Thanks, Leandra for helping.

It is over. Ahlon is done for. Leandra thaws out. After half and hour or so, the worm crawls back out of her father, leaving a tiny wound behind that will heal quickly. When they venture outside, they find that Floret, one of the Seven Sages, has ordered her people to catch Shade. Ralf gives Nova a tour around the fortress. She is shown the Seven Sage council room, with a large table with chairs all around, then a few VIP bedrooms with one for the Speaker and one for the Prime Minister, and a large kitchen with dining area. But other than that there was nothing else. Nova is treated to a four course lunch with her dad, Leandra, Ahlon and THE SEVEN SAGES 45-50. They serve up a salad of fresh greens with homemade dressing, then venison and vegetable stew with chunks of bread and butter. Then they have invisible fish casserole, which Nova finds so delicious she can't stop eating it. Nova is going to ask for more on her plate but decides to try the special desserts instead. When she is done eating the chocolate truffles she goes to get more of the fish dish but it is all gone. The plate she is holding droops.

NOVA

I hate when that happens.

Ralf comes over and wraps an arm around her shoulders.

NOVA  
Do you know if my friends  
are doing all right?

RALF  
If with Captain Palherd, then  
friends are in good hands.  
Trust with life. Want to show  
Nova something.

Nova starts to follow Ralf out of the dining area and takes a look at Leandra still sitting at the table. She is in a heated conversation with her Neanderthal friends. She sees Nova and waves but didn't bother to get up and follow along. Ralf takes her to the Legislative Chamber. He shows her the pool of water he always watches her through.

NOVA  
That's so clash.

RALF  
Clash? What does that mean?

NOVA  
It means 'great'.

RALF  
Oh. Here, watch this.

Her father changes the picture to a new place in the viewing pool. Nova recognizes the school library.

RALF  
Pulled Nova through library.

NOVA  
Oh, so it wasn't a ghost?

RALF  
No.

Her father shakes his head.

RALF  
Nova is Dad's project to save  
Idealites and the Lower Echelon  
people. Only dated Mom to make Nova-  
a hybrid vigor. Nova is so  
powerful, even more than  
Neanderthal gods. Didn't mean to  
fall in love with Mom and Nova.

Nova hugs him again.

NOVA  
Why did Ahlon have our socks  
on? How did he get them?

RALF  
Idealites are known to steal  
from the Lower Echelon  
people. Took my favorite  
fishing pole from Mom's  
garage.

Then changes the location of the viewing pool again.

RALF  
Look at this.

And there is Ned, dressed in a suit, going to church office.

RALF

Ned was looking in a drawer for a butter knife to make a peanut butter sandwich when accidentally cut finger, then Ahlon sent an evil sprite into Ned's body to take control. After that, Ned did mischievous things--turning into a green hulk, having huge strength -- and the worst part-- communication with Shade, but good thing Ned didn't know or use it much. What Ahlon did opened Ned up for Ahlon to use to get to The Shade Riders.

They spy on Ned for a while. He goes to a church office dressed like an anthropologist trying to sell a Neanderthal skull.

NED

It's the only one in existence that proves evolution. If you bought it you could destroy it forever.

He receives five thousand dollars each time. She and her father laugh at this.

NOVA

I want to check on Shade, Dad. I think she needs some vetting.

RALF

If anyone can do it, Nova can.

NOVA

Yeah, I watched and helped Mom so much. I'll see you later.

Nova leaves the fortress, climbs down a long ladder, follows a dirt path and spent time with Shade, who is eating grass. Her horse nickers when she saw Nova.

NOVA

Sorry, girl I don't have anymore carrots. See?

Nova holds out her hand. She strokes Shade's nose and ruffles her mane. Nova checks her wing where she is hit, but it is already cleaned and bandaged. She wonders if Leandra did it. The army men who had been outside fighting have split up and have now gone their separate ways. Civilian Neanderthal people are picking up the dead and injured off the battlefield. Nova sees a rainbow portal near-by under another waterfall. She watches the various monsters and beasts come forth. A werewolf jumps out of the indigo color and shows its fangs and growls at her.



Then it goes back inside. A group of six fairies flying in the air and doing stunts come out of the infrared color, stick their tongues out at Nova and go back inside. Nova remembers that a sprite entered Ned's body. She imagines how they would feel forced into a finger. She grimaces. A Kraken comes out of the blue color and smashes the waves down with his huge fist, stares at Nova and then turns around and dives back inside. But She'd has enough and strolls back to Shade. Leandra comes down the ladder and approaches Nova. She pets Shade and looks at the wounds.

NOVA

Looks like someone did a great job on healing her, Leandra.

LEANDRA

Yeah, I applied some herbs after the worms did their job.

NOVA

How did you even find me?

LEANDRA

Your watch was able to give me feedback of where you were located before it died. I'll get you a new one, later. I'd like to stay in touch.

When suddenly they hear a noise in the forest and turn to look. A huge crowd of rowdy Neanderthals come toward her. Nova begins backing up into the forest. Then she sees Benny in his wheelchair clamped onto and driving the cart. Max Kim stands in front of the seat holding a long rope, which holds the long poles in the front up. They zoom by constantly pulling toward the left, forcing laughing Neanderthals to jump out of the way. Takeesha runs around, whooping and yelling. Nova ran out into the crowd and gives them hugs and high fives.

NOVA

Hey Benny, to cancel out infrasound we need to use another obnoxious sound.

BENNY

I kind of thought as much.

Ralf, Leandra, the Seven Sages, other Idealites and Ahlon-- who curtsies in a rather awkward way-- come out to see everyone.

RALF

Let Idealites and friends have a hero's homecoming welcome and a huge feast. Cooks, another round for everyone.

People cheer.

INT. FORTRESS

After the feast when they start to pack up, a group of about fifty Neanderthals come over and grab Max Kim

FRAGON

Nova, Benny and Takeesha can go.  
Max Kim will stay because like  
magic tricks.

The rest of the group of Neanderthals nod in agreement.

NOVA

No... He must come with us...

Captain Palherd puts a hand on Nova's shoulder to calm her.

CAPTAIN PALHERD

This man doesn't belong here.  
Can visit to do tricks.

FRAGON

No! Max Kim will stay.

They pull out spears. Max Kim tries to get to the Shade Riders but the fifty men and women catch him and take him back. Nova can't hear what a Neanderthal with long light brown hair said to Max Kim, but he stops trying to come over.

CAPTAIN PALHERD

A doppelganger would work just as  
well.

The group of Neanderthals murmur among themselves. Captain Palherd walks to a rainbow portal in a nearby waterfall and pulls something only vaguely human out of the color yellow. Max Kim and the being went into a VIP bedroom and closed the door. When Max Kim appears half an hour later

MAX KIM

Okay I'm done. I hope they're  
happy.

Another Max Kim strolls out of the room and starts doing magic tricks for the group of Neanderthals. The men and women sing and clap their hands.

BENNY

Max Kim, is that... you?

MAX KIM

As near as I can tell, it's  
like a three-dimensional  
Youtube video of me. I just  
taught it a couple of tricks  
to keep them busy.

Nova hugs her dad, The Seven Sages, and even Captain Palherd. The other Shade Riders teach a few Idealites how to high five. The Neanderthal people look confused then smiled at the concept. They stand around the cart and Shade who is still a filly. And Captain Palherd waves her hands around doing the sign for space-time continuum. She stretched out her arm and it looks like she is measuring the sun with her hand. Then did a circle with her arms. An iridescent whirlwind full of fractals engulfed them causing their hair to blow around in the turmoil. The wind moves faster increasing in speed until they can't see anything but each other. The wind eventually dies down and Nova could see where they are. They are back at Leandra's house. Nova just saw the tail end of the cart pulling through the rainbow and disappearing when the rainbow vanishes in a flash of green light. Nova and Max Kim take Shade up the path to make her big again. They put on the harness and attach the cart and take off into the sky. When they get her in the air, they circle the invisible house and wave to Leandra who waves back.

LEANDRA

I'll see you sprogs later. We're home and hosed.

She enters her invisible house and disappears. Nova flies to each of her friends houses to drop them off.

BENNY

That was a clash trip! Thanks Nova.

Benny unclamps his chair, replacing it with the old one, and wheels into the garage at his house. At Takeesha's house she gave Nova a hug. At Max Kim's house he gives her a high five. She takes Shade back to the farm where she removes the cart and gear, then let her horse go into the dark pasture with the other horses. Nova puts the cart back under the tarp in the garage.

INT. SCHOOL-DAY

Nova, Benny, Takeesha and Max Kim set up speakers in the Auditorium.

NOVA

The tiger sound will do nicely. It will cancel out the ghost sound.

As soon as she turned it on the ghosts vanished.

INT.ENGLISH CLASS-DAY

The Shade Riders arrive just before class starts and approach Ms. Chillardress.

NOVA

Ms. Chillardress, we exorcized the ghosts from the school. Now you can teach science and the ghosts won't bother you or the students.

MS. CHILLDRESS

We'll see about that.

Ms. Chillardress nods and strides over to her laboratory. She grabs a contraption out of her science closet and plunks it down on the table. This machine had a twelve inch diameter glass wheel on top with a five inch diameter glass wheel on the bottom. The top wheel had a crank on it on the right side and there are two metal spheres about three inches apart on short poles on the opposite side. The whole thing is the size of a bread box.

MS. CHILLDRESS

This is called a Wimshurst machine. When I turn the crank the wheels turn in opposite directions and the metal carriers hold the charges, which are then transferred to the spheres. Watch. This should theoretically attract the ghosts back.

She turns the crank for what seems like fifteen minutes. The machines whir and hum and nothing happens. Then suddenly, what looks like a bolt of lightning ran from one sphere to the other. It sizzles, crackles, and pops.

MS. CHILLDRESS

I'm creating an electric static charge.

They wait, looking all around the room. Nova runs to the doorway and looks out into the hallway. Nothing. All is as it should be. The ghosts didn't come back and harass her.

MS. CHILLDRESS

Well, I can't believe it. After all this time I can actually do science.

TAKEESHA

Yes, you can.

Takeesha is wearing her African patterned outfit.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
This is simply marvelous.

Ms. Chilldress starts to dance around.

MS. CHILLDRESS  
I'm going to ask for my old job  
back.

The Shade Rider Kids grin and Takeesha and Max Kim leave the room. Benny shows Nova a newspaper article.

BENNY  
Look at this. Right here. It says  
Nocurnal Ned was arrested for being  
a con-man. Leandra found him beat  
up and homeless living in a van. He  
surrendered without a struggle.

Nova laughs. They stroll to class when the bell rings.

INT-FARM HOUSE-NIGHT

That night before bed, Nova pulls out the fairy dust from the dresser drawer and sprinkles some on her sister's side of the bed. Nova crawls into bed with a knowing smile and thought about her dad.