

“What is taking them so long?” Chrysalis spat at the nearest worker, switching between pacing and hovering in her state of emotion. The Queen was not one for patience, becoming more anxious and irritated by the second.

The nearest worker changeling opened its mouth to respond, “Your Maje -

“It has been sixteen days. Surely that has been a significant amount of time for them to grow to maturity. How long do they expect me to wait for them to make an appearance? I might just stop prolonging the inevitable and finish it now, before it’s even begun.”

Chrysalis huffed as she hovered in the air beneath the cells, keenly intent on searching for movement within the capped cells. The split second she saw movement, she wanted to have a front seat view of the momentous occasion.

The few workers below kept their mouths shut, not wanting to anger their leader further. Their blue eyes were keenly focused on the six unique cells hanging from the ceiling of the nursery chamber.

The worker changelings had been hoof picked by Chrysalis to monitor, care, protect, and feed the soon to be hatchlings. No changeling, not even the queen, was allowed to get more than ten feet from the cells. This prevented the untimely death of the new hatchlings. Once the first cell opened, the worker changelings would then be relieved of their former duties.

Feeling her impatience growing hotter, the queen decided to make herself useful by sharpening her horn and fangs. Lowering herself to the ground, Chrysalis made her way to a sharp looking stalagmite and proceeded to drag her horn along the side of the mineral formation. With each long stroke of her horn, a ear cringing scrape echoed across the cavern.

Sighs of anticipation escaped her lips with each connecting sound made from horn and rock. After a good ten strokes on each side of her horn, Chrysalis gave a deep throaty chuckle.

“The hatchlings won’t stand a chance against the one true ruler of the hive,” Chrysalis spoke with certainty, then launched herself onto a nearby shadowed ledge. It would provide the ideal viewing spot to witness the birth and death of life, while also acting as her stage for her transformation.

Wiggling her haunches to get into a comfortable sitting position, the queen fixed her green eyes on the hatchling cells above, then closed her slitted eyes to take on the form of a large rock.

Come to me my children, to see who is worthy of being Queen of the swarm.

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## **Prologue: The Law of Old**

Chrysalis waiting for cells to open; elaborates on the gladiator succession of new Queen

### **(01) The Birth of Queens**

(02)