

The end of *House Name* and the end of *Hunter's Death* overlap.

The beginning of *The Broken Crown* occurs almost sixteen years later, in the year 427 A.A. By this time, Jewel and her den, with the exception of Angel, have been members of House Terafin for half their lives. Jewel appears only briefly in *The Broken Crown*.

In BC, the story centers on three people: Valedan, an exchange hostage from the Dominion of Annagar in the court of the Twin Kings, Diora, a Serra of the Dominion, and Kiriell, a runaway from the far North, who fled her home with the aid of Evayne a'Nolan after destroying large parts of it. Kiriell is taken to House Kalakar, where she is installed as a member of the Kalakar House Guard. They are all in their teens, and they are all swept up in events that occur because of Allasakar, the Lord of the Hells.

In the Dominion, the hostages from the Empire are publicly slaughtered. Citizens of the Empire are then sent North with word of their gruesome deaths—and as the hostages were primarily from The Ten, House Terafin is involved in their loss. It is assumed that the Annagarian hostages will meet a similar fate.

And it's Jewel who approaches The Terafin and tells her, with her knowledge as a seer, that that *cannot* be allowed to happen. Were any other person to demand that the Terafin attempt to save the hostages, The Terafin would have refused; as it is, it's close. But she goes to the Council of The Ten, and she argues in favor of mercy. She is outvoted; the hostages are to perish.

Valedan, however, petitions the Kings—as a King. As the sole survivor of the ruling clan Leonne, he argues that he *is* the Dominion's rightful ruler, and that the deaths of the Northern hostages in the distant South are the acts of an outlaw. Jewel is witness to this petition, because the Ten are called to the Kings' palace to listen to him plead his case, since they have an interest in its outcome.

During this plea, Valedan is attacked by a demon Lord, who also kills many of the bystanders. He is saved, not by Jewel and not by any of the Kings or the godborn present, but by a girl: Kiriell. She is every bit as dark and dangerous as the demon that attacks, but she saves his life — while Jewel watches.

Kiriell is present as a member of House Kalakar, and her actions are called into question by the Kings, who wish to know who she is; they know full well that she should not have been able to survive the demon—and she not only survived, but drove him away in deadly fury. Kiriell, it is discovered, is the daughter of Allasakar—a god who walks *this* world. Meralonne counsels that she be destroyed.

The Kalakar argues against it, as does Sigurne Mellifas. In the end, Kiriell is free to leave with The Kalakar. But she meets with Jewel again, and Jewel offers her a home in the West Wing of the Terafin manse; an offer that she does not fully accept. Jewel is drawn to Kiriell because she sees what Kiriell is.

Unfortunately, Jewel is not the only one who does; Lord Isladar watches Kiriell, unobserved, and he isn't pleased with Jewel's intervention; Kiriell is not as off-balance as he expected she would be. He therefore attempts to kill Jewel—in full view of Kiriell. Jewel is not easy to kill, because she's seerborn. She survives for long enough that Angel is able to intervene while Kiriell watches helplessly (there's some lateral thinking on Angel's part). He is mortally injured—but so is Jewel.

Both are taken immediately to the healerie in House Terafin. Alowan chooses to heal Angel—not Jewel—because he knows that Angel will be left to die, otherwise; finding a healer who is *willing* to heal the dying is very, very difficult, but Jewel is valuable enough to the House that a healer *will* be found for her. Angel is not even a House member.

The healer found is Daine. It is not the first time he has healed the dying; it is the first time he has done so voluntarily; he was kidnapped and forced to heal a member of House Terafin. Levec is enraged by the first; it is, however, Alowan who makes the request of Levec, and with cause. Alowan knows what Daine has gone through, and Alowan knows who Daine healed; he is aware that Daine now holds the memories and instinctive reactions of one of Terafin's most ruthless members. What he offers Levec is Jewel ATerafin as a counterbalance. He believes that healing Jewel will *also* heal Daine.

He is aware of what Amarais intends for Jewel, and he also believes that Daine might come to serve Jewel in the future as he himself chose to serve Amarais. Levec acquiesces, but only barely.

During this period, three members of the House Council are assassinated, as is the Captain of the Chosen. The Terafin makes the unusual move of promoting two of the Chosen as Captains: Torvan and Arrendas. Pressure is brought to bear on Jewel to support one of the four contenders; Haerrad is the most insistent, and when she demurs, Teller has an accident that lands him in the healerie. It is not, of course, an accident, and he does survive it.

Given that Valedan's assassin was a powerful demon lord, the Kings see the hand of

the Lord of the Hells, and understand that he is beginning to move. Valedan requests Imperial aid in securing his throne, and they grant it because Valedan has the support, ordering the Three Commanders back to active duty and allowed conscription. Because Jewel ATerafin is known to be seerborn, one of the Commanders requests her presence as an aide. Jewel has no intention of traveling with the armies — among other things, army hierarchical structures were not designed for a woman of her nature. But Jewel does intend to travel to the South, because of a nightmare vision and a discussion with the Terafin Spirit, who counsels her to follow her instincts, and to return when she is summoned.

The decision is difficult because the Terafin faces death. Amarais knows she is going to die, and soon; she isn't aware of *when* or *how*. If Jewel remains, there's some chance that she might be able to save her, to keep her alive. But Jewel knows that if she doesn't go south, more than Terafin will fall.

In the end, she goes South in a fashion she didn't expect and didn't plan for: Avandar is attacked by demons in the Common; they appear to recognize him, and they want him committed to the Shining Court — or dead. He grabs Jewel and he carries them both somewhere safe.

But it leaves the den with the smoking wreckage of parts of the Common, and no leader.

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