



# NIGHTMARE HEX

HEXSPHERE CHRONICLES PREQUEL

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# 4 YEARS AGO

Wren Martis walked home from school with a slight bounce to her step. She had impressed her Hex lab teacher today and she was still reeling about it. Their assignment had been simple: take a decanter of water and use the spell in their textbook to change its color. Instead of going for the boring and simple primary colors, almost all her fellow students cast bright, fluorescent colors to get a good grade. But Wren took it a step beyond. She added an extra flourish to the spell that she had created on her own, transforming the water into a full rainbow of colors, defined perfectly as if glass separated each layer.

Her classmates didn't even get jealous like she thought they might. They had all cheered and asked how she did it. By the end of class, Wren was teaching her fellow students as well as the teacher.

It had been a great day.

Starting the eighth grade had been a bit nerve-wracking

because Wren had been placed in all the advanced classes. Not because they were difficult, they were quite easy actually, but because her mother was a Dis-con and Wren wasn't supposed to draw attention to their family. Being taught to keep a low profile by her parents came second nature to Wren, but her seventh grade quantum spell-casting teacher, Ms. Gardner, saw through Wren's intentional holding back. With a prideful recommendation from one of the top teachers in California, not even Wren's parents could say no. Probably because it would cause even more attention.

Most likely today had been a mistake, but Wren had to admit, she loved the praise.

Hopping up the steps to her front porch, Wren unlocked the front door and entered inside her house. A foyer with a wall of hooks and shelves greeted her on the right, while on the left was a giant painting of a rock her father loved for some reason.

He was definitely a weird one, Wren thought fondly.

"Is that you, Wren?" her mother's voice came from the kitchen.

"Yeah, be right there." Wren cast a levitation spell on her backpack, situating it on an empty shelf. Hanging up her coat, Wren walked straight ahead for the swinging door that led to the kitchen.

Once she was through, only the marble-topped island was there to greet her. "Mom?" Wren looked around the small kitchen. Nothing but blue cupboards and white countertops.

"I'm here, hang on." Isabelle Martis, Wren's mother, popped her head up from the floor to see Wren over the island. "I was trying to clean the floor, but there was a spot the mop couldn't quite get rid of."

Wren rolled her eyes. "Mom. Why are you breaking your back to clean? Here." Wren cast a floor cleaning spell she had memorized

a year ago for this very reason. Her mom being a Dis-con, she couldn't cast any spell and no spell could be cast on her. Dis-cons were hated by the world and if one was ever discovered, a terrorist group called Trackers would hunt them down and kill them.

It was why Wren needed to be careful.

Why she shouldn't have cast that rainbow water spell.

Stupid.

"Oh, sweetie, you know not everyone uses spells to do things, otherwise they wouldn't sell mops in the first place." Her mom stood up and walked around the island, pulling Wren into a giant hug.

One of her mother's specialties.

"Can I get in on this?" Wren's dad walked into the kitchen with a smile.

"Get over here." Her mother pulled him in as well.

"Can't breathe." Wren squirmed out of the hug. She loved her parents, but sometimes they could get a little too mushy for her own taste. And as a newly minted teenager, too much affection from her parents was getting old.

Wren's parents laughed as they parted, looking at their daughter with unbridled affection.

Her father opened the junk door in the island, searching. "Have you seen my reading glasses anywhere?"

Wren shook her head with exasperation. "I learned a vision spell in advanced biology. It wasn't for fixing vision, but if I added a repair spell to it..."

"No, no. No spells. And no creating new ones. At least not to the public or school," her father interrupted with a level sternness.

Wren grumbled. Creating spells was a talent that came naturally to her. She didn't know why. At thirteen she should barely be able

to cast a levitation spell, but it was easy, second nature. She'd even been working on creating spells that might work on Dis-cons. That way if a Tracker ever came, she could protect her mom. Nothing had worked so far, but she knew she was close.

"You know, I think I saw them in the truck. I'll go check." Wren's mom stepped in, not wanting her being a Dis-con to be a cause of tension in their household.

"I'll go." Her father walked toward the back door that led to the side of the house and the driveway.

But Wren's mom stopped him by gently touching his arm. "I got it. I know where to look. You could be in there for hours," she teased.

Laughing, Wren and her father watched her walk out the door.

"You want tacos tonight?" he asked his daughter.

SCREECH!

The sound of tires squealing on pavement.

"What the...?" Wren's dad ran to the back door.

BOOM!

The door burst out, off its hinges, flying out into the side yard, smashing into the bed of the parked red truck.

Wren's mom swung the truck door open and flung herself inside, quickly slamming the door shut behind her.

A Tracker with the legendary smooth-skin replacing her face, dressed in black tactical gear, rushed toward the truck and Wren's mother.

Wren cast a spell she'd created to break through glamour-spells like the one the Tracker had cast on herself. The words came out of Wren's mouth, sharp and succinct.

It worked.

Wren could see the woman, or girl, late teens maybe, storm

toward her mother's location, tracker blade, long and sharp, gripped in her hand, smile on her face.

Running through the door at break-neck speed, Wren's dad cast a bone breaking spell on the Tracker.

Nothing happened.

He must have pronounced something wrong in his incantation. If spells weren't recited perfectly, they wouldn't connect and manipulate quantum waves, so basically, they wouldn't work.

The Tracker stopped and turned toward Wren's father. She cast a telekinesis-spell on him, throwing his body against the house, his body slumping to the ground, unconscious.

It was up to Wren now.

She had to save her mother.

Protection spell.

It hadn't worked so far, but now was the time. If she didn't succeed, her mom could be killed.

Casting the spell to perfection, Wren saw a slight displacement of air over her mother's back, crouched in the cab of the truck.

Did she?

Could she have?

Another telekinesis-spell and the heavy metal door of the truck swung open.

Wren cast a body-locking spell on the Tracker.

Nothing.

The Tracker reached into the truck and yanked out Wren's mother.

Why didn't that work?

Wren knew she had said the words correctly.

She cast it again.

Still nothing.

Maybe the protection spell will work, Wren thought frantically.  
The Tracker laughed, maniacal, excited.

SLICE!

Everything froze.

Wren couldn't understand what she was seeing.

Nothing made sense.

Nothing.

Nothing.

Nothing.

The sound of her mother's head hitting the pavement instantly brought bile up through Wren's chest and she puked on the kitchen floor. Breathing in a shocked sob at the same time, Wren choked until her throat closed and she couldn't breathe anymore.

The Tracker laughed and laughed as if she were on some kind of repeating nightmare Wren couldn't wake up from.

Air finally hit her lungs again, and Wren was able to breathe through coughs.

The Tracker grabbed Wren's mother's head by the hair with one hand, and with the other, clapped the arm, dragging the body and head away as if it were nothing more than laundry, but instead of water dripping from clothes, a river of blood trailed behind the Tracker as she walked away.

Wren need to move.

She needed to get her mom back.

She could put her back together.

There had to be a spell.

There had to be...

Pushing her brain to force herself to move, Wren finally stood up on shaking legs.

Stumbling through the open doorway, she barely glanced at

her father's unconscious body, eyes only focused on the long streak of blood she had to follow.

Turning the corner of her house, she readied another body-locking-spell. She'd say it right this time.

But there was no one there.

The blood trail stopped abruptly at the sidewalk.

A car, a van, something had taken her mother's decapitated body away.

Gone.

Panic raced through her limbs as she ran down the driveway and to the street, searching both ways for the vehicle, or any sign of the Tracker.

Wren had waited too long.

Her fear and shock had frozen her and as a result her mother was dead, murdered by pure evil.

The laugh.

Wren couldn't erase that beast's face laughing as she sliced her mother's head off.

That image would never go away.

It would never fade.

Wren fell to her knees, dropping onto her mother's blood, screaming as loudly as she could, not able to stop.

Neighbors popped their heads out of their windows and doors to undoubtedly see what the commotion was about.

Wren didn't care.

She kept on screaming until her voice was gone, no sound coming out, only the rough croaks of what was left.

As nosy as the neighbors were, not a single one came out to help, to see why this thirteen-year-old girl was on her knees covered in blood, screaming in anguish.



Because Wren suspected they all knew.

They must have glimpsed the Tracker and believed her mother deserved what she got.

A rage filled Wren that swallowed every thought in her head until all she could see was that Tracker's face.

She'd find her.

She'd murder her.

And she wouldn't stop until every last Tracker was dead.

This was the prequel to Wren's story. If you'd like to see what happens four years later when Wren finally finds the Tracker who killed her mother, read book one of The Hexsphere Chronicles: The Severed and the Hunted.

Click the link below to check it out:

<https://amzn.to/3sspoFw>