

# CHAPTER 15 — Convergence

The room didn't move.

---

It didn't need to anymore.

---

Everything—

---

held.

---

Perfectly.

---

---

That was the first real warning.

---

---

Mai stopped.

---

Not because something changed—

---

because nothing did.

---

---

“This is the lock,” she said.

---

---

Ace didn't slow.

“Then we break it now.”

---

---

“No.”

---

---

Immediate.

---

---

Sharp.

---

---

Mai stepped forward—

---

not toward the center—

---

into alignment with it.

---

---

“That creates a new resolution,” she said.

---

---

Ace’s gaze hardened.

---

---

“Then we don’t let it finish.”

---

“It already has.”

---

---

Silence.

---

---

That landed harder than anything else.

---

---

Shammy closed her eyes.

---

---

The air—

---

perfect.

---

---

Too perfect.

---

---

“It’s not pulling anymore,” she said.

---

---

A beat.

---

---

“It’s holding.”

---

---

---

Padre's voice came from behind—

---

distant.

---

“...Then what are you doing?”

---

Mai didn't answer him.

---

She was watching the center.

---

Not the space—

---

the agreement.

---

The object in her hand—

---

no longer resisted.

---

It matched.

“That’s wrong,” she said.

Ace stepped beside her.

“Then move.”

Mai didn’t.

Because she understood it now.

“If we remove it,” she said,

“...the structure doesn’t collapse.”

A beat.

“It replaces it.”

That tracked.

Too well.

Ace exhaled slowly.

---

---

“Then we don’t remove it.”

---

---

That was the only viable move.

---

---

Shammy opened her eyes.

---

---

The air—

---

was no longer neutral.

---

---

It followed the center.

---

---

“It’s aligning everything to it,” she said.

---

---

Mai nodded.

---

---

“Yes.”

---

A pause.

---

---

“Which means it’s incomplete.”

---

---

Ace glanced at her.

---

---

“Explain.”

---

---

Mai lifted the object slightly.

---

---

It didn’t resist.

---

---

“That’s the missing reference,” she said.

---

---

Silence.

---

---

Padre’s voice again—

---

further.

---

“...You’re telling me that thing is holding this together?”

---

---

Mai didn’t turn.

---

---

“No.”

---

---

A beat.

---

---

“It’s allowing it to finish.”

---

---

That was worse.

---

---

Ace looked at the center.

---

---

The space—

---

---

no longer wrong.

---

---

No longer shifting.

---

---

Just—

---

correct.

---

“That’s the trap,” she said.

---

Mai didn’t disagree.

---

“Yes.”

---

Shammy stepped closer.

---

The air tightened—

---

but didn’t push back.

---

“It’s waiting for confirmation,” she said.

---

That locked it.

---

Ace's hand moved—

---

---

not toward a weapon—

---

---

toward the object.

---

---

Mai didn't stop her.

---

---

She understood the move.

---

---

Ace took it.

---

---

The moment her fingers closed—

---

---

the space reacted.

---

---

Not violently.

---

---

Decisively.

---

---

The alignment—

---

sharpened.

---

---

The distance to the center—

---

collapsed.

---

---

The room—

---

contracted.

---

---

Padre's voice—

---

gone.

---

---

Shammy inhaled sharply.

---

---

The air snapped tight.

---

---

"It's locking!" she said.

---

---

---

Mai stepped in—

---

fast—

---

no hesitation.

---

“Don’t resist it!”

---

Ace didn’t.

---

That was the difference.

---

She held the object—

---

but didn’t force it.

---

Didn’t define it.

---

Just—

let it exist.

---

---

The space—

---

hesitated.

---

---

That was new.

---

---

The alignment—

---

wavered.

---

---

Not breaking—

---

uncertain.

---

---

Mai saw it.

---

---

“Now,” she said.

---

---

Ace didn't move.

She shifted.

---

---

Not position—

---

intent.

---

---

The object in her hand—

---

stopped trying to settle.

---

---

The center—

---

lost definition.

---

---

The room—

---

blurred.

---

---

Shammy pushed—

---

not against it—

---

through it.

---

---

The air—

---

disagreed.

---

---

For a fraction—

---

everything lost alignment.

---

---

That was enough.

---

---

The structure—

---

didn't collapse.

---

---

It failed to complete.

---

---

The center—

---

vanished.

---

Not removed.

---

---

Unresolved.

---

---

The room snapped back.

---

---

Not perfectly.

---

---

But enough.

---

---

Distance returned.

---

---

Pews—

---

slightly off.

---

---

Walls—

---

not entirely parallel.

Air—

---

---

uneven.

---

---

Alive again.

---

---

Mai exhaled.

---

---

“It’s not finished,” she said.

---

---

Ace released the object.

---

---

It didn’t fall.

---

---

It settled.

---

---

Wrong.

---

---

Shammy steadied herself.

---

The pressure—

---

---

returned.

---

---

Not clean.

---

---

But real.

---

---

Behind them—

---

---

Padre stepped forward.

---

---

Slow.

---

---

Careful.

---

---

“...It’s still here,” he said.

---

---

Mai nodded.

---

---

“Yes.”

---

---

A beat.

---

---

“But it’s not resolved.”

---

---

That was the best outcome they were going to get.

---

---

Ace turned.

---

---

“We’re done.”

---

---

Not a victory.

---

---

Not a loss.

---

---

Just—

---

containment.

---

Temporary.

---

---

And as they stepped away—

---

the space behind them

began—

---

very slowly—

---

to disagree

with itself again.

—

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Last update: **05/04/2026 14:35**

