

*High Etara*  
by  
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HIGH ETARA

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Alfred Hamilton, Principal of Minnesota's Etara High School and a Hierarch of the Etara people, sat in his office looking at his wrinkled hands. *They're getting worse. If I don't find a life source to steal soon, I'll die,* he thought to himself.

Slowly, he stood up, walked out of his office and into the main hall of the high school. From there, he could watch the students as they mingled during senior lunch. Directly in front of the office stood the one and only student who had ever scared and humiliated him. Her name was Alondra Smitlom, the daughter of Beth Smitlom and her human husband, Calvin, a mechanic at the area truck stop.

He didn't know what it was about Alondra that scared him, but since her first day at Etara High School, she seemed to exude a force that caused him to want to cower in his office from her very presence. That had been when she was a freshman and now she was a senior who would be graduating in two months.

He recalled his first meeting with this child. It had been in the cafeteria. Since Humetaras were only half-bred Etaras, they were to sit at a rickety picnic table during their lunch periods. Alondra had decided she would not sit at a table that made her feel like a sub-citizen of the school.

On the second day of school that year, Alondra brought a tablecloth and battery powered candles to set on the Humetara table. When he approached her about it, she calmly looked into his face, held up a camera and offered to take pictures of the table and send them to the health department

for them to see the filthy place where some of the students had to eat. He had tried to stare her down, but there seemed to be a cold burning in her eyes that forced him to relent and return to his office completely humiliated in front of all the students in the cafeteria at the time.

Each day, Alondra would set her tablecloth and candles on the Humetara table, along with her camera as a silent reminder of her threat.

*Revenge is sweet, Alfred,* he thought to himself, turning around and walking back into his office.

As soon as school was over for the day, Alfred Hamilton drove his green sedan to the truck stop and parked across the street. From there he probed the thoughts of the mechanics, searching for one in particular. It took him a few moments, but soon he found the one he was looking for. The mechanic's thoughts were on his wife and daughter and their plans for the weekend. Alfred watched his victim walk underneath a truck suspended by a hydraulic lift. When he was sure Calvin was in a position that he would not be able to move out of, Alfred released his mental hold on the lift and allowed it to fall, quickly smashing his victim beneath the truck.

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Alondra was cleaning a procedure room at her Aunt Becky's massage clinic when she heard someone scream. Quickly, she looked out into the hall to make sure nobody was in trouble. There was nobody there, but the screaming continued. She put her hands against her ears, trying to stop the sound. Suddenly, in Alondra's mind a picture formed. She saw a truck falling, then men surrounding the truck trying to get the lift to work so they could get it off the person who was under it.

Her mental eye also focused on a green sedan driving away.

"Aunt Becky," Alondra called, trying to stop the feeling she was having.

Becky walked across the hall to see what her niece needed. She stopped in the doorway when she saw the look on Alondra's face. "Are you alright, Alondra?"

Alondra was shaking. "I need to get home, Aunt Becky. I think something's happened to Dad," Alondra half stuttered, half cried.

Becky went back to her office and took her purse from her desk. She went to the front desk and told the receptionist she would be gone for a while. "If any clients come in, Debi, try to reschedule them. Tell them it's a family emergency; I'm sure they'll understand."

"Will you be back tomorrow, Becky?" Debi asked.

"I'm not sure when I'll be back. It might be nothing at all and I'll be back in a couple of hours. Alondra's has a feeling something happened to Cal and I'm not going to let her drive home the way she's shaking. I'll let you know as soon as I find out what's going on."

"Okay, Becky," Debi said, watching her boss walk into the back office area.

"Come on, Alondra, I'll drive you home. You can get your car later," Becky told the still shaking girl.

When they arrived at Alondra's home, Alondra quickly unbuckled her seatbelt, opened the car door, and ran into the house. She didn't notice the green sedan parked on the other side of her mother's car.

Alfred Hamilton sat at the dining room table with his hand over one of Beth's hands, offering his condolences at the loss of her husband.

"What are you doing here?" Alondra asked the principal of her school.

"Oh, Alondra," he said as sadly as he could, "I'm so sorry to hear about your father." He stood up and walked towards Alondra with his arms open.

"Don't touch me and stay away from my mom." Alondra pushed him away and quickly sat in the chair he had vacated. Alondra noticed her mother's vacant stare and quickly wrapped her arms around her shoulders. "Mom, please snap out of this and tell me what happened to Dad," she pleaded through her tears.

Slowly, Beth began to move her hands. Within a few minutes, her arms wrapped around her daughter and she began crying.

"I'm sorry, Alondra," Beth said, after she had pushed herself away from her daughter. "There was an accident at work. The truck Dad was working on fell on him."

"He's going to be all right, isn't he?" Alondra asked.

"No, dear, he's dead," Beth sobbed and once again clung to Alondra.

Alondra couldn't believe what her mother was telling her, but somehow knew she was telling the truth.

Alfred stood next to Beth and placed his hand on her shoulder. Almost immediately, her eyes became distant and lost their focus on Alondra.

Alondra stood up and pushed the principal of her school away from her mother. "I told you to stay away from her. Now get out." Her eyes blazed. "Out," she yelled, pointing towards the door.

Alondra took hold of her mother's hands and watched as her mother returned to normal.

"Mom," Alondra said later that evening, before her mother went to bed. "Mom, I think there's something wrong with me."

"What do you mean?" Her mother asked sadly.

"When I was at Aunt Becky's, I heard screaming and then saw, maybe that's not the right word, but that's what it was. I saw a truck fall on someone and the screaming sounded like Dad's voice."

"What do you mean you saw a truck fall?"

Alondra thought for a moment, trying to organize her thought. "It's sort of hard to explain. It was sort of like a very clear image in my mind; almost like watching it on TV, but not being able to turn it off. It was really scary."

"Is this the first time you've heard and seen things?"

Alondra shook her head. "No, it's happened a couple other times, but those seemed more like a daydream than the nightmare I saw earlier. Do you know what's wrong with me?"

"I'm not sure, Alondra, but I'll ask Grandma. Maybe she'll know."

"I hope so, because this is starting to scare me."

"Let me take care of things around here. I think I'm going to sleep on the couch tonight," a tear fell from Beth's chin. "I don't think I can sleep in our bed right now. Go to bed, Alondra. You have school tomorrow and even though you may not want to go, you're going. We are Etara and must hold our heads high, even during times of grief."

"All right, Mom. I guess I can be thankful that tomorrow's Friday." Alondra turned to walk towards her bedroom, but quickly turned around and ran back to her mother. "Why, Mom? Why did he have to die?" She cried in her mother's arms.

The next day, Alondra sadly walked through the halls of Etara High School. A few of her friends approached her to offer their condolences, but most of the students kept their distance from

the grieving girl. Mr. Hamilton grinned maliciously at her every time she saw him.

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The day after Calvin Smitlom's funeral, Alondra's class left for a five-day field trip to visit the Etara Museum of History in Rugby, North Dakota, a museum every Etara high school senior was required to visit before graduation, to learn the history of their people.

The board that governed Alondra's school decided early on that Humetaras did not need to know about their history, so they refused to let a Humetara participate in classroom history, but the schools were required by the Elite Hierarchy to take them to the Museum. As with every trip, Alondra and her Humetara classmates went on, they were required to sit in the very front of the bus and not associate with any full-blooded Etara.

It took two days to reach Rugby from their small, northern Minnesota town. Two bus drivers alternated driving shifts so there would be no need to stop at motels. Short stops at fast-food restaurants and rest areas gave the students a chance to stretch their legs and take care of their personal needs.

The Etara Museum of History was on the campus of The Rugby Etara School which sat at the end of a dirt road. It was comprised of six dormitories, an office, cafeteria, gym and the museum.

"You will put your bags on your beds and report back here within five minutes," Mr. Long, the Vice Principal, told the students in a loud voice after assigning each one to a room at the boarding school where they would stay that night.

When the students returned, they lined up to begin their tour. Full-blooded Etaras were at the front of the line while the Humetaras stood at the back of the line where Mr. Long reminded them to keep quiet during the lecture.

A tall, very old man stood at the front of the group and introduced himself. "I am Mr. Baxter. I am the Principal of this Etara High School and I am also an Elite Hierarch. As you all know, your own Principal is a Hierarch, the local ruler of the Etara people. I am above him in authority."

"Is there anyone who has more authority than you do, Mr. Baxter?" A short, brown-haired girl asked.

"What is your name, young lady?" Mr. Baxter asked.

"It's Stacy, sir."

"Next time, Stacy, raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged. To answer your question though, only the High Etara has more authority than I do. Let's begin our tour and I'm sure most of your questions will be answered along the way."

Mr. Baxter led the students through the double doors of the museum and immediately down a flight of stairs into a dank cavern whose only lights were above the displays. Against the walls of the cavern were relics of Etara history, relics most visitors to the museum would never see. Mr. Baxter began the tour at a mural of the Pyramids of Egypt and South America.

"As you all know, our ancestors came here to help the ancient people of this world. They brought with them technologies from their home world of Etara and shared that knowledge with the ancient civilizations. Our ancestors showed the ancient Egyptians how to design and construct their pyramids. They taught them how to align the pyramids with the heavens to predict seasonal changes. This knowledge they also shared with the ancient peoples of South America. That is the reason why the pyramids are similar in design. Of course, each group of humans added their own touches to the buildings, which made them different as well."

"At least he thinks we all know," Alondra whispered to Damon, who stood next to her.

"Let's go to the next display," Mr. Baxter instructed the group of students.

Alondra and the three other Humetaras stayed behind and looked at the pictures hanging on the wall behind a red cord. Alondra stared at the first picture. It showed people building a pyramid in the sands of Egypt, but slightly to the right there appeared to be a group of taller, fairer skinned men talking to the darker skinned Egyptians. Alondra could count seven fair-skinned men.

"Did you guys notice this?" Alondra asked her friends.

"What are you looking at, Alondra?" Deidra asked, looking at the picture.

"Look in the right corner. Do you see those fair skinned men standing there?"

Deidra looked closely at the picture. "I only see Egyptians in that picture, Alondra. Are you sure you're not imagining things? Come on, we need to catch up or we'll get in trouble."

Mr. Baxter was explaining the importance of the large, leather-bound book sitting on an ornately carved stand when Alondra and the other Humetaras caught up with the group.

"This book was written by the original Etara in their home world language of Eтарan."

Stacy raised her hand, waiting for acknowledgment before she spoke.

"Yes, Stacy," Mr. Baxter said.

"Are you able to read what that book says, Mr. Baxter?"

Mr. Baxter shook his head. "No, Stacy. Only the original Etara and the High Etara can read the words contained in this book."

*"Who is the High Etara?"*

*"The High Etara is an Etara who embodies all the original Etara. We, the Hierarchs have been waiting for over a thousand years for a new High Etara. The last one lived at the end of the first millennium, AD."*

*"How would you know if you saw this High Etara?" Stacy asked.*

*"All the Hierarchs know what to look for and will know the baby when we see him. Finding the High Etara is not something you will ever need to worry about, Stacy. Now, let's keep moving."*

*Alondra and the Humetaras stayed behind to look at the book. It was opened to what appeared to be the exact center and a large red piece of velvet sat between the pages.*

*Damon reached out his hand to touch the book, but Alondra quickly slapped his hand away.*

*"What did you do that for, Alondra? I just wanted to see what the paper felt like."*

*"Only the High Etara can touch it," Alondra told him.*

*"How do you know that?" Alicia asked.*

*"I don't know, but somehow I do," Alondra said, staring at the writing on the pages. "Didn't you guys see how Mr. Baxter avoided it? He wouldn't even reach his hand over the top of it when he was talking."*

*"You're getting weird, Alondra," Damon told her.*

*"Let's try to keep up with the group," Alondra said, walking away.*

*Alondra didn't know what happened, but when she first looked at that book, something seemed to snap in her mind. It felt like*

*something or someone had opened a door and walked in, imparting knowledge that had not been there before. Mr. Baxter continued to lecture on the different artifacts in the cavern, but Alondra didn't seem to hear anything he said. She only heard the conversation going on in her mind.*

*I thought we had done a better job of revealing our real reason for coming to this world. one of the voices said.*

*They appreciated the building technology, but failed to learn the compassion and caring we were trying to teach them, a second voice said.*

*This one will be different, but we must do the guiding and teaching, it must not be left to a Hierarch, a third voice commented.*

*I agree. We will be able to give our knowledge fully and instantly to this one, the training will be quick. We will stay with this one until all knowledge is imparted and then we must continue to be available if any questions or problems arise, the first voice said.*

*I don't like what I'm seeing in this Hierarch's mind. There seems to be a lot of abuse of authority and powers. Do you think the Hierarchs will accept this one, A fourth voice asked.*

*It will be hard to tell. The Hierarchs seem to take pleasure in segregation and manipulation, a fifth voice said.*

*The Hierarchs have become evil over time. This one suffers because of the acts of one Hierarch and we may have a few problems because of that, a sixth voice said.*

*We must not allow things to get too out of hand if this one chooses any type of revenge, a seventh voice said in unison.*

*That is true, but this one may not be easy to control if anything else happens, the second voice said.*

*Only time will tell if we will need to exert any type of force on this one. The mind is open, but not necessarily willing, the first voice said.*

*The Hierarchs may not believe this is the one, the fifth voice said.*

*This one bares the mark on the neck. That rainbow should have been found when this one was born, but since the Hierarchs believe only a certain Etara is allow to be the High Etara they failed to check all the children, the second voice said.*

*Who and what are you, Alondra thought to the voices heard. What are you talking about and why am I hearing you?*

*We must tell this one, the fourth voice said to the others. It is not fair for us to be speaking and this one not know what we are talking about.*

*Alondra followed her classmates and instructors around the cavern while trying to understand what the voices in her head were talking saying. They stopped in front of a wooden chair, set back from the red cord that separated it from those who came to look at it. The voices in Alondra's head became quiet.*

*"This is the High Etara's chair," he began. "Only the High Etara may sit in it."*

*"What happens if someone who isn't the High Etara sits in it?" Stacy asked, before raising her hand.*

*Mr. Baxter gave Stacy a hard stare, but answered her question.*

*"If you will all wait here, I'll demonstrate what happens," he said, before leaving the room.*

*Stand back against the wall, Alondra, one of the voices in her head told her.*

*Who are you? She whispered in her mind.*

*I am Pamot, one of the original Etara. We will tell you our names before we speak to you again.*

*Were you the ones in the picture?*

*I am Glimel and yes, we are the ones in the picture. Only you are able to see us, a deep raspy voice said.*

*Why do I have to stand against the wall?*

*I am Amonot, Alondra. Something is about to happen that we will need to react to, through you, a soft voice said.*

*Alondra did as instructed.*

*Mr. Baxter returned to the room carrying a cat. "This stray cat will demonstrate what happens when someone who is not the High Etara sits on this chair."*

*Mr. Baxter tossed the cat over the red cord, laughing as it landed on the chair. The cat yowled in sudden pain as her paws began to smoke. She tried to jump off the chair, but some unseen force held her in place.*

*Inside Alondra's head, she heard a different scream.*

*My babies, my babies, the cat was saying.*

*Alondra, give us your mind and let us use your words, the seven voices said in unison.*

*No, I'm not turning over my mind to you, she told them silently.*

*Don't make us force you to do as we tell you, Alondra. We must stop what is happening and can only do it through the High Etara. More will be explained to you after we are finished, the voice Alondra recognized as the seventh voice said.*

*She didn't know why, but she handed her mind over to the voices and stood next to the wall, contemplating what they had said about the High Etara.*

*Thank you, Alondra, Amonot told her.*

*The cavern room filled with the angry voices of the Etara while the cat began levitating over the High Etara' Chair.*

*"How dare one chosen to be an Elite Hierarch behave in such a manner; inflicting pain and suffering on an innocent creature for your own pleasure," the voices roared. "You have failed in your duty, Baxter, and soon you will be relieved of your position."*

*The students stared first at Mr. Baxter and then at the cat, still hanging in the air.*

*"I don't know what's going on, but whoever is doing this better stop," Mr. Baxter said, trying to act unshakable.*

*"We, the true Etara are speaking to you, Baxter. Look behind the High Etara's chair."*

*Mr. Baxter and all the students looked at the chair to see seven tall men standing with their eyes glowing like a million stars.*

*"You think yourselves better than the rest of the people on this world, but you are no better than they are. There is only a small amount of Etara blood flowing in your veins. You, who call yourselves full-blooded Etara, are no better than the ones you call Humetara. You all descended from one of the seven of us, but since there were no females of our race with us we bred with the humans on this world."*

*"No," Mr. Baxter protested, "we are true Etara."*

*"Why do you not listen to what we tell you, Hierarch?" The voices continued in unison.*

*"You are not real, you are all dead," Mr. Baxter stammered. "We are waiting on the High Etara to give us wisdom."*

*"You do not even know what the High Etara looks like, Hierarch. You do not know the purpose of the High Etara. You think to control the High Etara, but the High Etara will not be controlled by you or any other Hierarch, the High Etara will control you. The High Etara will have control of every mind whose owner has a drop of Etara blood in its body."*

*"Then, the High Etara has been born," Mr. Baxter stated, smiling a malicious smile. He would find the High Etara and raise it.*

*"Do you think your thoughts are hidden from us, Hierarch? You will not find the High Etara, but the High Etara will find your mind and destroy it. We have spoken."*

*"Come to me little child and I will heal the wounds inflicted on you and your children," the specter in the middle beckoned to the cat, who floated into his arms. The cat began glowing while the students watched the burned hair and charred skin heal. He then gently placed the cat on a cloth behind the chair.*

*The Etara entered Alondra's mind again, but she was not ready for the impact of their power and she collapsed against the wall. Alondra's falling against the wall caused those in front of her to turn around and see what happened.*

*Deidra was the first to Alondra's side. "Alondra, are you okay?" She asked, shaking the fallen girl.*

*Alondra opened her eyes and looked at the ones staring at her. "I'm...I'm okay, I guess. I must have lost my balance. I'm sorry if I scared you, Deidra."*

*Deidra helped Alondra to her feet.*

*"I think this tour is over," Mr. Baxter said loudly.*

There were too many unanswered questions for Mr. Baxter to allow this group of high school students to stay the night. However, he consented to allow them showers before they left.

He must call a meeting of the six Elite Hierarchs and inform them the High Etara had been born. He would tell them what the voices had said. Perhaps the voices in the cavern had been wrong about the child finding them before they could find him.

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Alondra wanted to sleep on the bus, but she needed answers from the voices.

Are you there? She silently asked.

We are here, Alondra, Amonot told her.

What did you mean earlier when you said you could only work through the High Etara?

Since we are no longer alive, we are only able to work through the Chosen Ones. You were born to be the High Etara.

I'm what? Alondra's eyes widened.

You are the High Etara, the one our people have waited for, for over a thousand of your years.

Wait, there is no way I can be the High Etara, women aren't allowed to take that position, Alondra said, remembering a conversation she heard between her grandparents.

Where have you heard that from?

My grandparents said females are not allowed to be the High Etara.

They were wrong. There have been two other female High

Etaras, Amonot told her. Like you, they were very strong willed. Unlike you, they were raised to be the High Etara from birth. That is the reason you will quickly receive all our knowledge and powers.

Is this why I've been hearing voices and seeing things in my mind?

Yes, Alondra it is. When the High Etara is growing up, knowledge and power is granted to them on a gradual basis. They know who they are and what their purpose is before they reach what you call your teenage years. You were not given that, so we have given you all our powers and you already have control over them.

But, why me, why was I chosen to be the High Etara, Alondra protested. I don't want to be the High Etara; I just want my dad back.

I am Hojok and you are the keeper of life, Alondra. All life is sacred and you must remember that. As an Etara, you must never take a life. You are able to heal those in need, but you are to use this gift judiciously. All life must come to an end, eventually, so it would not be a good idea to heal one who is supposed to die.

How will I know? Alondra asked silently.

You will know, please trust me. Once the life source is gone, it cannot be replaced.

What do you mean by life source?

All life has a life source. It is the force that gives it life.

I'm so confused. Why are you seven in my mind, telling me things?

I am Tynuh, Alondra. We are here to guide you and protect you from the Hierarchs.

*What?*

*You will see in time, Alondra. We will not harm you in any way.*

*A different voice resonated in Alondra's mind. Alondra, help me. No, don't take it, she needs me. The voice faded away as Alondra realized who it was. It was her mother.*

*What's happening to my mom? She asked the voices in her head, but they were silent. "What's happening?" Alondra yelled loud enough to alert the staff on the bus that she was still awake.*

*"You need to be quiet, Alondra," the staff member driving the bus told her. "The other students are trying to sleep."*

*"Something's happening to my mom and they won't tell me what it is," Alondra cried.*

*"Who's 'they'?"*

*"The voices in my head, that's who. Hurry up and get us home."*

*"We won't be there until tomorrow afternoon, now it's time to be quiet," he told her, shaking his head. "Voices in her head," he whispered.*

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*The bus arrived at the school the next afternoon. Alondra found her overnight bag and threw it in the back seat of her car. She quickly drove the twenty minutes to her house. When she arrived, Alondra ran into the house and found her mother lying on the floor, dead.*

*"What happened to her?" Alondra demanded of the voices that shared her mind.*

*Her life source has been stolen, the voice of Pamot told her. This*

*is the final violation of an Etara's power.*

*"If her life source is gone, I can't help her, can I?"*

*I am sorry, Alondra, Pamot said.*

*Alondra screamed with grief and frustration. First, she had to call the police and once she was finished with them, she would find the one who did this to her mother.*

*The police came, took Alondra's statement, and introduced the coroner who took Beth's body away.*

*"Who did this to her?" Alondra demanded of the voices.*

*One who has abused his powers for the last time, Pamot told her.*

*"What do you mean by that?" Alondra said angrily.*

*Only a Hierarch has the power to steal a life source from another Etara.*

*"Hamilton did this to her? Did he kill my father too and if so, why?"*

*A Hierarch may not take the life source of a non-Etara. If he killed your father, he did it to have free access to your grieving mother. Somehow, he must have sensed you were a threat to him. Amonot told her.*

*Anger began building in Alondra. "He will pay for this," she screamed.*

*Alondra, we cannot allow you to do what you are thinking of doing. You must not take a life, ever. If you do, that will make you no better than Hamilton.*

*"Well, I'm certainly not just going to sit here and let him get*

*away with it. That would make me a coward."*

*I agree there must be some sort of punishment, Pamot told the Etaras.*

*They allowed Alondra to hear their discussion and finally agreed on a punishment.*

*"But, what about those who are not Hierarchs, they haven't done anything wrong?" Alondra asked.*

*No Alondra, they have not done anything wrong, but it is time for Etaras to stop acting like they are superior to humans.*

*Hamilton, however, will need a swift and just punishment, Pamot told her.*

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*Now it was time to avenge her mother's death.*

*Alondra drove towards her school and her anger began to build.*

*Alondra, you must remain calm, Amonot told her.*

*"I think it's time for you guys to shut up and let me deal with this," Alondra told them defiantly. "We agreed on a punishment and I know how this will end, but I'm going to do it my way."*

*When she turned into the parking lot, the cameras mounted throughout the entire school exploded. She parked the car and opened the door, her blonde hair sizzling with the anger enveloping her entire body.*

*Alondra, the voices called in unison.*

*"Shut up, you gave me these powers and the knowledge of how they worked. Now, I'm going to use them."*

*The more she looked at the school, the angrier she became and her eyes began to glow white-hot. She purposefully walked towards the school complex, the tentacles of her anger destroying every inanimate object that stood between her and the cause of her anger.*

*A green sedan sat in the staff parking lot, the same sedan Alondra had seen when she watched the truck fall on her father. She looked at the car and it exploded. Alondra made sure nobody would ever find a piece of that car.*

*Alondra walked towards the main entrance. The doors and windows of each classroom imploded as she passed, sending shards of wood and glass throughout the room. The main entrance doors disintegrated at her approach, leaving no trace they had ever been there.*

*You must not take his life, Tynuh reminded her sternly. You must control this meeting. You are the High Etara and must not lower yourself to his level. Buildings can be replaced, but people cannot. We understand why you destroyed the inanimate objects on the way to this door. You had to have a way to relieve your anger, but now you must control that anger and act rationally.*

*Alondra stopped and took a deep breath. A hundred feet separated her from the office where her victim sat.*

*Her eyes continued to glow in their white fury while her hair flowed out from her head. Each step took Alondra one closer to the man who would feel her wrath.*

*The office door evaporated upon her approach. Two women behind the counter stared at Alondra when she entered. One began to reach for the phone. Before she could pick up the receiver, both women found themselves forced against the wall, held firmly by an unseen force. The counter cracked down the middle, sending its contents crashing to the floor. The two pieces thrust apart wide enough for Alondra to walk through.*

Purposefully, Alondra walked towards Mr. Hamilton's office, her thoughts opening the door in front of her. She did not destroy that door when she entered. He stood behind his desk, waiting for whoever was causing the noise he had heard in the main office.

He saw Alondra's face and began to cower. Alondra reached her hand out in front of her and with sheer will, she forced Mr. Hamilton into the air. His eyes widened as he felt Alondra's mind invade his. Alondra was searching for two particular memories and she quickly found them. One showed how he killed her father and the other was her mother.

Alondra watched as he stood over her mother, ignoring her cries for mercy. She watched him reach out his hand and grasp Beth by the neck. She watched his hand glow faintly, taking the last drop of her mother's life source. Alondra watched her mother fall to the floor in the heap she found her in when she arrived home earlier.

Still holding Mr. Hamilton in the air, Alondra pronounced her sentence on him. "Are you scared yet, Hamilton? If not, you should be. You killed my father so you would have access to my mother," Alondra roared, her eyes still flashing. "I have every right to kill you, but that goes against the Etara. Instead, I will take from you that which you coveted." Alondra reached out her other hand and retrieved her mother's life source.

"NOOOO," Mr. Hamilton screamed, feeling the stolen life source draining from his body.

"Yes, but that is not the only punishment you will endure for your crimes against the Etara people. Because of this final act of cruelty, all memory of the Etara will be removed from this world."

"You do not have the ability to do that, Alondra," Mr. Hamilton said defiantly.

"Oh, yes, I do. Look into my eyes, Alfred Hamilton. Look into the

eyes of the one who has made you uncomfortable since my first day at this school. Look into the eyes of your High Etara, for you shall be the first one to lose your identity."

"You are not the High Etara. Only a full-blood can be the High Etara."

"You did not study your history very well." Alondra mocked him. "If you had, you would have known that only seven Etara came to this world and they were all male. You, Alfred Hamilton, are a Humetara as are all Etara. You were looking for a special mark on what you felt were full-blooded Etara, but you failed to look at all Etara babies. If you had, you would have found this on me." Alondra pulled the back of her hair up and turned around to show the man hanging in the air the small, round rainbow on her hairline.

"That is the mark you were looking for and failed to find. Now, Alfred Hamilton, your punishment will commence. Soon, there will be no knowledge of the Etara people, even amongst themselves. You will die shortly, but it will not be by my hand. It will be because of your greed. Your own life source is almost gone and now you will lose the ability to steal anyone else's."

Alondra's eyes flashed brighter, erasing all memory of the Etara from the man's mind. When it was gone, Alondra put him back in his chair, turned around and walked out his office door.

Before she left the main office, Alondra erased the women's memories of the events they had witnessed that afternoon.

Alondra walked out the main entrance and stopped before she came to the end of the courtyard. Sending her mind out through the building,

Alondra made sure there were no other people in it before she began her act of cleansing. There were only three people in the building and they were all in the office.

Alondra raised her arms above her head and her eyes once again began to glow. Pushing her energy to settle on the top of the building, Alondra quickly brought her arms down to her side, crushing the entire school, except the office.

*I am Wofob, Alondra. You are not finished. You must still erase the memories of all Etaras as we discussed earlier. We will guide you and show you what you must do.*

“Then, let’s get started before I lose my nerve.”

*I am Yavem and I will guide you in the removal process. First, you need to touch every Etara mind at the same time.*

“How am I supposed to do that?”

*You already have the ability and the knowledge, but we will guide you.*

“We should probably go back to the house. I’m sure it won’t be long before the police arrive and I don’t want to talk to them again today.”

*There is time, but not much.*

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When Alondra arrived at her home, she continued sitting in her car. She concentrated and again her eyes began to glow white. She stopped before her mind attached to any others. “I can’t do this,” she protested. “These people haven’t done anything to me. It’s not fair that they lose their identity as a people.”

*This must be done, Alondra, Yavem told her. The Etara people have forgotten why we came to this world and have set themselves above the pure Humans they share this world with.*

“But, why do I have to be the one to do it? You seven are all powerful, why can’t you do it?”

*We have already given you that knowledge, Alondra. We must work through the High Etara.*

Alondra resigned to her fate and sighed. “All right, let’s get this over with.”

The Etara in her mind guided her as she sent her thoughts out over the entire world, finding every Etara from the ones in their mother’s womb to the old ones who were about to die. When she was sure she had contact with all of them, Yavem gave her further instructions.

*You must now force yourself into their minds, the way you did the Hierarch. You are not searching for any particular memory. You are searching for the part of their minds that contain any knowledge of our people, it will be the same on every person. When you find that part erase it, Yavem told her.*

“It wasn’t this hard when I erased Mr. Hamilton’s mind at the school.”

*We helped you with that since it had to be done quickly and we knew what we were looking for.*

“Oh.”

Alondra concentrated harder on the minds she was in contact with and finally located what she was looking for. With a brief thought, she erased all memory of the Etara race from their minds.

*Now, you must eliminate all physical evidence of the Etara, Yavem said.*

“You mean books?”

*All forms of media that refer to Etara must be eliminated.*

“Computer programs and files as well?”

*Everything must be eliminated, Alondra. The Etara name will still be attached to our schools, but nobody will know what it means. Perhaps you would like to go into your home for this. It may take longer and you wouldn't want anyone to see you when you begin to glow.*

*"That might be a little hard to explain." Alondra laughed softly.*

*Alondra went into the now empty home and sat on the couch. She wanted to cry because of the emptiness, but the Etara wouldn't let her.*

*I know it is hard, Alondra, but you must finish before you can mourn, Amonot told her.*

*Alondra took two deep breaths. I'm ready, let's finish this.*

*Eliminating all forms of media will be similar to changing the names on the bank accounts. You are to search out everything containing the word Etara and make it vanish, Yavem said.*

*Alondra closed her eyes and sent her thoughts out into every computer database, every book, and every museum throughout the world. Slowly, she began destroying what she found. Databases became unreadable, never to be repaired. Book entries vanished. Museum artifacts disintegrated and disappeared. The only thing left when Alondra finished was the High Etara chair.*

*"Why is that thing still intact? I know I destroyed everything," she asked, seeing the chair in her mind.*

*I should have told you before you began. The High Etara chair is impervious to your powers, Yavem told her.*

*"Why?"*

*It is crafted from the alloy of our ship and can only be destroyed in an Etaran smelter.*

*"But, it's only wood."*

*It is wood covered and because it is covering our alloy, the wood cannot be destroyed.*

*"Great, now what am I going to do?" Alondra asked sarcastically.*

*It is yours, High Etara. Bring it to you and keep it as an heirloom.*

*"That's not the safest chair on this world," Alondra reminded the voices in her head.*

*It will not harm anyone any more. You took care of that when you destroyed everything else, Pamot assured Alondra.*

*"How do I get it here? It's too big to fit in my car, not to mention it's a long drive back to North Dakota."*

*You have the ability to bring it to you. Just command it and it will come, Glimel said.*

*Alondra concentrated on the chair and within seconds, it was sitting in the middle of the living room.*

*"That's a neat trick. It could come in handy in the future, unless I'll lose these powers when I'm finished eradicating all traces of the Etara people."*

*You will be the only one who retains any memory of our people. It will be your decision if you wish to pass that information on to your children, Wofob told her.*

*"Mom told me Etara's can only have one child. Why did you say children?"*

*Etaras no longer exist. You cannot take away your own powers, but you have taken away the restrictions on reproduction. You*

*will have as many children as you wish to have, but none of them will inherit your powers, Hojok said.*

*Alondra looked at the chair sitting in front of her. She noticed something lying on the seat and went to see what it was.*

*“I guess it’s only fitting that you came with the chair,” Alondra told the cat the Etaras had rescued. “Welcome to your new home, all four of you.”*