ORB

“Glyph? Where did you go?”

Her voice echoed off the still water and the smooth stone walls, sounding for all the world like a chime left to blow in the wind. She scanned the cavern with her eyes slowly, trying to use the dim light filtering down from the hole high above to catch a glimpse of her friend.

“Glyph?”

A nook in the wall of the cave suddenly flared with light before fading away to a dull and inconsistent flicker. Her eyes widened, and she shot towards the opening, her shadow casting itself onto some of the formless shapes moving beneath the water as she passed above them. Swinging her body around in the air, she rounded the corner, hunting for the source of the light.

What she had thought was just a dent in the wall revealed a roughly hewn pentagonal room, it’s surfaces lit with a sickly purple glow. On the floor was a pedestal seemingly carved out of the rock, it’s single supporting column carved into the shape of an eagle. Or was it a lizard? Or a squid? On the pedestal itself was a solid black sphere maybe as tall as a cat, that were it not for the colour could have been simply described as a giant pearl, so black that it appeared not to merely be absence of colour, but the absence of all light – the purple light in the room failed to illuminate it at all, instead leaving a disc shaped hole in reality.

Standing on the pedestal next to the sphere, her hands pressed against it, was Glyph, her wings still and her eyes blank, lips moving to some unknown script.

All of this went largely unnoticed by the newcomer, who took from the scene that her exploring companion was too busy staring at a dumb trinket to reply to her.

“Hey! Brittle wings! I’ve been calling you!” she laughed, landing on the stone next to Glyph, reaching out to hug her by the waist, gently tugging her away from the dark circle that towered over them both. Glyph blinked.

“H-huh?” she looked around, confused. “Spark?”. Her wings fluttered gently as she came out of her reverie. “Don’t sneak up on me like that!”

“Sneak?” the dark-skinned sprite pouted dramatically, crossing her arms and leaning forwards to make a point “I’ve been calling for you for 10 minutes! I was about as sneaky as a boar charging into a tree!”

“Please, I’ve been gone all of 10 *seconds*” her red-haired friend giggled, the sound weirdly muted, as if the purple light was muffling it. She hopped off the pedestal into the air, hovering easily. “Did you find anything cool down here? All I found was this stupid ball.”

Spark shrugged and jumped backwards off the table, hovering smoothly back out of the room.

“Nothing. You wanna head home? Sun’s gonna go down soon and I could do with some food!”

“The darkness will consume the reason and instinct of all that walks under the lucent dawn”

“What?”

“I said yeah, we should get back before dark. I’m starving!”.

The two girls rose vertically out of the cavern into the evening light, the forest’s calming scenery banishing any thought of the hidden room from their minds.