

# THE GALACTORS

A SAGA BEYOND THE STARS

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# *Dedicated*

*To all my mentors who always had faith in me.*



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## *Chapter 1*

### **What did I just do?**

“Oh, I am out of eggs again, I will have to go the store.” I thought to myself. I hope the storm doesn't start until then as the sky looks dark. It usually gets cold where I live. As I walked out of my small sea-facing wooden house, all I could see were dark clouds and the uneasy sea. I better be quick or I will get stuck in the upcoming storm. This is a small fishing town known as Perko. It is not very fun or lively but I quite like the solitude. There are times that I just sit by my window for hours and look at the sea. It's strange how the sea looks infinite yet it feels finite when we look at it from a distance. I am not originally from Perko. I was an only child to my parents who died in an accident after which I was sent under the guardianship of my grandfather. I was only 6 then. I don't remember much about them. My grandfather was my life. Sadly, he too passed away last year. But I don't feel sad for him. That man lived his life to the fullest till the day he died.

He was the one who taught me everything about fishing. By the way, I almost forgot to introduce myself - I am Max. I have the habit of getting lost in my thoughts and getting off-topic. Oh shit, Eggs. Yeah, I was going to buy eggs.

As, I stepped out of the house, a cold breeze tried to rip my face off. I could see the line of houses alongside mine giving a

golden light from the windows. It must be nice to have a family and come back home to someone. I too tried down the route but then I decided that I was better off alone. Like a lone wolf. But mostly it was because Daisy was now with that douchebag, piece of shit, asshole and garbage of a person Sam. Gosh! I hate that guy. I don't even understand what she sees in him. Daisy is like an angel when compared to that hell-born Sam Welsing.

"OUUU, LOOK AT ME I AM SAM WELSING. My Father owns the Fishing Company in Perko. I am so rich. Look at my new Car. Look at my new watch. IT IS CUSTOM MADE! Look at my shoes they came from JAPAN." What a jerk that guy is. I am telling you, this guy gets on my nerves. And one of these days I am going to shove those shoes in his face and throw him into the ocean with a rock tied to his neck.

Oh yeah, EGGS! This Sam again made me forget about things. Gosh!

The grocery shop is within walking distance from my place. The storm alert had made everyone cautious so the streets are mostly empty. I hurriedly crossed the street to reach the store. The Cling of the store bell welcomed me as I got inside.

"Hi Max, how are you?" I heard a familiar voice.

I looked to see it was Frank, the shop owner greeting me from behind one of the aisles.

"Hi Frank, am good. How about you?" I enquired.

"Good man, but these storms been stomping my business." He replied.

Frank is a retired Army guy about 6 feet in height. He is as white as it gets with a grey moustache and always well-cut and properly trimmed nails and hair. Now that I think, I have never

seen Frank having a bad hair day or with an uncared-for moustache. He is always very proper, like a gentleman.

“Don’t worry Frank. The epicenter is in the sea. They warned us just to be safe, as this looks like a big one. But I think It will pass soon enough.” I said.

“Hope that it does. I am getting tired of having to move veggies from the front to the inside every time they sound the alert. So, what are you in for?” he asked.

“Just some eggs.” I replied.

“Oh, they are at the end in the fridge a new batch had come just this morning, you can take from those.” He said.

In Perko, everybody knows each other as it's a small town. So mostly everyone is like family. Everybody else is cool. Except for that scumbag Sam. And don’t get me wrong Mr. Welsing is a very good man. I do respect him a lot it's only his jerk son that I hate.

Cling!

I turned around to see a familiar face entering the store. Against the grey background, her face looked like a pearl, with the same shyness in her eyes, and the same vibrant smile on her face. The love of my life Daisy Parkson. She was wearing a blue jacket with a white t-shirt inside it along with blue jeans and brown boots.

“Oh! hi max, nice to see you here, been a while since we last met”, she greeted.

Me: “H..Hi... Hi.. Daceesy”

Daisy: “isy.. Daisy... Gosh! You never seem to get my name straight. We have known each other for years. Come on.”

Me: "Sorry Dace.. Ah I mean Daisy."

Daisy: “No worries just messing with you. Hehe. So how is maxie pads doing these days.?. Did you come here to buy condoms again for your kinky nights? Hehe,” she said smirking.

Me: “What!. No.... Come on it was once and that too when we were in 8th grade.”

Frank: “Hi Frank, I need some condoms for my grandpa.... he said it so seriously that for a moment even I was convinced.”

Me: “But you called him anyways. Didn’t you?”

Frank: “And he smashed your butt...HAHAHA!”

Daisy: “HAHAHA!.. Oh man, this gets me till this day. Oh yeah frank do you have any more of the lip gloss I always buy.”

Frank: “No Daisy they haven’t arrived yet. I already told you two days ago. I believe when the storm passes by, I’ll get them from the distributor. I have already placed my order for them.”

Daisy: “Oh ok, I better hurry it looks it going to rain any minute.”

Frank now came behind the counter. Daisy went to pick out her things from the small aisles.

After I brought my eggs to the counter for checkout. I was surprised to see Daisy already standing there with about 10 packets of bread and 5 liters of cold drinks.

Me: “Well. That was fast. You are throwing a party or something?”

Daisy: “Nah.. I had asked Frank to keep the bread and cold drinks in stacks so that it’ll be easy for me to collect them. I am tired of buying bread every other day because my father keeps sending me to buy them. I am just bulk buying now.”

Frank: “So that will be \$2.75 Max.”

Me: “Oh yeah here you go”.

Daisy: “Yo! Now help me take these things to my car.

Me: “Ah..”

Daisy: “What Ah... a gentleman always helps a woman in need. Doesn't he frank?”

Frank: “Can't argue with that.”

Me: “Oh yeah sure.. let me hold the drinks.”

Daisy: “Now that’s more like it, Maxie.”

As I stepped out, I followed Daisy towards her car. The sky had now changed its color from grey to black. The winds were rising and the clouds were circling towards the sea like there was a whirlpool in the sky just above the sea pulling them away from land.

The next thing I knew Daisy was standing in front of me smiling.

Daisy: “Thanks, for the help Max. You have always been so nice to me. Call sometimes and take care. You can talk to me. I know you were close to your grandpa and after his death, you just went quiet. I just want to say that I....” Daisy just froze and her eyes widened in shock.

We at that time were facing each other, so I didn’t know what was it that she saw. I turned around to check and against the dark sky, I saw a huge wall of water going as tall as I could see and as wide as it could go. It looked like the infamous Tsunami took some steroids.

For a moment my jaw just dropped. I was shivering, just realizing the magnitude of the wave that was going to hit us. I wanted to run but I couldn’t move. My body won’t allow it. My arms spread wide open as if they were trying to face the wave on their own. It suddenly came to me, it was because Daisy was standing right behind me and I wanted to shield her.

“Why am I doing this? Is this it for me? I just came to buy some eggs. I wanted to talk to Daisy more. Oh Daisy! I wish I could just tell you how much I love you. How much I want to be with you. I guess this is it for me.” My mind was flooding with thoughts. My thoughts were getting out of control. And then I heard a voice.

“Omelette is all I want,” said the voice.

“What!?” I replied.

“Yeah, a french omlette. They are my favourite. Will you make it for me? And I think you should move.” The voice replied.

“But if I move, Daisy will be in danger. Do you not see the seriousness of this situation?”

“Oh yes. I do. I think you will die if you do not move. She is going to die regardless if you move or not.” The voice said.

“It doesn’t matter I’ll do whatever I can to protect her. And by the way who the hell are you? And why would I even cook for you? And also, why the hell are we having this conversation right now?” I replied bewildered.

The giant wave was rapidly moving closer. Daisy just fell and sat on the ground it looked like her legs were unable to support her. She was going through an adrenaline shock.

“This wave is not some joke. when it hits, it's most probably going to wipe the entire town along with you and your beloved Daisy. And I am only your well-wisher. But I can offer you a deal. I can help you if you promise to make me a French omelette afterwards.” The voice replied.

“What?! Are you kidding me?” I said.

“No. Seriously. A deal is a deal,” the voice said.

“Ok fine. Deal.”

“Now give me the control.” The voice said.

“What?” I asked.

“Just close your eyes and you’ll see.”

I obeyed.

In a matter of seconds, I could feel this surging energy growing from within me. I could see a blue light flowing all around me. This light had a certain sense of warmth. I slowly opened my eyes. I could feel an invisible force surrounding me. It felt like this force was coming from inside me and was going to overflow at any point in time.

“Now guide the flow towards the wave,” the voice said gently.

My hands moved on their own and like a laser cannon a wave shot from them. It had no visible form but I could make out that it had a cylindrical shape with a spherical end. As the wave exited my hands, it left a huge shockwave in every direction. The invisible wave hit the wall of water in the center and seconds later the Tsunami dispersed into the air.

I was shocked and overjoyed with what I saw. But it started to get dark quickly, it seemed that I was suddenly out of energy and couldn’t even stand properly. My vision started to become blurry and before I knew it. Everything went dark and silent.

## *Chapter 2*

### **Meet Alex**

Daisy and I are childhood friends. I guess I fell in love with her in 2nd grade when she came to sit by my side in school. I can re-live that moment still, as soon as I close my eyes. She had golden hair and was wearing a pink top and skirt. And had a sky-blue color side clip in her hair. She just came and sat by my side and was really shy. I guess she sat beside me as there were no other seats left in the class. But once we started talking, we just never stopped.

“Dais... I woke up with a start. I turned around to see if Daisy was ok. My breath was too rapid. But to my surprise, there was a wall where Daisy was supposed to be. “What! did I just dream about that..” echoed in my mind. I slowly started to calm down. To my relief, I was in my room and on my bed. The sky looked dark still and it seemed that the storm was coming to an end. I felt thirsty so I just walked to my kitchen to have a glass of water. My house like all the other houses in the area is a fairly simple one. The main entrance on one side has the kitchen and the small dining area, opposite to it is the living room with a television and a sofa set. The lane that divides the two sides of the house leads to a staircase and ends at the backdoor, next to which is the only washroom in the house. The staircase leads to

the top floor which has two rooms one of which is mine and the other belonged to my grandpa.

Even though the winds were now calming down, I could see them have an effect on the kitchen window. I felt funny in my head so I poured myself a glass of water and sat on one of the dining chairs to have a sip. I was still very drowsy and each sip of the cold water was slowly taking that drowsiness away. After finishing the glass of water, I woke up enough to realize that the house looked pretty dark and it would be better to turn some lights on. I am quite lazy so this huge task also took me about five minutes of prep talk to get up and complete.

Click!

And now my house was filled with a yellow warmth. As I walked back to the dinner table to get my glass. My body just froze for a second and I stopped in my tracks.

“If I just came from my room. Then who brought the EGGS?”  
Echoed in my mind.

The egg packet still lay untouched on the dinner table.

A chill ran down my spine. And I rushed to my kitchen to grab anything I could find in order to defend myself. Now, I was in total stealth mode with my weapon of choice as the kitchen knife. I took off my flip-flops as they were making too much noise when I was walking on the wooden floor. To be very honest I was scared as shit. But one thing that all the movies, anime and web series that I have watched until now have made me realize is that in situations like these, stealth is what we need. Because the intruder doesn't know my house as well as I do. So, this meant that he was in my territory. And if I showed a little courage and smartness, I could easily win.

I calculated that he couldn't be in my room as I just came from there. Grandpa's room was locked. The kitchen is where I am

right now and the living room has no place to hide and is completely visible from where I am. So that leaves...

I raced to the end of the small corridor and with a swift motion I swung the door open.

“AhaAAA!” I screamed proudly to the empty washroom. I managed to startle my shampoo bottle enough that it tried to commit suicide by jumping in the bathtub. Although some people would say that it fell because of the sudden change in air pressure in the washroom when I barged in. But those people are idiots. It's my house and if I say the shampoo bottle tried to commit suicide then it did. End of story.

So, after this 10-minute-long action-packed adventure, I walked back to my dinner table still scratching my head as to when did I go out to buy the eggs. Because now the most explainable cause of the intruder entering my house had been ruled out. I vaguely remembered that I had dreamt about something to do with eggs. It had Daisy in it. And I do remember that I was scared of something but everything else was all blurry. And the more I was trying to remember it the more it seemed to fade from my memory. I just decided to let it be for now and since I was already awake now, It felt like a good time to cook some French omelette. I still don't know why I chose that dish. I just had a craving for it at that time.

I decided to go back to sleep as eating had taken a toll on me and I am very much conscious about not overstressing my body. As I slid gracefully into my blanket on my bed and was about to fall asleep, “YO! The French omelette was quite delicious.” I heard a voice, it was so instant that I was not able to differentiate that it was my imagination or I really heard someone. I sat upright on my bed in an instant. But my room looked unimpressed by this sudden behavior of mine and so it

did nothing. “Must’ve been my imagination,” I thought to myself.

“Or it could be a ghost you know,” I heard the voice again.

“Yeah, that seems logical too. Wait. What.” my thoughts echoed in my mind.

“who... are you?” I spoke out loud.

“Well, I am called Alex. And as to what I am I don’t know. You tell me.” Said Alex.

Me: What do you mean? you are not a ghost then?

Alex: No, I don’t think so. From what I know I am a part of you.

Me: What? You mean like...

Alex: No. Don’t go there. Not like in the movie.

Me: Hey! I did not even say that. Can you read my thoughts? Ahaa! So, what about now?

Alex: You absolute idiot. I just told you that I am a part of you. Like I am in your mind. Stop singing Twinkle Twinkle Little Star in your mind. It will not hide your memories from me. I already know about them. Simply put, I know as much as you do. And what you are currently thinking.

Me: Hmm... Interesting. But you do sound like a brain parasite though. They also behave in the same way

Alex: Seriously? Where on earth would you have picked up a brain parasite in Perko? You barely go out of your house. And you have not even taken a shower in 5 days.

Me: Hey! 4 days. I have not taken a shower in 4 days. If you are a brain parasite at least do your job correctly.

Alex: A literal voice is coming from your mind and this is what you are bothered about. Gosh! And I am not a brain parasite.

Me: I believe you for the brain parasite part. But then, how do you explain your existence?

Alex: Well... from what I can recall. When I first opened my eyes, or rather your eyes. All I could see was a giant wave coming towards me and there was this girl, Daisy I think. She was shivering with fear behind me. And it felt like I needed to protect her. As I was thinking of ways of how I can protect her. I found a pool of energy inside your body. And so, I first tried to tap into it directly. But it turned out that I had to start learning how to channel it. And once I was able to control it. I asked you to give me the control after which I blasted the wave out. Dropped the now passed-out Daisy at her house. Waited for her to start getting conscious then quickly exited her car. Took our eggs. Came back home, and put the eggs on the dinner table. And since I was feeling groggy after that, I went to sleep. I woke up after I tasted your French omelette. And now here we are."

Me: "Wait! You went too fast. Slow down a bit. Just answer what I ask. I will then try to make sense of things.

Alex: As you wish.

Me: So, you mean to say that what felt like a dream to me was not a dream and that really happened?

Alex: Yup that's exactly what I am saying.

Me: Tell me when you say you found a pool of energy in my body. What do you mean?

Alex: I am not too sure about it. It felt just like magic. Or when we have an adrenaline rush. It was the same kind of feeling. But, with a lot more power.

Me: Hmm. You said that it took you time to learn how to control it. But if I remember correctly hardly a minute passed by when you asked me to give control to you.

Alex: Yes, a minute for you. An eternity for me. You and your body are bound by linear time. I live in your mind. My existence is not affected by your perception of time. A simple way to explain it will be that thoughts don't age. There is no limit to how much a human mind can think in a given frame of time. I am not bound by time.

Me: Well, this is new. I did not know that. Then how did you know it?

Alex: You already had these concepts of time in your mind. I just pieced them together and drew a conclusion to support my point. Just because you haven't given a thought to something doesn't necessarily mean you don't know it.

Me: This is so COOL! So, tell me more about these powers that you found.

Alex: It seems to me that it is some kind of telekinesis power that you have. It feels like a pool of really cold water and I can only dip my hands in there for some time before the cold starts to make my fingers freeze.

Me: Interesting. You say you can reach or rather I can reach to use at any time I want.

Alex: Could be. I can sense its presence so it's easy for me to be able to use it. Can you do the same?

Me: Let me try it.

I closed my eyes and tried to focus on this power that apparently lay inside of me. And just after a few moments, I could feel this sudden pressure in my stomach.

Me: Yes! I think I found it. I can feel it too right now.

Alex: Are you sure?

Me: Yeah, of course. I focused and now I can feel it.

Alex: Hmm, so let me get this straight. The power that took me years in terms of human time to master. You found it in mere human seconds.

Me: Yes. What else could it be?

Alex: Oh! For starters, the French omelette that you devoured might have found its way through your digestive tract and is now wanting to leave your body.

Me: Ooh! Grrr! (My stomach grumbled again).

A flush Later...

Me: Well, that was relaxing.

Alex: Yeah... Yeah... right. Can we talk about something else? Go and Check if the storm has stopped.

Me: Don't order me like that. Why can't you go and check with your fancy superpowers?

Alex: You know what, I am really fascinated by this quality.

Me: What quality?

Alex: How dumb can you be? I already told you that I am a part of you. My powers or rather your powers are in your body. I am no God or angel that could just be everywhere or know everything. I am bound by your physical senses too. So, my fancy powers can't know about the weather outside without your sorry ass being there in the first place.

Me: Why are you so mean? I was just kidding.

Alex: I am not mean. I just get irritated very easily when some people can't understand a simple point I've already explained to them in detail. Now would you please go and see what the weather is like?

As I opened my front door. I could feel that the winds had calmed down. The dark cloud blanket had many holes in it through which the sunlight was pouring in. This tattered blanket was also now being slowly carried away by this wind. The atmosphere was refreshing. I decided to take a walk along the shore.

Alex: this is nice, isn't it?

Max: Yeah. It is.

Alex: This brings back memories, doesn't it? Remember the time when you used to race with your grandpa here?

Me: I do. It used to be a daily evening activity. Now stop looking into my memories they are private.

Alex: I am not looking into them I already have them, this one just popped up due to the smell of the sea breeze.

Me: Let's just sit here for a while.

Alex: Yeah sure.

I don't remember how long I sat there in a trance just looking at the sea. I re-lived all those days that I spent here with my grandpa. It seemed just like yesterday that he was there with me.

Alex: Pss.. Pss.. Are you done with your walk down memory lane?

Me: Hmm. Tell me.

Alex: Wanna see something cool?

Me: Sure.

Alex: OK. Pick up that small white pebble and place it on your right-hand palm. Keep the palm open.

Me: OK.

Alex: Now watch this.

And in front of my eyes, the pebble started to levitate a few inches above my palm.

Me: Cool!

Alex: I think it's possible for me to channel a small part of the energy even when you are awake. Now you try it.

Me: Me? How? I can't even find the energy within me, let alone control it.

Alex: Don't worry. I'll control the amount of it. You just focus on controlling the flow.

Me: Ok.

It slowly started to feel heavier. Even though the pebble was levitating it felt like I was holding a larger weight in my hands two or three times the pebble's size. But my excitement was making me quickly get used to it.

Me: You are still controlling the amount, right?

Alex: Yeah.

Me: Then watch this.

As the pebble floated, I tried to mentally shift its weight towards the right of my palm. It started to drift towards the right. And slowly I was able to make it revolve around me. Like the moon revolves around the Earth.

Alex: Nice! Let's try to do it some other day. Now I am feeling drowsy again.

Me: Oh Sure. Let's go back home for now.

## *Chapter 3*

# Testing My Superpowers

“Psssh! wake up.” I heard a whisper.

I tried to open my eyes but it was still dark. I tried to again force myself to wake up and I managed to do that. But something was off. I could feel my bedsheet, I could smell my bedroom and I could even hear my clock tick. But the only thing was that I could not see. I tried blinking my eyes I could feel them blink too, but nothing.

A few seconds into it all the sirens in my head went off. I tried to feel my eyes but they felt normal. I tried to focus on my eyes hoping something might happen, but still nothing. This only fueled the flame. My breath became frantic and my throat went dry. I hurriedly got out of my bed losing my mind. I was unable to think straight.

“What are you panicking about now?” I heard Alex.

“I ... I can’t see,” I replied.

Alex: “What do you mean you can’t see? I can see which means your eyes are fine,”

Me: “But, I really cant! Its pitch black for me right now!”

Alex: “What? Oh! Just a min... Try now.”

I closed my eyes and slowly started to open them again. And my vision started to get clearer and in a few seconds, my eyesight was back. I took a sigh of relief.

“Thanks, Man. You really saved me. But what did you do?” I inquired.

Alex: “Ah.. well.. no problem buddy. Actually it was my bad. I forgot to enable the optic nerve receiving ports in the brain, I was trying something with the eyes, but it’s all good now.”

Me: “What? You did what with my eyes? Do you even know I could’ve died if you messed up even a little.”

Alex: “Oh Please! Don’t be a bitch now. You wouldn’t have died just because of an optic nerve not working properly. Worst case scenario would be that you would’ve gone blind, that’s all.”

Me: “What the hell is wrong with you? Going blind is no joke you dumb-ass!”

Alex: “Woah!! chill out! you are just overreacting. I was just kidding. I’ll explain in simple terms suppose you own a webcam and forgot to plug it into the computer someday then that doesn’t mean the webcam itself is broken. It’s the same thing with your eyes. Since your optic nerve receiving points were disabled doesn’t mean you have gone blind. It’s just that the optic nerve data was not able to reach your brain so that it could process the information that your eyes were seeing. That’s why you couldn’t see anything. And I am sorry by the way I should have asked your permission first.”

Me: “Yeah alright. Just don’t ever do this again. But I have a doubt too. How were you able to do it? Like I have never heard of anyone being able to turn their vision off on will.”

Alex: “Oh well, because you people use your conscious mind to be active while awake. And it doesn’t have that access. While

on the other hand I am literally in your subconscious mind so I kind of have admin access to all your bodily functions.”

Me: “So if that’s the case then you can even stop my heart from beating anytime you want?”

Alex: “Well its an involuntary action so technically yes, I can do that. But there is one issue with that?”

Me: “And what is that?”

Alex: “I will also die if you die. So why on earth would I do such a thing?”

Me: “Oh!. Makes Sense.”

Alex: “I want to go the beach now. And I can see that now you are awake so lets go.”

Me: “Ok. Just give me a minute. I’ll change into my beach clothes.”

Alex: “Change? Dude seriously? I literally showed you yesterday that you have superpowers. And you still wanna go wear your beach shorts first?”

Me: “Ah. Well. Actually, they are on the way down only in the laundry basket so we have go by there anyhow.”

Alex: “Oh gosh! Listen, just let me do my things, ok? You just focus on the direction we are going in.”

And in a few moments, I could feel an energy radiating from my feet. I looked down and was shocked to see that I was levitating a few inches above the ground.

Alex: “Hang Tight! Here we go!”

And now I could feel my body being lifted up by the energy from my feet. But it was so sudden for me that I lost my balance and started wobbling like a balloon in the water tub.

Alex: "What the hell are you doing?"

Me: "I.. I don't know. It's all happening without me knowing."

SLAM!! THUD!! I crashed into the wall of my bedroom and fell to the ground.

"Ah!! it hurts," I groaned in pain.

Alex: "Well yeah it should. Can't you just remain calm instead of flying like a pinata all over the place."

Me: "I tried. Its not that I wanted to crash in my wall. I never had this experience before."

Alex: "OK. Let's take it slow this time."

And before I could reply my body started to float again, but this time it was a bit different. I was able to control my body's posture which in turn helped in controlling my levitation.

Alex: "Okay now step 2."

Me: "Wait!"

BANG!! THUD!! This time I crashed into the ceiling and was on the ground again.

Alex: "Well it does seem to me that you are quite inexperienced at this. I really think we should go out first and then give it a try."

Me: "Oh! Really!"

So, after getting back to my senses. I was back at the same location where I hovered a pebble in my hand.

Alex: "Let's try it one more time just don't panic like before. I got the energy flow you take care of the direction."

Me: "Ok"

And my body started to levitate above ground and now it started rising higher and higher. In a few minutes, I was floating in mid-

air. I instinctively pushed my body weight forward and now I was moving forward too.

Me: "Alex. I think I got the hang of this. Let's do this then."

Alex: "Ok you asked, but don't blame me if you die."

And now I could feel as if there were rocket thrusters attached to my feet propelling me forward at an incredible speed. I could now feel the wind gushing past me and the ocean looked like a blue blur. The feeling was amazing. When I felt that I was far away from the shoreline I descended enough so that I could touch the waters and it felt exactly how they show in the superhero movies. I was on top of myself.

I flew in a straight line as per my sense of direction and tried to fly as fast as I could. And then in the distance, I could see some buildings. I adjusted my height to have a bird's eye view of the town.

Alex: "Dude. Something's not right."

Me: "What? What do you mean?"

Alex: "Look closely. It's your town. The town from whose shore you flew away from."

Me: "What the... This can't be possible."

As I flew above the town my mind was now full of questions. I suddenly heard a loud noise. I turned around to see a black storm cloud inching closer to me. Lighting sparks glowed in its different parts at irregular intervals.

At that moment the best option that I could think of was to go back home and wait this storm out and then try to find any other answers. I did just that. Landed on the beach and ran towards my house. And the closing click of my door brought the rain and thunder.

## *Chapter 4*

# Trying to make sense of things

“What the hell was that?”

“How am I supposed to know?”

“It really doesn't make sense.”

As I shut the door close in my house. The heavens started emptying their reservoir. The storm lasted for quite a while. I sat by the window of my room waiting for it to calm down.

Alex: “So? Did you figure it out?”

Me: “Figure out what? You and I have the same mind If I had figured it out you would have known already.”

Alex: “Yeah, yeah. No need to get all cranky now. I was just kidding.”

Me: “But tell me one thing how did you know it was our town by just looking once from above. I have never flown over this own before.”

Alex: “Yeah but you have seen maps of the town before. And so that information is available in your mind I just used it.”

Me: “But it still dosen't make sense. How can we end up in the same place after flying away from it.”

Alex: “Well I have thought of something, but I need to test something first. Let’s go on a flight again.”

Me: “What have you found? Tell me.”

Alex: “I will. But I need to see something first.”

The storm had now calmed down, but the grey sky remained. We went to the same place for take-off. And this time the flight seemed to be much smoother.

Alex: “Go straight”

I kept flying straight and then again a town started to become visible at some distance. To my surprise, it was my town again.

Alex: “Don’t stop keep going”

I did, again and again. After what seemed like the nth time, I was able to see my town again in the distance. I was on the verge of losing my patience.

Me: “Seriously what the hell is going on. If you don’t tell me this moment, I am going to land in the middle of the street now.”

Alex: “Ok. Don’t panic. Let’s go to the place where we took off. And have a walk on the beach. The weather seems to be calm now.”

I followed his instructions.

Me: “Are you going to tell me what is going on or not?”

Alex: “It seems that we are trapped here.”

Me: “OO! so insightful. Why didn’t I think of that!!”

Alex: “Will you let me complete?”

Me: “Go on then.”

Alex: “See I thought that I might see some sort of change while you were flying through the place and ending up at the same

place. But it all seems to be a perfect blend. It's like we are in a whole different world which is connected front to back."

Me: "So you mean like another dimension?"

Alex: "Could be. But that is the catch. I am not sure. Because usually whenever you travel into a new dimension there has to be some sort of physiological change that also comes with it. Like for example your perception of time, your becoming unable to breathe or a sudden change in your thought process. If there was anything different about you, I would have known immediately. But there is nothing. That is what bothers me."

Me: "What do you suggest we do now?"

Alex: "You do have the power of flight now. Let's once trying going up."

Me: "Ok."

And up we went. It was amazing to go above the clouds in one swoop. But after that, it seemed that we were just not going anywhere. The sky just kept getting farther the more we tried to reach it. And after a while, we decided to land.

We also tried flying towards the left side of the town, but the same thing happened we came from the right side of the town. It felt like in this world the town was the original center of everything.

My head was full of questions now and I was also getting exhausted by the continuous flight. So, I decided that it would be best that I just went back home and took a rest first and figured out other things afterwards. Alex agreed with it too. We landed and went back home. I was so tired after the flight that I fell asleep as soon as I reached home.

## *Chapter 5*

### **The Plane**

My pillow felt softer than usual and I snuggled further into it.

“Hello sir, good morning. You will be arriving at your destination in 30 mins.” I heard a woman’s voice.

“Yeah okay.” I replied lazily and dozed off.

A minute later all the alarms in my head went off and I woke up with a start. I sat upright on my bed or rather what I thought was my bed. As my vision cleared, I could make out that I was in a capsule seat the ones they use in business class airlines.

It took me a few more minutes to come to my senses and realize that I was in a cabin on a plane, I could see the clouds passing by through the window on my right.

“Hello sir, would you like some morning refreshments?” I heard a familiar voice. I turned to my right to see a pretty lady dressed up in all red. With the perfect air hostess smile looking at me waiting for an answer.

“Ah, yes! I would like tea but in some time. May I know where the washroom is?” I replied.

“Sure sir, I’ll leave it here for you. The washroom is on the right, at the end of this lane.” She said while pointing in the direction.

I was still trying to make sense of all this. I slowly got out of my capsule and started walking towards the washroom. On my way, I could see some very unfamiliar faces sipping their tea and reading their newspaper while deliberately trying to deny my existence.

As I locked the washroom door behind me and washed my face, this new reality started to catch up with me. My mind flooded with questions, “Is this a dream? how did I get here? and where am I even going on this plane? what is all this even about?”

This all felt too real to be a dream, I tried reaching out to Alex but didn’t get any response. I was in a situation where I didn’t know what to do or even how to react, I was freaking out and yet was curious to see how everything goes. Finally, after some self-discussion, I decided to go with it and see how things turn out.

I then returned back to my capsule which had now transformed into a recliner seat with a neatly placed breakfast and tea on the side table.

As I took the first bite of the omelette, it just melted in my mouth. I sipped my tea enjoying sailing through the clouds. After I completed, I just set aside the utensils and sat by the window.

“Are you done sir?” I heard a familiar voice. I saw the same pretty lady waiting again for my reply with a smile on her face.

“Yes, thank you” I replied.

She nodded and then took my breakfast plates with her.

“Hi all, this is your captain speaking we are currently heading into some bad weather so you might face some slight turbulence. Please don’t be alarmed. Kindly fasten your seat belts you can unfasten them once we are out of this. The staff are requested

to assist the passengers in this request and then go back to your stations too. Thank you,” an announcement was made.

I fastened my seat belt and could see a few air hostesses walking up and down this small plane making sure everyone was having their seat belts on. I turned my attention to my window where it seemed like the plane was entering into a dark blanket, and within a few minutes, it was pitch black outside the plane. The cabin lights went on and I could sense the tension growing among the other passengers as they clenched their armrests. The winds were howling outside like a pack of wolves.

But then it suddenly got quiet, it was as if a cloak of silence covered the plane. I tried to look outside to see what was happening.

**BOOM!**

A loud sound came as I could see a huge hole in the side of the plane sucking everything out. The plane suddenly started to lose altitude and all I could hear were horrified screams and yelling as everything went to hell.

And then everything abruptly became quiet.

## *Chapter 6*

### **Welcome to Reality**

I woke up with a start, struggling to get a hold of my breath. I was sweating profusely and my heart was pounding against my chest. My vision slowly cleared and the silence of my room greeted me. My head was feeling light and it took me a few minutes to realize that I had just came back from the land of dreams.

“Blake are you awake?” I heard a female voice coming from downstairs.

“Blake? Who the hell is Blake?” I thought to myself.

“Come on hurry up the breakfast is ready. I have to leave for work as well,” the voice came again.

As I slipped out of my bed, something felt wrong. I didn’t know what it was but it just didn’t feel right. I got downstairs and could see that the breakfast had toast and an omelette laid out for me. As I sat down to eat, a homely feeling took over me. It just felt good to be there.

A few minutes later the voice came with its body which was an old-aged woman with bright silver boy-cut hair wearing a pink Hawaiian shirt and blue jeans.

She hugged me from behind and whispered in my ear, “Good morning sweetie, I’ll be back early today and then we can go on our beach walk together. You be a good boy. If you feel hungry then there is some cash on the counter go out and have something. Love you, bye-bye.” She then kissed me on the cheek and I watched the front door close behind her.

My thoughts were a swirling mess. I definitely knew her but couldn’t figure out who she was exactly or rather what she was doing in my house cooking breakfast for me.

My head hurt every time I tried to concentrate, so I just decided to go back to sleep after having my breakfast in the hopes of getting better.

Everything felt hazy as I lay in bed and then everything went dark again.

“Hello Sweetie, wake up.” I heard the same voice again.

As I opened my eyes, I could see the same lady smiling at me.

“Come on, get up and let’s go to the beach, the sun’s setting and it looks so pretty,” she said and went downstairs.

Things still seemed unclear to me, and my thoughts were a mess. I was sure that I knew this lady but the details were still not clear to me. At this point, I was just going with the flow.

I got out of my house and followed the lady to the beach. The weather was nice just as she said. The breeze was calm and the sea was preparing for the night.

My head was still heavy but I just decided to ask whatever came into my mind.

“Who are you?” I just said blatantly.

“What?” she replied.

“Who are you?” I repeated.

“I am your grandma sweetie. Are you ok?” she said quizzically.

“What?” I said.

“Yeah, what’s wrong with you? You are behaving very weirdly today,” she said

“Ah.. I am not sure exactly something just seems off to me and my thoughts are all hazy. I am not even sure who I am,” I said.

“Oh dear, let’s go back and have a talk on this. I’ll make some hot chocolate for you. it will help you for sure,” she smiled.

We then went back to our home.

## *Chapter 7*

### **Getting to Know the Truth**

As I sat with her on my dining table sipping hot chocolate. I was having trouble articulating my thoughts. The more I tried to concentrate the more messed up they got.

Grandma: “So sweetie tell me what’s bothering you?”

Me: “Ah.. I am really not sure how to explain it to you.”

Grandma: “Don’t stress about it, dear. Just tell me whatever comes to your mind we will see it through together.”

Me: “Ok. I think I had a dream. But it seemed very real to me. It was as if I lived a whole other life and was a completely different person.”

Grandma: “A different life? why do you say that?”

Me: “Because it felt very real to me. I don’t remember everything in detail but there was someone named Alex in that. And also, I think I had some sort of flying superpower. And after that, I also remember being on a plane. But it’s not very clear to me what happened there.”

Grandma: “But sweetie. It’s ok we have weird dreams all the time. You don’t have to stress on it so much.”

Me: “I know that but, this time it just feels different and also very real to me. It feels as if I am in the wrong place. And when today you called me Blake, I don’t think that’s my name either. I can vaguely remember but I think my actual name is Max. I don’t think I remember you clearly either. I feel like I know you from somewhere but the details are very hazy. I know I sound like a complete idiot and like a crazy person. But I really do believe that I am not supposed to be here.”

Grandma: “Hmmm.. Ok.. Calm down first. I am not here to judge you. You say you remember someone named Alex, try to only concentrate on that and tell me what else can you remember from that. Don’t panic if things seem unclear or they don’t make any sense. Just tell me whatever you can and then we will discuss it further”.

Me: “Hmm ok. Let me think for a minute”

Grandma: “Sure, Take your time.”

Me: “I remember that this house was exactly the same. But I used to live alone. And Alex was my friend. That part is still not clear. But I do remember a part where Alex helped me fly. I could hear his voice clearly and he was guiding me too. Not sure how but he was there with me the whole time. And it also felt really good when I was able to fly, I felt like I could do anything in this world. And it also felt like I belonged there. And that is why being here with you feels really weird to me.”

Grandma: “Apart from this, anything else would you like to share?”

Me: “Yeah, at one point of time I was also in some plane. But I am having difficulty in remembering the details of that. It was just before I woke up here.”

The expression on her face had now changed. She seemed more serious now.

Grandma: “Let me jog your memory first. Your name is Blake Clark. You are my grandson. You have a mother and a father with whom you have lived your entire life. You have come to my house for a summer break. You do this every year.”

Me: “Blake Clark... Hmm...”

Grandma: “And yeah, I know what I am saying might seem completely absurd to you. And there is a very logical explanation for that.”

Me: “And that is?”

Grandma: “You are going through a reality lag. It happens when your consciousness jumps back and forth between alternate realities. It tends to mess up your memories if you are not careful. And your original reality seems like a place you don’t belong because your memories from the alternate reality gets fixed in your mind.”

Me: “What? Wait, Wait ... Reality lag? And also back up a bit on all the stuff you said earlier I didn’t understand a thing.”

Grandma: “Ok. I’ll simplify it for you. Do you know what a jet lag is?”

Me: “Yeah, it happens when people travel between multiple time zones and their internal sleep clock gets disturbed because of that and mostly they have trouble sleeping after that.”

Grandma: “Yes. Correct. Now our consciousness does the same thing by travelling between multiple alternate realities. A same kind of effect happens but instead of our perception of time it affects our memories. From what you told it seems your consciousness travelled between two different realities and then came back to your original one. But since you didn’t do it willingly it seems to have tampered with your memories and now you feel like an alien in your own world.”

Me: “What do you mean my consciousness traveled? Like I was dead or something? And how is that even possible?”

Grandma: “Yes, your consciousness left this reality and jumped into an alternate reality. No, you were not dead your body was in a state of limbo. And yes, that is possible for us to do because we are not human.”

Me: “What? You just said I have a mother and a father. Then how can I be not human?”

Grandma: “Having a human mother and father doesn’t make you a human. Because human memories are very easy to tamper with. When we came to this planet, I changed their memories to think that you are their child.”

Me: “Wait. This doesn’t make any sense. You just changed their memories to think I was their child and no one noticed. Not a single person found it to be odd or suspect anything fishy about that?”

Grandma: “That’s the trick to it. I didn’t have to overwrite everything. I just had to alter the memories of everyone who was present in the delivery room. In total 5 people, 2 nurses, 1 doctor and your father and mother. After that you were in their care and all their memories are built around you.”

Me: “If what you say is true then how come you are my grandmother?”

Grandma: “Because your father was an orphan. But I altered his memories too. So, he thinks of me as his mother.”

Me: “But isn’t it wrong and unethical to play with someone’s memories like this?”

Grandma: “Your dad never knew about love and support. I became his mom to give him the love and care which he yearned for. And your mom was infertile; she had no clue about that. So

instead of letting her go through the pain of not being able to bear a child ever. I just gave her the feeling of motherhood, so what is wrong with that?"

Me: "You say you altered their memories of giving birth to me? But what about the times when she was pregnant?"

Grandma: "Human physiology is very simple and it is very easy to fake the pregnancy symptoms in them. It was also convenient that your mother stayed with me and your father the whole time she was pregnant."

Me: "Who are we? And why are you telling me all this only now? When you raised me since I was a child you could have raised me to all this? So why didn't you?"

Grandma: "We as in The Galactors. I didn't tell you earlier because a Galactor child's powers take a lot of time to develop and unless you showed any symptoms of having your power awakened there was no point in explaining it to you. Because first, you wouldn't get it and second you would have centered your life around a power that you were not even sure would awaken. Everything has its own time and place."

Me: "I am really confused now. Please tell me from the beginning, starting from the Galactors."

Grandma: "Ok. First, you have to understand a few things. This universe that we are in is not some random chunk of rock and debris floating aimlessly and orbiting stars and galaxies. Rather it's a living and thinking being. In simple terms, if you consider your body to be the universe then we in this sense are the bacteria in your gut. And even though we are sentient because of the sheer difference in scale and perception, to us the universe seems like an infinite place.

Now, Galactors are the first sentient beings from this universe. We for the humans, are an alien civilization with highly

advanced technological skills. Assuming ourselves to be the masters of the universe, like the humans, we were on the verge of self-destruction. That is when the universe stepped in. Or to be more accurate, she projected her consciousness into our world and our ancestors then came to call her mother. Mother told us about the reality of space-time and all that is within her. And saved our species from self-annihilation.

Every species whether they are aware or not has their purpose in this universe. Even though we might never come in contact with any of them. They still have their purpose and live only to fulfill that purpose. Mother also taught us that everything in the universe is connected even though the connection is not widely visible. Humans have a very clever way to describe it, they say “What goes around, comes around”.

Every millennium or so the universes have a mating season. After which a universe bears a child which in turn forms a new universe. We call this child the ‘infinite baby’. As galactors, our job is to protect this child from internal threats until it's big enough to be given birth by the universe. Or that is what our job was supposed to be. You see, the infinite baby in its initial stages is just raw energy and before it gains consciousness it's very fragile and if all its power is released at once it could end up annihilating the universe itself. Mother helped us build a containment field for the baby. You might be thinking that if the universe itself is so powerful then why doesn't it do something itself to protect the baby instead of relying on the galactors? The answer to that is that when a universe gets pregnant it takes a toll on her and even projecting her consciousness in order to do something to protect the baby becomes a difficult task. So usually, the universe goes into a slumber until the day the baby is to be born.

Now this brings me to us. I was also a galactor who swore on her life to protect the baby. I was the army chief and I was

happily doing my job. I had a son and a daughter-in-law and we were a happy family.

But, our king got manipulated by one of his ministers and decided to have the baby for himself in order to use it to control the universe. Anyone who opposed him was executed and at that time I was on a different mission in a nearby galaxy. By the time I got back, my son had been killed and the whole planet was in chaos. My daughter-in-law, your actual mother died while giving birth to you. And I took it upon myself to protect you. But before I was about to leave one of my confidant's managed to steal the baby from the king's grasp and we escaped from the planet. And came to one of the farthest and barren places in the universe which the humans call the Milky Way galaxy. I landed here on earth 16 years ago. And have been in hiding since."

Me: "But didn't the king sent his forces behind you?"

Grandma: "He sure would have but the reason I called this place a barren land is because this planet is so primitive in its technology that it doesn't leave any radio trace in its trail and there is a lot of noise in the Milky Way which makes it difficult for spaceship trackers to function properly."

Me: "Ok. So where do we go from here then?"

Grandma: "See the infinite baby is not mature enough to defend itself. It still needs to be protected. I am also not in my prime to be able to protect it on my own. So, you will have to step in as the next protector."

Me: "What? I just came to know about its existence a few minutes ago and now I have to be its protector. And how am I supposed to do that? I can't even kill a fly let alone protect a cosmic being."

Grandma: “See dear, I never said that I am going to die tomorrow and you will be left alone to protect it. I will train you in our way of fighting and then you will be able to do the same. But, If you are going to behave like a whiny bitch like you are doing right now. I swear I will kill you first myself.”

Me: “Ah.. oh.. ok. Sorry Grandma.”

Grandma: “Yeah alright. Now go and take some rest. We will start your training from tomorrow.”

## *Chapter 8*

### **First Day at Training**

“Wake up soldier! its 4:00 o’clock” I heard a stern voice. While still drowsy, I pushed myself out of the bed. I stifled a yawn and as my vision cleared I could see my grandma in some sort of training uniform standing in front of me. Her clothes were similar to a tracksuit.

“Here. Change into these and be downstairs in 5 minutes,” she said and left the room.

I was quite surprised as I had no memory of my grandmother being like this. After our previous conversation, my memory had now started to come back little by little. I guess a good night's sleep was all that I needed. I changed into the uniform she gave me and went downstairs. To my surprise, she wasn't standing near the front door but rather standing in front of the washroom at the back side of the house. As I reached her, she signaled me to go inside. Before I could say anything, she followed me, closed the door behind her and then went straight near the bathtub and pressed her hand on the 4th tile from the top. As she pressed it a robotic voice responded, “Biometric authentication complete.”

And the bathtub just slid along with the floor to the side revealing a glowing staircase going downwards. It reminded me of the staircase that they usually show in cheap UFO movies.

As we reached the bottom, the entire area suddenly lit up and what I saw left me short of words. It was a huge area, pure white in color. There were panels going in each direction as far as I could see, they had a metallic finish to them and I could hear some instruments starting up in the distance. The panels had all sorts of buttons and screens on them and some text kept floating across the screens but I couldn't read as there were only symbols. The floor and ceiling looked almost the same.

From the direction we walked in, Grandma went straight and stood in front of a wall which had a screen attached to it and started typing something. I couldn't understand what she was doing, so I decided to have a look around. The place looked the same in every direction, I wondered how did she even know which way to go.

As I was looking around, something caught my eye. I could see a faint light coming from one side of the walls. As I reached closer to it, I realized that it was another smaller area cramped up between two walls. As I stood in front of the area, I could see that the purple light was actually coming from a cylindrical container with a dark object floating at the center of it. The cylinder walls were made of glass but had two discs covering the top and the bottom. The entire setup was about as tall as I was.

"This is the infinite baby," I heard a voice speak from behind me. I was startled and turned around to see it was my grandmother. "This is what this has all been about," she continued, "The dark mass you see in the centre that's the baby. Currently, it is still forming so we are able to see and perceive

it in our 3 dimensions slowly it will transcend the dimensions as well. Come now, the training chamber is ready”.

The training chamber didn’t look like much it was a small room with a white tiled floor and pale blue tiled ceiling and was barely big enough to fit the two of us.

“So, are you ready to begin?” My grandmother asked.

“I am. But one question first. What is this place? And how long did it take you to build in your basement?” I said

“What? HAHAHA! No, who said I built it? And this is not a place. It’s the ship I came to earth in. The house is built on top of this thing.” She replied.

Me: “Ok. So, what is this training chamber? And why is it so small?”

Grandma: “Because I haven’t started it yet, we are still in the loading bay. Cynthia, boot up the training regime 456-901.”

Cynthia: “Loading the sequence. The expected wait time is 30 seconds.”

Me: “Who Is Cynthia?”

Grandma: ” I forgot to tell you. It’s the ship’s AI.”

As I nodded, I could see an entire forest just conjured up out of thin air. As far as I could see there were only trees. And at the end of the forest, I could see a hill.

Grandma: “This the training chamber we use to train our soldiers between missions. It can simulate any environment that you want. I’ve set it to a beginner level and your first task is to reach the top of that hill and wait for me. You can now start. I’ll be back after I make some arrangements so that your training can continue without a hitch. If you have any questions, just ask Cynthia. Carry on then. Bye.”

And then she left.

Me: “Cynthia?”

Cynthia: “Yes Blake.”

Me: “Ah. where are you?”

Cynthia: “I am right here Blake.”

Me: “Well I can’t see you. So, it’s a bit difficult to be able talk to you.”

I could then see a small shape emerging out of thin air, which slowly started to look like a pixie. The pixie then opened her eyes and spoke, “Hello, is this better?”

Me: “Cynthia?”

Cynthia: “Yes, its me. I took this form as I found out that you perceive this character as a reliable guide”.

Me: “Wait. What do you mean you found out?”

Cynthia: “I did a neural scan of your brain when you arrived. That’s how I knew that your name was blake, and your favorite site for pornographic content is xv...”

Me: “WOAH! WOAH! OK! OK! I get it now. You don’t need to go into the details. I believe you. what am I supposed to do now?”

Cynthia: “Your task is to reach the top of that hill.”

Me: “I know that already. What if I get hungry?”

Cynthia: “I can conjure up organic dishes as well. this ship has an organic printer”

Me: “And what if I need to go to the loo?”

Cynthia: “For evacuating your bowels I can also conjure a restroom facility. The waste matter will be also disposed in accordance with my waste management protocols.”

Me: “What if I hurt myself?”

Cynthia: “Sorry you have now reached your quota for daily questions.”

Grandma: “Blake! Stop your whining and get to the top of the fucking hill!

Cynthia: “Feel free to contact me if you need anything.”

And then she vanished.

I could see the hill. I estimated the journey would take me a day to reach the bottom of the hill. I just started walking.

## *Chapter 9*

### **The Arrival**

It took me about a day and a half but I finally reached the footsteps of the hill. It was exhausting yet fun. Cynthia helped me with food and water although she could only conjure fruits, that was a bummer. After a trek for another day, I finally reached the top. The view from above was spectacular. I could now see that the training room itself was shaped like a dome. There were trees in each direction and the starting point was visible as a small clearing on the edge of the forest.

Grandma: “Ah so you finally made it.”

Me: “How did you get here?” I asked surprised

Grandma: “The same way you did.”

Me: “Seriously it took me about two days to get here. And you are saying that you got here the same way I did?”

Grandma: “Yeah. Oh yes and one more thing.” And her body dropped like an empty husk.

Me: “WTF? Grandma!”

Grandma: “Look behind you I am still here.”

As I turned around, I could see a beautiful figure floating in front of me. Her hair eyes and mouth seemed to be made out of

pure white light and her entire body glowed a sky-blue color. As she flew around, I could see how graceful she looked and how her hair left a trail of light behind her wherever she went.

Grandma: “AHH! Finally!! It has been so long since I took this form. You see this is the true form of us Galactors. We are initially born with a skin but once we mature, we get the ability to shed it and recreate it on command and to any form that we like. Soon you will also be able to do the same. Enough talk now. Ask Cynthia to make a weapon for you and let’s have our first duel. Don’t worry I won’t kill you.”

“This old lady is thinking too much of herself. I’ll let her have this one. I’ll try to go easy on her for now. I wish Cynthia could make me a wooden sword.”

BLINK!

A sword popped in my hand.

Me: “DAMN! Those neural scanners.”

Grandma: “Ok now come at me.”

Me: “Are you sure you are still unarmed.”

Grandma: “Did I stutter?”

Me: “OK Madame. You asked for it.”

And I charged at her. I raised my hand to strike her but the moment my sword was about to touch her body she vanished. And before I could react, she appeared right next to me.

SMACK! THUD!

I fell face forward on the ground.

Grandma: “Stand up. And come at me again. I know you can handle more than this.”

I stood up, dusted myself and charged again. A second or so later THUD! I was again on the ground.

Grandma: "Again!"

THUD!

Grandma: "Again!"

THUD!

This process continued for days, which turned into months. As far as I could guess I was about to cross the 1-year mark. We only stopped to eat and sleep. But day after day I could now finally see how she travelled so fast and was able to anticipate her next move.

Grandma: "Ok! Goldilocks. Let's do this one more time."

I charged at her like usual. Before my sword could reach her, she vanished. But by this time, I had learned to follow the light trail that she leaves behind, so I guessed that she was going to appear on my right. And then she did. I quickly turned my gaze towards her and looked her in the eye, this seemed to have caught her off guard and she froze for a second or so. It was enough time for me to rotate and swing my sword right at her. I was finally able to hit her body after all this time. Even though she blocked my attack it was a big accomplishment for me.

Grandma: "Good job! Your attack managed to reach me. Now we can say that you have reached Level 1 for basic combat."

Me: "WHAT!?! This whole time was for Level 1!"

Grandma: "Oh yeah. Absolutely. I was going easy on you didn't you notice?"

I was too dumbfounded to give any response.

Grandma: "Well, that's enough for now. Now let's go outside I want you to meet some people. They must have arrived by now."

As I stepped out of the training chamber, I started feeling dizzy all of a sudden. It got so intense that I had to sit on the floor to avoid tripping.

Grandma: “Everything ok?”

Me: “Yeah. I just started feeling dizzy all of a sudden.”

Grandma: “Oh that’s ok. It’s normal to feel that way once you are out of the training chamber. You see you just came out of the time field so your body is trying to get used to the time perception of the real world again. Give it a few minutes it’ll pass.”

Me: “Oh ok. We were in there for quite a while. I roughly assumed it was about a year. So how much time has passed out here?”

Grandma: ”1 hour.”

Me: “What!”

Grandma: “Oh yeah. In the training chamber we are also allowed to configure the time and gravity parameters for the training as well”

Me: “But it seriously felt like almost a year had passed in there.”

Grandma: “Yes because it did. The time field affects the time inside the chamber. Time was going in there a lot faster than out here. I did it so that I can at least teach you the basics in a short span of time. Now go into the house and have a shave and shower you look like an ape.”

By the time I cleaned up and got changed. I could hear a few people’s voices coming from downstairs. As I reached the living room, I could see that there were three people in there along with my grandma. I could see there was an Asian guy with spectacles, a white lady about the age of my mother and a

black lady who looked a little bit older than me. As I stepped in, everyone turned and was now looking at me.

My grandma came by my side and said, "Hello everyone this is my grandson, Blake."

"Hi Blake," everyone responded in chorus.

She then led me by my hand to introduce me to everyone. Then I found out that, the Asian guy's name was Ren and he was her team's technician, The black lady's name was Olivia and she was my grandmother's second in command and the white lady was Margaret she was the team's physician. Everyone seemed quite friendly and welcoming. In the small time we spent together they had already nicknamed me Fruitcake. Why? because the smell of the soap I used reminded them of a fruitcake. I had never seen Grandma so happy and in such a good mood before. I could just tell that these were her closest friends and around whom she could put her guard down. As the dinner was being prepared, Ren asked me to accompany him on a walk on the beach. My grandmother was busy chatting with the other two so I didn't bother her and we quietly left the house for a short walk.

Ren: "You have grown quite a lot since I last saw you."

Me: "Well, not many options were available to me."

Ren: "HAHA! Yeah! I get it."

Me: "So for how long have you worked with my grandmother?"

Ren: "Oh with Major Greene. I actually can't remember the exact time it's been so long. She was my recruiting officer and I have been with her on every mission since then."

Me: "Can you tell me something about my mom and dad? I was hesitant regarding this so I never asked her. As I didn't know how she would react?"

Ren: “Hmm. I can understand. Well, I didn’t know them personally but I have heard the stories about them from Major Greene. Your father was a scientist and an inventor in fact of the same ship which got us here. Its fusion drive was designed by your father. Your mother was your father’s assistant at first. But then they fell in love and got married and had you. I do remember this though, Major Greene was very fond of your mother and used to always praise her. She also used to say that your mother was the only woman who can get your father to do anything. To me they sounded like a happy family.”

Me: “Thanks for telling me that. And what about you? Did you also leave your family behind to come here?”

Ren: “My mother was the only family that I ever knew. And it was her dream that I join the army. After I joined the army, and while I was on a mission in a different galaxy. I got the news that she had passed away. And after that Major Greene was only one whom I consider as my family as she was only one who supported me in that difficult time.”

Me: “Sorry for your loss.”

Ren: “No worries. It happened a long time ago. You were not even born then.”

Me: “So how was my grandmom in the field?”

Ren: “Well Major Greene was as good as they get. Her battlefield name was The Red Queen. Because she was the most ferocious fighter on our planet and every battle she went in turned out to be a victory for us. And even though she would get drenched in blood and sweat while fighting the enemy she would never give up and always come out on top. She was loved and cherished by everyone in the army.”

Me: “That’s great. She is a great person.”

Ren: “Yup. That she is.”

Me: “Can you tell me exactly what happened on the day you left? Because Grandma told me the story but I want to know the details as well. And she lost too many people on that day so I don’t want to bother her more with this.”

Ren: “Of course. But you need to know a few things first. On our planet, the King has two main advisors one is the chief of the army and the other is a political advisor. Major Greene was about to be the chief of the army as the current chief of the army had recently died. The political advisor at that time was named Heouborghblat, he was an asshole, to be honest. The ceremony for the appointment of the new army chief was to be held on the day we returned from our mission. But before that could happen, Heouborghblat saw an opportunity to manipulate the king and rise to power. He gave the King the promise of unlimited power by using the infinite baby and in the background got your father killed and imprisoned your mother and everyone else who was loyal to Major Greene. Then he appointed himself as the army chief. And the moment we landed, we were declared as traitors and locked up as well.

When Major Greene found out about your father, she became furious and then hatched a plan to escape the prison, and we followed her lead. She still had some people who were loyal to her, with their help she stole the infinite baby and got your mom out of the prison as well. Your mom did pass away while giving birth to you. But as we escaped something had changed in Major Greene, she never spoke about your father or mother after that. What bothers me most is that it's like seeing a volcano keep its calm waiting for its time...”

I did not know how to feel at this moment, I was overwhelmed.

Me: "I also had a few really weird dreams earlier. Grandmother said that they were reality lags. Have you had any such dreams too?"

Ren: "Oh did you go the sphere reality too?"

Me: "Yeah I think so, because from what I could remember I kept ending up at the same point. "

Ren: "Was the town named Perko?"

Me: "Yes. How do you know this?"

Ren: "Well reality lag takes everyone to a different place but it seems this Perko town is the most common one. From what I know, in that reality, everyone has some sort of extra worldly power and it gets triggered when we enter their minds. We usually avoid doing reality jumps, but when our power gets awakened sometimes it just becomes unavoidable. At Galactor, we educate our children regarding this so that if anything happens they are aware of it. I am sorry that you had to go through all this alone."

Me: "It's ok. I was able to snap out of it, so that worked out for me."

Ren: "The thing with reality lag is that it doesn't last very long, even for experienced galactorians it takes a huge toll on their psyche. So, we also don't indulge in it much."

Me: "I also remember being on a plane, did that happen to you too?"

Ren: "You jumped twice? Very interesting. It's very rare to see first-timers jump twice. For the plane thing, this one seems unique to you, I've never heard of such a jump from anyone else."

Ren: "...WTF? How did this happen?"

Ren was looking with his mouth open at the sky.

As I looked above, I could see something huge was coming down it was difficult to make out what exactly it was but one thing was sure that it was not alone and some smaller shapes were also slowly emerging right behind it.

Ren: "We need to go NOW!"

We bolted towards the house. Ren was leading me. As we reached the house, I could hear laughter coming from within.

Ren then rushed through the main door screaming, "They are here."

And the atmosphere in the room suddenly took a 180-degree turn. Everyone's faces changed their color. It seemed like despair itself had just entered the room and painted everyone's bodies.

My grandmother however was looking down at her feet. I didn't understand what was happening. But it was like she was giving away a murderous aura. Everyone unknowingly stepped away from her. I could see in their eyes it was as if they had seen the devil himself. She then started to slowly walk towards the door. Her presence had become so intimidating that I just wanted to run away from her. As she crossed by me, I wanted to speak to stop her. But fear had taken over me, it was unbelievable. All I could understand was that the person in front of me was no longer my grandmother. It was death itself. As she stood just outside the door, she glanced back and in a monotonous voice said "Gear Up. It's time." And then kept walking in that trance-like state outside. Once she left, I was finally able to catch my breath.

Olivia caught me by the arm and said, "Take me to the ship." We all then rushed to the ship. And everyone except me knew exactly what to do. They started wearing their armour took out

their guns and loaded them. I just stood there like an idiot trying to process all that was happening.

“Come to me.” I heard a faint voice calling to me.

I looked around but everyone else was busy in their tasks. “Come here,” I heard the voice again. It seemed to come from the direction from where the infinite baby was kept. I walked towards it until I faced it. “I will guide you and help you. Don’t worry you will get through this,” The voice I was hearing was in my head but all I could see in front of me was the black mass inside it floating in the center.

Olivia: “What are you doing here? Take this and get ready. OK?”

Me: “But.. That thing... It...”

Olivia: “We don’t have time for any of this. Get ready and let's GO! Margaret, you stay close to the ship in case we need evacuation, you can ask Cynthia for help in flying it. I and Ren will go and assist the Major. Blake, do you have any combat experience?”

Me: “I.. I only have basic training.”

Olivia: “Ok good enough you stay close to Margaret then help in protecting her and the ship. Ok everyone let’s head out.”

## *Chapter 10*

### **The RED Queen**

As discussed, I and Margaret stood at the door of the house, while Olivia and Ren moved towards my grandmother to assist her. From where I was, I could see that my grandmother was now in her true form, but something was off about her, the color of her hair and her body had now turned crimson red and she was floating at the beach a few centimeters above the ground as if waiting for someone.

Margaret: “Here take this and put it in your ear, it will help you understand”, she handed me a small white capsule I just put in my ear.

Me: “What is this?”

Margaret: “This is a long range microphone and a language translator. It will help you hear and understand whatever they talk.”

As we all stood there. The huge shape that was floating in the sky now opened a white door and three glowing figures started to float down to where my grandmother was. As they reached her, I could make out that the guy in the center was in charge and the other two looked like his bodyguards.

The guy in the center then spoke, "It's my pleasure to be in your presence, Major Greene. I am Bloartet, a humble servant of his majesty. I have come here to kindly escort you to his majesty."

Grandma: "How did you know to come here?"

Bloartet: "Well I do not have authority to disclose the details, but I would just say that we had some help."

After hearing this, Grandma turned her gaze towards us. And slowly said, "Who was it?" Even at this distance, I could feel her murderous aura coming directly towards us and it was suffocating me. As I looked towards the others they were backing off and as I turned, I saw Margaret had fallen on the floor as if her legs didn't work anymore and was sobbing uncontrollably.

Margaret: "I... I...I had become tired of this dump. I just wanted to go bac..."

WHOOSH! SLICK! THUD!

I felt a liquid just squirt on my face, which caused me to close my eyes. As I wiped the liquid, I could see it was some white glowing fluid. But as my vision cleared, I realized that my grandmother was not on the beach anymore she had vanished. I felt a strange presence coming from behind my back. I gulped nervously and turned around to see that my grandmother was standing right behind me with a huge sword in her hand that had the same white fluid patches on it. And on the floor lay the lifeless body of Margaret whose head has just been chopped off.

Before I could open my lips to say something, my grandmother vanished as quickly as she appeared before and was now back facing Bloartet.

Bloartet: "Well Major Greene, that was pretty rude of you to kill our friend like that. But no worries, our majesty is very

forgiving and our chief of army had already foretold that something like this might happen. What's done is done. Now you and your colleagues will be kind enough to join us?"

Grandma: "Is he here?"

Bloartet: "Pardon me madame. Is who here?"

Grandma: "Heouborghblat"

Bloartet: "Ah.. No. I apologize for this but our esteemed chief of army and the advisor to the king has not arrived with us here. He though has specifically requested me to convey this message to you that, we have arrived here with an army of 20,000 soldiers and if you don't cooperate with us. Your grandson along with you will have to face the same fate as your so..."

SLICK!!!

And in a matter of mere seconds, Bloartet's body was split into two. His bodyguards reached out to attack her but faced the same fate as their boss.

Now I could see the color of my grandmother's body and her aura had now turned to blood red.

She looked up at the sky, the vague shapes that I could see before now had become visible and were forming a circle over the top of my grandmother.

She looked back at me and smiled, at that moment I could see my grandmother whom I had been searching for until now. And then she flew directly towards the ship and with one fell swoop cut it in half. It was like seeing red lightning strike the ship.

Ren: "Well.. that's done."

Me: "What?"

Ren while pointing to the ship that had been cut in half said, "If she is using her power to do that it means she is getting serious."

BOOM!!!

I looked up to see one more ship had just gone up in flames. The debris from the ships had now started to rain on the beach.

Olivia: "That's our queue. We need to leave NOW!"

Me: "But we can't. I can't..., just... leave...." tears had now started to roll down my cheek.

Ren: "I understand what you are going through, she was like a mother to me too. But there isn't time now. Once she goes all out, we will be in trouble as well."

I looked up and I could see the ships colliding with each other and a RED lightening passing through them as a hot knife passes through butter.

Ren helped me and led me by hand and led me to the ship while Olivia dashed in front of us to pilot the ship.

As Ren strapped me to my seat and ship took off. All I could see was a red blur moving rapidly inside a thick cloud of smoke.

Our ship flew as fast as it could, and now we were observing Earth from space at a safe distance. And then it happened.

An orb of light started to form from the place where we came. It then started to grow rapidly in size, till it became so bright and so large that it towered above earth and I was not able to look directly at it. And as I closed my eyes, a shockwave hit our ship. It didn't do any damage but was enough to bring me back to my senses. And as I opened my eyes it looked as if someone had just taken a big bite out of the clouds and the ground. And everything was visible.

Ren: "Well she did go all out after all."

Olivia: "That's our Major. She fought so that we could live another day. Let's not waste this opportunity. Shall we?"

Me: "Yes absolutely. After all, this is only the beginning..."

# Part 2

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## *Chapter 11*

### **On the Run**

It has been 5 years since we left Earth. We have been on the run ever since. Every planet that we find is ultimately discovered by the Galactorian forces and we have to be on the run again.

Ren: “So you say that, you heard that thing’s voice in your head?”

Me: “Well yeah. It was just before we went out of the ship on the beach. I clearly remember it. I know it sounds crazy but I am only telling you what I heard.”

Olivia: “It’s not crazy. It’s just that we have never heard of this happening before. So, its very difficult to believe.”

Ren: “I think you were just imagining things. Because you were given so much information in such a short time. Your brain might have gone haywire. And also, you never heard that voice after that even once.”

Me: “Well yeah. I understand where you are coming from. But it is exactly what I told you even though I might not have a way to prove it yet.”

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!

Cynthia: “Proximity Alert. Patrol droid approaching.”

Olivia: “OK ladies. Let’s save the chitchat for later. Cynthia has this one detected us yet?”

Cynthia: “No not as of now. The cloaking field is still functional”

Olivia: “Everyone stay calm I am going to slowly put us away from its path.”

Ren: “I say we destroy it. And get as far away as possible.”

Olivia: “And give them a potential lead as to where to find us. I don’t think so.”

Ren: “Come on. These space droids get destroyed all the time.”

Me: “No. I agree with Olivia on this one. It’s too risky to attack it. We don’t want to give them any clues whatsoever. Because if one of these things suddenly vanish more will only follow.”

Olivia: “See, the kid’s got more brains than you Ren.”

Ren: “Yeah. Yeah. I get it now.”

Olivia: “I don’t think staying out here will do us any good. Cynthia, are there any planets nearby where we can make a landing without going into hyperdrive?”

Cynthia: “Scanning the planet directory. Yes, there is one planet named B618-9057. That can be reached without removing the cloaking field”

Olivia: “What’s the status of life on that planet?”

Cynthia: “My records show that there was once a sentient species dominant on this planet. But they have now went extinct”.

Olivia: “Try to find any place that is safe enough for us to land. And make us land there.”

Cynthia: “Noted. Setting flight path.”

As we cruised towards this new planet. I could see the stars in the distance passing by. It had become all the same to me. After all these years the space doesn't surprise me anymore. It's the same empty void in every direction that you look.

As we reached close to the planet. I could now make out big oceans and greenery surrounding the surface. It reminded me of Earth. When we went through the clouds it felt nostalgic as if I was back on a plane.

We made our landing in a forest. The trees were thick and as we landed in a small clearing in the forest, it seemed as if we landed in a comfortable womb. The sun was setting on this planet, and it gave a golden tinge to the tree tops and we just smoothly sailed through this golden sea.

Olivia: "The planetary records show that this planet is currently void of any sentient life. But it's still good to have a basic perimeter setup around the ship. Kid you stay in the ship. I and Ren will go and set up the fence."

Me: "But.."

Olivia: "That's an order. You have no experience of setting up camp on a new planet. So let the adults handle this one. Ren start the perimeter setup."

Ren: "Sure. Don't take this the wrong way buddy. She just wants you to be safe. Cynthia, start syncing the motion sensor capsules to the ship's alert system."

Cynthia: "Initiating Sync Sequence. Sequence complete. All capsules can now be planted."

I stood in the cockpit and watched through the windows like a child who had been grounded. Olivia and Ren went outside carrying their guns and a few small white capsules. As Ren planted them around the ship. Olivia covered for him with her

gun, just in case there were any surprises on this planet. The whole ordeal took about ten minutes.

Olivia: “Cynthia, start the perimeter fence.”

Cynthia: “Booting up perimeter fence. Fence now online.”

As Cynthia completed speaking. I could now see that the capsules in the ground outside the ship started emanating a faint blue light which started to connect all the capsules together and then in a matter of seconds this blue light formed an enormous bubble that now covered the entire ship.

Olivia: “Now, nothing can approach the ship without us knowing. Try to get some sleep kid.”

Since we’ve been on the run. It was the first time that we had landed on a completely uninhabited planet. Our previous visits to different planets had some sort of alien life living on them. They were usually friendly and didn’t bother us much. But the galactorian force’s arrival on these planets made us leave them.

As the night fell, it got quiet outside. It felt very soothing and after having our dinner, I lay on my bunker. I didn’t even realize when I dozed off.

## *Chapter 12*

### **The New Suit**

“Hey Kid, Wake Up,” I heard a whisper. And my sleep was broken by someone slowly nudging me. As I opened my eyes, I could see Olivia crouching beside my bunker bed with her gun. She seemed alarmed by something.

Me: “What... What happened?” I finally managed to speak.

Olivia: “Shhh... Keep your voice down. I think someone is there outside the ship,” she whispered.

I nodded in agreement.

As I slowly got off my bunker bed, trying to be as quiet as possible. Olivia signaled me to keep my head low and stay put while she got Ren.

The layout of our ship was such that in front there was the main command center. As we moved towards the back, on the right few steps before my bunker bed was Ren’s bed. And then towards the far back of the ship was where Olivia used to sleep. Since her bed is right next to the ship’s tail if something was outside the ship. It made sense that she was the first one to notice it.

As I crouched next to my bed, I could see Olivia slowly making her way to Ren’s bed. And then nudging him awake. It took a

few seconds for him to wake up but then as soon as he saw Olivia's face, he became alert and instinctively knew what he had to do.

Olivia then came back to where I was crouching and a few minutes later Ren came with his gun. He handed me mine and now we three were facing each other. Everyone tried to keep their voice level to a minimum as they spoke.

Ren: "Did you check the scans? Of what might be outside?"

Olivia: "I did. The Scans showed nothing. But I am sure something was walking right outside the ship."

Ren: "Are you sure? It might be you dreamed of something."

Olivia: "This is not a time for this. I am positive I heard something heavy rub against the tail of the ship. And then I heard some faint steps outside"

Ren: "But Cynthia would've alerted us if there was something like that. And also, we have the perimeter setup for such cases remember."

Olivia: "I know. But it seems this thing or whatever it is, didn't get picked up by the sensors. And..."

She stopped mid-sentence as if she was listening to something.

"Did you hear that?"

Me: "Hear what?"

Olivia: "That. Focus."

I closed my eyes and tried to listen closely.

Click! Click! Click! Click!

I realized something was indeed walking around the ship. I opened my eyes and saw that now even Ren had picked up on this sound. And his expression had completely changed.

Me: "Can't we just take off now? and Leave this thing be."

Olivia: "We can. But we don't know what this thing is capable of and if it harms the ship while it is taking off, we might get in more trouble than we are in now. So, we first need to identify what this thing actually is."

Ren: "I'll go and increase the sensitivity of the bio-scanners, maybe then we might be able to get something."

Ren quietly went to the cockpit and then came back with a tablet in hand.

Ren: "I have hooked this to the ship's bio-scanner and increased its sensitivity. Let's give it a go."

As the green lines scanned the tablet screen, every second felt like an hour. And after a few seconds, a warning popped up. "Unidentified Life-form found. Proceed with caution."

Me: "what does that mean?"

Ren: "It means there is definitely something outside the ship. But its details are not in the Life form database. It must be a new species."

Me: "But didn't Cynthia say that his planet had no sentient species."

Ren: "Yes. But that data was of a time when this planet was last visited by the planetary census team. So, it could be obsolete now."

Me: "So what do we do next?"

Olivia: "We'll have to assume that this thing is hostile and take steps accordingly."

Just then the whole area around the ship echoed with a blood-curdling scream.

BANG!

Something heavy just pounded the ship's side.

BANG!

Again, the same thing happened. But this time the entire ship rocked from left to right.

Olivia: "We need to take this outside. Otherwise, this thing will tear the ship apart. Kid you stay in the command center, and takeoff if anything happens to us, we are still not sure what we are dealing with."

Me: "What! No!"

Ren: "Listen to her. We can't be fooling around with that thing outside. And our main priority is to keep the infinite baby safe."

Olivia: "So this is the plan. I and Ren will rush outside and hit that thing with everything we've got. And try to draw its attention. If we are able to take it down then good. Otherwise, we'll try to draw it towards the forest. And in the meantime, you will take the ship off the ground and get the hell out of here. Mind you that's an order."

I nodded in agreement.

In a few minutes, everyone was at their position. The plan was to suddenly turn on all the lights of the ship to startle the creature, after which Olivia and Ren would rush out and start shooting at the thing.

I stood in the command center and was watching Olivia and Ren ready at the door. Olivia signaled to me 3... 2... 1...

And I quickly hit the ON button for the ship. The Ship sprang to life and illuminated the entire area around it. Olivia and Ren rushed outside with their guns raised.

The blood-curdling scream came once again. But this time it was followed by the shots of lasers from the two guns.

Pew! Pew! The sounds echoed in the silent night.

From the noises outside it seemed as if they were winning. They were trying to draw this thing away from the ship.

And now from the windows, I was finally able to see what we were up against. It looked like a 10-foot-tall bipedal cockroach. The fires from Olivia and Ren seemed to push it back. They looked like tiny pebbles in front of him. And for a moment there I thought that we were going to win.

But then, AE!!!! a shrill and deafening sound was made by this beast. The sound was so overwhelming that I got dizzy even when I was inside the ship. Olivia and Ren got hit the worst. Ren had passed out, and Olivia was barely able to stand and was now slowly trying to drag Ren and head back into the forest.

The creature now seemed to focus on her and started to follow her and head away from the ship.

Olivia: "RUN! Leave Us!" She screamed at the top of her voice.

I stood there dumbfounded, unable to wrap my head around the things that were happening. I didn't want to leave them alone to die. I had already lost my grandmother. And I couldn't just leave them like this. But what could I do in this instance? Our guns didn't seem to have much effect on that thing. I felt completely powerless. My mind was running in circles, trying to find a way to save them.

"Free me. I can help you save them," I heard a voice.

I quickly turned around to realize that I was alone there.

"Come here and Free me. I can help you save them." The voice came again.

I unknowingly followed it and was now standing in front of the Infinite Baby's capsule.

Me: "Did you just speak?"

"Yes," I heard a voice in my head.

Me: "How is that possible?"

"I communicate telepathically, your friends are in danger. Free me and I shall help you save them"

Me: "Free you? But How?"

"Turn off the containment field," the voice in my head said.

"Ok... Here goes nothing." I said, as I turned the field off.

As the containment field turned off the black orb floating at its centre slowly descended downwards towards the bottom, and then the glass case opened. I looked inside to see, but the black mass now jumped and was crawling over my chest.

"AhHH.." I managed to say while freaking out.

"Calm down, I am not going to hurt you," I heard the voice.

As I took a deep breath, I could see that the black mass now started to spread through my entire body. And in a matter of seconds, I was now covered in what looked like a black Armour suit. Like the ones they show in movies of superheroes. It felt strangely good. And now I could feel a surge of energy growing inside of me. I felt confident and all my fears seemed to have vanished.

"Now Let's go and save your friends," I heard the voice in my new helmet.

As I started rushing towards the exit door, I thought to myself, "It would be really cool if I could have a sword too." And then

SLICK! The Armour in the right hand produced a sword.  
“Thank me later,” the voice echoed.

As I reached outside, I could see that Olivia was backed into a corner and the beast was about to strike again. Ren was still passed out and Olivia was still shooting at the beast.

I knew I had to do something now. I focused my attention then raised my sword and rushed towards the beast.

Whoosh! Slick!

In a matter of seconds, I was on the other end of the ship way past the beast and Olivia.

“Wait! What just happened!” I was still trying to figure it out.

I then saw that my sword was now covered in some dark liquid. I quickly turned to realize that I had just cut off one leg of the beast, and it had now lost its balance. As it was about to fall over.

My adrenaline rush was now at its peak, and I whispered to myself, “No you don’t”. And I could now see it falling in slow motion, I jumped up in the air. I was now towering over this falling beast. I raised my sword again.

SLICK!

As I landed on the ground, the beast’s body had now been split in two, and I got a hold on myself finally.

YES!!! WHOOO!!

I was in hyper-excitement mode, my helmet now merged with my body Armour.

“Did you just see that? I was like a fucking superhero. I nailed the hit and the landing,” I was panting for my breath now. “Thank god you are safe Olivia. I was so worried that you and Ren were going to die here. And I am going to be all alone again.

Are you OK? You Look OK. I think you are OK. Thank god, you are OK. Of course, you are OK. Hey, why are there two of you ...” my head suddenly started to go in circles and even keeping my eyes open started to feel like a humongous task.

Thud! I fell on the ground face forward. And then it all quickly became dark.

## *Chapter 13*

### **Rise and Shine**

I tried to open my eyes. My head was pounding. And even though I was surrounded by darkness, it felt like I was spinning. I was unable to wake up. It felt like I was in some kind of limbo. So, after trying to wake up and failing, I decided to just lay there and wait for the dizziness to pass. And to my surprise, after some time it did. Finally, I was able to open my eyes.

The scene in front of me was quite blurry as I woke up, it took a few seconds for my eyes to focus and now I could see the ship's ceiling above my bed. I slowly woke up and sat up on my bed. My head was still pounding and I was still hazy but now it was bearable. And it took a few minutes but all the memories just came flooding in, and I shouted "REN!! OLIVIA!!"

"What? What happened," Ren came rushing from the command center. Olivia was nowhere to be seen.

Ren: "Oh great. You are awake. How are you feeling?"

Me: "It doesn't matter how am I feeling. Are you ok? And what about Olivia? Is she ok? I need to go and see if she is ok," I started to pull myself up to go and look for her.

Ren: "Whoa! Whoa! Kid. Take it easy. Yes both of us are ok. You saved us remember. And Olivia has just gone outside for

scouting. She'll be back soon. Don't worry everything is under control now. You can relax. So, now tell me how are you feeling?"

Me: "I feel fine. Just a bit tired. For how long was I out? And what happened out there? I remember rushing out of the ship as both of you were in trouble. But after that my memory is quite foggy. I just remember being scared for both of you."

Ren: "Hmmm. Interesting. Well, I know only what Olivia told me, as I was passed out for quite a while. But first, it has been three days since the incident. Let me bring you up to speed then we can discuss other details. When I came to, Olivia was standing in front of me and you were passed out at some distance. She just stood frozen in front of the severed body of that thing. We were both tired so we first dragged you into the ship and asked Cynthia to do a bio scan of the area, we also fed Cynthia with a sample of that thing. Once Cynthia analyzed it, we found out that, the thing that attacked us was a ground dweller and was nocturnal. The reason why our ship's fence didn't register him was because it dug up inside the fence. Cynthia's analysis also showed that the creature even though huge didn't have the claws to dig through hard rock. So, we immediately flew up to a small hilltop nearby to at least avoid being on the hunting ground of those things. It seems that this planet has those things as the primitive life form here and they seem to be at the top of the food chain. Cynthia is still processing the DNA of the species so we might have some new observations soon."

"Ren, I checked the perimeter again and it seems we are good here. No sign of life as of now. we should be good to camp for the night. Increase the fence's sensitivity to a maximum and set the traps as usual. We can't take any more chances with this planet." Olivia spoke as she came inside the ship and was hanging up her gun.

Ren: “Hi Olivia. Noted. Look our sleeping beauty is finally awake.”

Me: “Hi Oliv... SLAP!” my ears started ringing. “What the HELL! What was that for?”

“That was for disobeying a direct order. And don’t you ever do this again.” Olivia said while hugging me. I’ve never seen Olivia show her emotional side, and it felt good to know that she had one too. I didn’t reply anything I just hugged her back.

Olivia: “Are you feeling alright?”

Me: “Yes. I am. How are you?”

Olivia: “I am good too. Now go freshen up if you need to. I and Ren will finish setting up the perimeter and then we can all have dinner”

I nodded in agreement.

After some time, all of us were sitting in front of each other with a bowl of green soup in front of us.

Me: “Ah... What is this?”

Olivia: “It’s food. Shut up and eat it.”

Ren: “Well. It doesn’t look like it.”

Olivia: “Oh sorry your highness. Let me dial up the Dominos for this planet and get you something. Oh yes, I CAN’T DO THAT. Can I?”

Here I thought of speaking something. Something funny or quirky to lighten the mood. But then I saw the look in Olivia’s eyes and I realized that this is not the day I want to die. I just kept my head down and started drinking the green soup. Because you know, after all, it was just a green-colored soup and as we all know ignorance is bliss. And I think even though

Ren didn't say anything but agreed on this part with me. Even he quietly started to drink his soup.

After cleaning the dishes, we all gathered again.

Olivia: "So kid. Do you have something that you would like to share with us?"

Me: "Well. I... I... I might have. Ah... Well... You know how these things go. But somethings are better left unsaid I believe."

Olivia: "Cut the crap. Will you?"

Me: "Yes Mam. But please listen to me first."

Olivia: "Sure. Go ahead"

By now I was feeling better and my memories had come back.

Me: "When I saw that the thing was about to attack you. I got really scared. And I was panicking about what should I do. But then I heard the same voice that I heard the day we left Earth."

Ren: "The voice of the infinite baby you mean?"

Me: "Yes. And it told me that if I want to save you. It can help me with that if I free him. And I did just that. And it was because of him that I was finally able to save you. So please don't be mad at me."

Ren: "Listen kid we are not mad at you. We are just concerned."

Me: "Concerned? But why are you concerned? We are all fine right?"

Olivia: "The reason for that is the bio scan we did of you while you were unconscious. Our scans showed that the infinite baby has now fused with your body on a molecular level. Or rather a better way to explain it would be that it's now a part of you."

Me: "Part of me? What does that mean? Am I going to die or something?"

Ren: “That’s the thing, kid, we don’t know. As your case is an anomaly for us. This has never happened before. Even we don’t know what that means for you. Do you feel anything different?”

Me: “No. I feel perfectly fine. when you scanned me did it show anything like a parasite or virus in my system?”

Olivia: “No. Nothing as such. The scans did show it as a foreign body present inside your body, but nothing to prove that it's an invasive species. Adding to that point your body seemed to be accepting of it and even now you don’t show any sort of allergic reaction to it.”

Me: “So what do I do now with this thing? Wasn’t our job to keep it safe until it's mature enough to be born or something like that?”

Olivia: “Yes. That remains our primary objective. And we are going to focus on it. But since the infinite baby is now a part of you. So, we will have to consider that as well. From that last incident, I can see that you’ll need to learn how to control it. Only then can we have a better chance of surviving.”

Me: “Agreed. what’s the plan?”

Olivia: “It’s simple. Training starts tomorrow, Fruitcake. Have a good sleep.”

## *Chapter 14*

### **Training Time**

The next morning started a bit slow. I woke up and scouted with Ren for a while. Had my lunch in the wilderness with him. And when we came back, Olivia was waiting for me at the door. But I could sense there was something different about her. It was as if I was looking at a robot. Her eyes pierced right through me as if I was only an immaterial object.

Ren: “Don’t worry kid. That’s her war face. As soldiers, we learn and train to keep our emotions in check while at war. Once a person becomes quite adept at it, they can do it on command. Olivia is one of those people. It’s nothing to be afraid of. This only shows that she’s taking your training very seriously. But one advice though till she is like that just follow whatever she says, and whatever you do don’t provoke her, as she sometimes forgets to hold back.”

I gulped and nodded in agreement.

Olivia: “Ren we will be back in an hour. If anything comes up Let us know.” She then signaled me to follow her and went into the training chamber.

This time as I entered the training chamber, a whole new scene was waiting for me. It looked like we were in a monastery amid mountains. The one they show in movies where Shaolin monks

usually train. As the doors of the time chamber closed behind me. I could now finally see that I was standing in the center of a huge courtyard, with red stone pillars surrounding me from each side. There was only one way that led outside the courtyard and in the distance, I could see a hill hidden in the clouds.

Olivia: “So shall we begin?”

I turned around to see a beautiful glowing blue figure floating above the ground. In some sense, it reminded me of my grandmother's true form.

Olivia: “Let’s first see of what kind of defense you have, then slowly we will move to the attacks. Suit up.”

I closed my eyes and my black armour was back on. I chose not to have a sword this time as I felt that it would be unfair as Olivia was currently unarmed.

I took a defensive stance, remembering best what grandmother had taught me. I was now facing Olivia. I tried to take a step forward.

Whoosh! In a fraction of a second Olivia was now standing face to face with me. And now I could see things happen in slow motion. I saw her hand coming in for a punch on my stomach. I wanted to block it but my body just didn’t respond. All I managed to do was to barely have my hands against my stomach to absorb some of the blow. And then I saw her punch connect.

BOOM!

I was thrown against the wall behind me. My entire body flew a few meters through the air like a potato sack. The impact against the wall was so hard and instant that all the air from my lungs was forced out and I fell face forward on the ground. It took me a few minutes to finally get a hold of myself and start

breathing again. After which I screamed, “Wait!! Wait!! Timeout.”

Olivia: “That’s all it took to knock you out? Seriously what is the point of that armour?”

Me: “Yeah I get it. I am not as strong as you. But if you were so strong, why didn’t you show the same strength when we were facing that thing?”

Olivia: “Because I would have hurt everyone around me”

Me: “What?”

Olivia: “Let me tell you something about the true form of the galactors. What you see in front of you is pure energy with a consciousness linked to it. The reason we galactors build shells around it is so that we can keep it in check as our power can get out of control very easily. Had I used it then, there was a very high chance that I would have ended up damaging the ship and caught you and Ren in the impact. I planned to initially lure that thing into the forest and then use my powers to knock it out. But you had to be the hero, hadn’t you?”

I got up and dusted myself.

Me: “Well I didn’t know that. “

Olivia: “Well now you do. Let’s go for round 2”

I nodded in agreement and as I took my stance.

Whoosh! BAM! Thud!

I was again on the ground panting for breath.

Olivia: “Again.”

And so, my training began. Days turned into weeks. Weeks turned into months. We sparred continuously and only stopped to eat and sleep. It turns out my grandmother trained her as well,

that's why her fighting style resembled my grandmother's. For the first few months, we practiced hand-to-hand combat, and then we slowly went up to sword fighting. My body had now gotten used to her blows and I was now able to block a fair bit of them. And yes, it still took all of me to be able to keep up with her, but slowly I was getting the hang of it. And more importantly, I had started to enjoy it.

When it was about to be a year, I had become a little better at fighting. Olivia finally decided that it was time for me to take a break. And we headed out of the training chamber. As I stepped out, the same dizziness hit me like before and it took me a few minutes to get control of myself. But this time it felt a bit easier than the last time I came out of the training chamber, it seemed like my body was getting used to this as well.

Olivia: "Take rest kid. You'll need time after this session"

Me: "Yeah. I do feel tired. But it doesn't feel like a lot I think if I sleep early today. We should be good to go tomorrow."

Ren: "Whoa! Champ. The training chamber is now off limits for the next 6 months."

Me: "Wait. What? But why?"

Ren: "Because of the time field that you are under when you are inside the chamber. Can alter your perception of time irreversibly if you continue to go in there again and again without breaks. And it's not only for you it's a rule for everyone making use of the training chamber. In the past when this technology was still experimental, we have seen a few cases where a few people went insane as their time perception was permanently altered. So, from then, these rules have been put in place."

Me: "But if Galactors are so smart, then why haven't they found a solution to this?"

Ren: “Because they are not above time. Even though we found a way to mimic a time field but still its effect on our consciousness is well beyond our control. And that is why we have such limits imposed on the use of the training chamber. Clear?”

Me: “Yes.”

Ren: “Now freshen up. We’ll then go up and do a perimeter check for the night.”

I nodded in agreement and then we headed out for our routine perimeter check. Came back, had our dinner and then tucked in for the night.

## *Chapter 15*

### **Ren's Birthday**

“Hey slowpoke, wake up. It’s time.” I heard a gentle whisper. I woke up a bit groggy and then washed my face.

As I stepped out of the ship, I could see Olivia, in a cheerful mood. Setting up a table.

“You look jolly for an uninhabited planet. Is today something special?” I said quizzically.

Olivia: “Well today is Ren’s birthday.”

Me: “But doesn't he hate celebrating his birthday?”

Olivia: “Oh yes, he gets all sensitive about it. So, we usually leave him alone. But this year I thought why not do something special for him.”

Me: “Ok... Sure... why not?”

Olivia: “Why do you sound weird?”

Me: “Well... Nothing. It’s just strange coming from you.”

Olivia: “What do you mean by strange? I am also a normal person. I am also allowed to have feelings.”

Me: “Oh yeah sure. I did not mean to offend you. It’s just that I have always seen you as a serious person. And it’s good to see this side too.”

Olivia: “Yeah... Yeah... Sure. Now go and wake up the birthday boy, and while you are at it, bring some water for the table as well.”

I agreed and headed back into the ship.

As I was filling the water bottle, I thought to myself, “How would Ren react if I just dunk this entire bottle on him while he is sleeping, it’ll be fun. And he is a good sport, right? I think it’ll be just fine.”

And then I let my intrusive thoughts win.

Ren on his birthday woke up, with a beautiful scream of “WHAT THE FUCK!!!!, I am going to Fucking kill you.” And then proceeded to chase me while still wearing his shorts, his pink t-shirt and being barefoot. Although he looked like a flamingo trying heels for the first time. I still thought that I was going to die when he managed to tackle me after 15 minutes of chasing around the ship. As we both fell to the ground, my saving grace came when we both burst out laughing. Olivia also chuckled from a distance but was smart enough to not take part in our little brawl. We got up and then dusted ourselves. Olivia said, “Are you goofballs done?”

We both just looked at each other and then proceeded to take a seat at the freshly laid-out table. The table looked like a makeshift birthday party table, with a variety of dishes some real some holographic. And after a long while, for me at least, it felt like home. As we sat down Olivia went into the ship and brought out a small cupcake with a holographic candle on top. And then we sang Happy Birthday to our birthday boy.

Olivia: “Now I know it isn’t much but, this was all the sugar and cream that Cynthia was able to synthesize in the food printer”

Ren: “Are you kidding me? This is the best cake I have ever seen in my life. Thanks a lot for this.”

Me: “Oh don’t thank me. I am just a guest here. This was all Olivia.”

Since we moved to this hilltop. We can see the forest that surrounds us.

As I was helping myself with a serving of a few of the dishes laid out on the table, I said, “Hey Ren, I was just curious why don’t you like celebrating your birthday?”

Ren: “It’s nothing major. It’s just that I never had a real family to celebrate a birthday with. So, I was never very used to this idea. And it always felt out of place for me. And...” he stopped mid-sentence.

Me: “And?” I was still looking down at my plate so I didn’t realize but there was a sudden change in the atmosphere.

I looked up to see that Ren’s face had suddenly lost its color. It was as if he had seen a ghost. He was looking at something behind my back. As I was about to turn around to see what was he looking at. Behind Ren, I could see a silver figure slowly rising from the side of the mountain. It turned out to be a galactorian soldier in his silver armor suit on his hoverbike slowly rising with a laser gun aimed at us.

Before I could react, I saw a blue light hitting Ren’s back and creating a burn hole in the pink shirt at the front. The hole was so big that I could see through it. Ren’s eyes went dark and he fell on the ground like a sack.

“NO!!!!!!” was all I could scream, as Olivia jumped over the table to tackle me down. As I was falling to the ground, I saw a laser beam barely missing me and hitting the table. There was another soldier on the other side of the mountain, which Ren had seen previously. As I fell on the ground with Olivia on top of me, I saw these two soldiers cross each other on their hover bikes like in a duel. Except they went zooming past each other. It was clear they were planning a drive-by and were about to return.

Olivia: “Listen! You need to go Now! I’ll distract them. Take the ship and go!!”

I was losing my mind over what had just happened. I wasn’t able to grasp the gravity of the situation. All I could feel was anger. I didn’t even realize when my armor was on me. I could see Olivia saying something to me. But I was too mad to listen. I just brushed her off got up with my sword raised and ran towards the edge of the cliff to find those bastards. I could see one of them speeding towards me with his gun raised. I could feel this energy from inside me. It was rising quickly, and then I was hyper-focused.

Everything started to happen in slow motion I could see the soldier on the hoverbike, and I sensed his bike’s trajectory. And without putting a thought into it, I instinctively threw my sword at him. He was a bit dazzled but he managed to avoid it, and he flew over me. He then proceeded to make a U-turn and was again coming for me. I could sense as if my sword was still in my control. I focused on my sword once more and as the soldier was coming, I called my sword by raising my hand. The sword stopped in mid-air in the direction of where I threw it and bolted towards me. It went right through the soldier cutting him in half and the sword was in my hand again. BOOM! his bike exploded in the distance after crashing.

I now turned my attention towards the 2nd soldier who was now aiming for me as well. I got myself in a fighting stance and was waiting for him. He started shooting, I was able to avoid the laser beams as he zoomed past me. I could see him making a U-turn and aiming for me again. I knew what I had to do and so I went into a stance for it. As I tried to focus on him, it felt different this time, a stinging pain started to rise from my chest. And my vision started to get blurry. “No, No, not now”, I thought to myself. As I was trying to power through the pain. I could see the soldier gunning for me with his laser gun raised. It was getting more and more difficult for me to keep my eyes open.

“Is this it?” “Am I going to die here?” My mind started flooding with thoughts. I still managed to maintain my battle stance. And by every second the soldier was inching closer.

PEW! BOOM!

A laser beam hit the soldier and he crashed on the side of the hill. I turned around to see Olivia holding a laser sniper rifle. As the immediate threats were eliminated my armor went away and I fell to my knees coughing and gasping for breath.

It took me a few minutes to get myself together after which I rushed to hug Olivia. I was all teary-eyed and choked up to say anything. We just hugged quietly for some time.

Olivia: “It’s not over yet. Those soldiers were just a show of strength. You still need to leave. Get yourself together.”

Me: “Wait, why are you saying I have to leave. I am taking you with me.”

Olivia: “Cough! Cough! Well, kid. No, it’s going to be your journey now.”

I then realized what she meant. Things happened so fast that I didn't realize that when Olivia jumped to save me, she got hit by the laser too. There was a big wound on her stomach too, and some white liquid was gushing through it, and she barely managed to keep it together by tying a shirt around it.

Me:” OH, No, no no. Olivia. I can't loose you to. I.. I.. just...”

SLAP!

Olivia: “I am not dead yet you dumb-ass bitch. Man up for God's sake. I know it's too late for me. The beams I and Ren were hit with were not ordinary laser beams, they were dark energy beams. Once we galactors are hit with them, it's a certain death for us. Because it starts to eat our pure energy from inside like a poison. And there is no cure for it. But luckily, I didn't get a direct hit like Ren, or I would have been dead by now. Now listen carefully to what I say, our priority is still to protect the infinite baby. Those guards don't travel alone. I'll help you get away. Get as far away as possible. I have faith in you. And Ren did too.”

Me: “But..”

Olivia: “No But or if. We don't have much time. You need to get out before other ships arrive. And don't even think of using your armour now, you are already at your limit.”

Suddenly it got dark on the hilltop. It was as if something eclipsed the sun. On looking up we realized that it was an armada ship. Like the ones we saw on Earth.

“ATTENTION FUGITIVES. BY THE ORDER OF KING Heouborghblat. YOU ARE HEREBY WANTED FOR TERRORISM. EITHER SURRENDER AND HAND OVER THE INFINITE BABY OR YOU SHALL BE TERMINATED. ANY ATTEMPTS TO ESCAPE WILL ALSO BE DEALT BY

INSTANT TERMINATION.” A loud and obnoxious voice blared from the ship.

I turned towards Olivia to see she was in her true form now. Just like Grandma, the only difference was that the place where she was hit by the beam had become black and it looked like it was eating away her gorgeous blue Aura.

Olivia: “Wait for my signal. And then go for it. Clear?”

Me: “Yes. Clear.” Now I knew what I had to do and so I locked away my feelings.

Olivia: “Well I am not as strong as the major. But I can pack a punch too. Well kid this is it then.”

As Olivia started to power up, her blue aura started to become more and more dark. Before the lift off she glanced back at me smiling. We both knew it was our final goodbye now. She nodded and I nodded in agreement.

ZOOM! BOOM!

From where I was, I could see a spear of blue light just hit the ship from beneath. And it caused the entire ship to shake and I could see that it also started to lose its altitude. I rushed towards our ship.

Me: “Cynthia. Lift off now.”

Cynthia: “Hello. Destination?”

Me: “I don’t know. Just take me somewhere safe from here.”

And so, the ship flew as fast it could away from the place where my new family lost their lives.

## *Chapter 16*

### **Despair**

I woke up and as my vision cleared it took me a few minutes to recall why was I feeling so down. And then all my memories rushed back in. I walked to the front of the ship and sat in the captain's chair. Through the front window, all I could see was the dark and endless void and, on the side, a golden disc of light surrounding a black hole. It had been a week since the incident and Cynthia had flown us close to this black hole in a safe orbit so that we could disguise ourselves as a part of the debris field revolving around the black hole. The ship had gone into low power mode to not attract any attention, and the black hole's gravity field was strong enough that if any big ships tried to approach it, they would get sucked in.

My mind had gone blank, I couldn't think or feel anything. As I sat there, with my head tilted on the head rest something caught my eye. I could see a small white L-strip peeking out from one of the drawers where Ren used to keep his things. I reached out and pulled it. It turned out to be a photograph of the three of us, and on the back, it was marked, "My new home". And then my vision became blurry and I cried my eyes out. Not sure for how long. But once I had cried out all I could feel was rage.

“Show yourself,” I said to the air. “I know you are there,” I said again. And then I could see a black mass appearing out of thin air and it started to take the shape of a floating rhomboid.

“Sorry for snooping around you. I was not sure if you wanted to talk to me,” I heard a voice in my head.

By now, I had become used to the infinite baby using telepathy to communicate so it didn’t bother me much.

“It’s ok.” I replied

“So, what do you want to do now?” He asked.

“I don’t know,” I replied

“Don’t worry it will get better if you give yourself some time,” he said.

“BETTER?! HOW WILL IT GET BETTER? EVERYWHERE I GO THESE FUCKERS KEEP ON DESTROYING EVERYTHING. EVERYONE WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM ME. AND WHY? I NEVER ASKED FOR ANY OF THIS. IT’S ONLY BECAUSE YOU CAME INTO MY FUCKING LIFE.” I lashed out.

“We can still go back to your parents and you could go back to your normal life,” he said.

“Yeah sure. WHY NOT! Go back to my parents and then risk endangering their lives too. Right?” I questioned.

“No, this time it will be different. You will be going alone. I realize that whatever you said is right. I had no right to pull anyone into my mess. I was not sentient enough at that point, but I am now, and if I try, I might be able to detach from your body completely. I am really sorry for whatever has happened. But now I think it’s the right thing to do. I will offer myself to the galactorian king, and you can go back to your normal life back on Earth.” He said.

Even though I was angry I wasn't expecting this answer from him and was taken aback by it. So I thought that it was best that we talk later about this, and I said "I am not in the mood to talk about it right now, let's talk later."

"Sure, whatever you say," he replied. And the rhomboid vanished into the air. And then I went to my bunk and fell asleep.

Not sure for how long was I asleep, but when I woke up the same haunting silence of the ship was waiting for me. I felt a bit relieved I think the earlier crying had helped. By now my mind was able to think rationally. I woke up and went and sat in the captain's chair again.

"You there?" I asked

The floating rhomboid appeared again. "Yes, I am."

"I had been thinking about what you said, and its not fair. Even if you offer yourself to the king, there is no guarantee that he would stop there. After having your power, he will definitely try to take over the entire universe, and then there will be no one to stop him. And the death of my grandmother, Ren and Olivia will have been for nothing. And knowing what I know now, I'll never be able to go back to my life. That asshole took the people I love from me. I don't care what happens to me, but I am not going to run anymore." I said.

"So, what do you have in mind?" he asked

"I don't have a plan yet. But one thing is sure that I am going to make the galactors pay no matter the cost." I replied.

I still felt hopeless and angry at my current situation, but now I knew that I was going to channel this rage into finding a solution to this problem, instead of running away from it.

"Ok, fine. But eat something first. You have skipped many meals. We'll need you at your full strength for this," he said.

I nodded and headed towards the eating area.

After having a meal, I was now ready to plan out the course of action.

“You there?” I said to the air.

The rhomboid appeared again. “Yes, I am. And I have named myself John by the way.”

“Ok John. Noted.”

Me: “See we don’t know how long will we be able to stay here. Any minute we could be surrounded by the glactorian ships again.”

John: “Yes you are correct. So, what do you plan to do?”

Me: “I was thinking that instead of running from the galactorians why don’t we take the fight to them?”

John: “This is the stupidest thing I have ever heard in my life.”

Me: “Listen to me first. According to the announcement we had heard earlier Heouborghblat is the king now. We don’t need to fight every Galactorian we just need to fight him.”

John: “Yes and he is also the KING so he is not going to come alone. Wherever he goes his army will follow. We will have to deal with his army first in order to get to him.”

Me: “Ok. I’ll think something about that. But first tell me why do I keep passing out whenever I use the armor?”

John: “It’s because the armor uses my energy, but it gets channeled through your body. And since, your body is not used to handling such power it overexerts itself leading you to pass out.”

Me: “So how can I make my body tough enough to be able to handle your energy?”

John: "From what I learned about the galactorian body by merging with you. It's that a galactorian body is basically pure energy linked to a consciousness that is keeping it intact. If we could increase this energy in the body, it should become stronger and also be able to handle my energy as well. But I don't think we should do that."

Me: "Why not?"

John: "Because, your mind might not be able to handle a sudden increase in the energy. Let me explain it to you with an example. Think of a large size balloon. It has some set limits to what it can be blown up to. If we start filling it slowly and gradually, there is a much better chance that the balloon will remain intact. But if just start filling it with rapidly without giving it the time to expand there is a very high chance that it might get damaged or even pop open. In your case, your body is that balloon and time and training is needed to make it ready to be able to handle more energy. Forcing it might even be fatal to you."

Me: "But, my case is different right. I also have you. Won't you be able to syphon off some energy and make it so that my total body energy is not too high? Because we don't have time on our side."

John: "Well in theory that should be possible. But still let me warn you, if we go with this plan there still be a huge burden on your consciousness and even, I am not sure what impacts will this have on it."

Me: "I don't care what happens to me. Our main priority is to take down Heouborghblat, and I am ready to go to any lengths for that. So, coming to the next question, where can we find such a source of energy to power myself up?"

John: "Well, there is a black hole right outside the ship. We can use that."

Me: “What? John. Black hole is not a source of energy. It’s just a super dense mass that sucks everything even light into itself. It also has an immensely strong gravitational field, we will never survive it.”

John: “Since I have gained sentience. I have come to know many things which might seem other worldly to you. Let me explain to you what a black hole actually is. You remember that the entire universe is a sentient species with a body. So, this thing that you call a black hole is nothing but a blood clot.”

Me: “What? A blood clot? How?”

John: “See, energy is like the blood for any universe. It’s present everywhere and is consistent throughout the universe, that is why its difficult to sense its presence. But if by any chance the outer shell or skin of the universe gets damaged. Then the place where it gets damaged a black hole appears. Which tries to contain the leakage of energy from inside the universe. The reason it has such a huge gravitational pull so that it can contain everything that is trying to flow outside with the energy flow. Otherwise, all the stars and planets will get pulled into the cavity along with the energy that is flowing outward., what you are able to see is just one side of the black hole, the other side of is generating extra space to repair the damaged skin of the universe.”

Me: “Ok but if we somehow manage to take away the energy from this black hole, won’t it impact the skin of the universe that is currently being repaired?”

John: “See, again you are seeing it from your perspective. Let me explain the details to you. Because the skin of the universe was damaged currently where the black hole is present. The energy outflow of this place has become inconsistent, as the energy was trying to flow from the skin. And the black hole stopped it and has now created energy dense space around it. If

we take the energy form here, we will just be taking up the excess energy and creating a less dense energy space. And as I told before, what you are seeing is just one side of the black hole. The other side of it will still be working to repair the skin so our actions will only speed up the healing process of the universe. Clear?"

Me: "Yes. One last question."

John: "Ok, Ask Me."

Me: "You said that the black hole appears whenever the skin of the universe gets damaged. But from what I have learned, Black holes have always existed and no one has ever seen them vanish or appear?"

John: "From a universe's scale a wound would take a day to heal. But for you it will look like a thousand years have passed. So, your perception of time is much smaller as compared to them. That is why it is seldom that any species gets to see the end or start of a black hole."

Me: "Ok, so how should we proceed for it then?"

John: "First you'll have to take your true form."

Me: "But I don't know how to do that yet."

John: "Don't worry, I'll help you do that, just close your eyes and breathe."

I followed. And in a few seconds, it felt like a weight had been dropped from my shoulders. My body started to feel much lighter.

I then slowly opened my eyes to see something white glowing, just to realize that it was my hands, and now my body looked like Olivia's true form but I was glowing with a dim white color all around.

“Holy Shit! This is so fucking cool! I exclaimed.

John: “Yeah. It is. Now let’s begin”

And my armor started to cover me.

Me: “Cynthia, prepare for a spacewalk.”

Cynthia: “Starting space walk sequence, Pressurizing command center. The process will take 2 minutes”

And then the command center doors closed and I could hear the area getting pressurized.

Me: “Wait, but what about the oxygen. I can’t breathe in space.”

John: “Your armor is technically your spacesuit. You are in your true form you don’t need oxygen now. Didn’t you realize the area where you are standing has been losing pressure ever since the cockpit doors shut. Had you been a human you would have died by now.”

Me: “Oh yeah,” I thought to myself.

John: “Now whatever you have to say, think about it. As in space speaking won’t work.”

I nodded in agreement.

Cynthia: “Pressurization of command center complete. Opening rear door. Turning off artificial gravity.”

WHOOSH!

Was the last sound I heard, as the door opened. It seemed like everything had gone mute. The utensils behind me started to float. My body felt like I was underwater, but it still felt weird

as I was able to move much more freely. I hopped towards the door and went floating outside the ship.

Me: “Oh shit! Shit!” I thought to myself.

I heard John’s voice in my head, “What? What happened?”

Me: “I think I jumped too far I came directly out of the ship, how will we go back?”

John: “Don’t worry. I’ll help in that. But first look to where you are going.”

I looked ahead and now I could see the black hole in its full glory, it was huge. I felt like an ant trying to look at Mount Everest.

Me: “Are we really going to take all that energy? I don’t think I can contain all that.”

John: “No not all of it, only the excess part of. Now I’ll guide you towards the event horizon of the black hole. Its going to be tough, we’ll just try to take as much energy as we can and then get out of here. It still won’t look pretty if we get caught in the event horizon.”

I nodded in agreement. By now my sword was in my hand and it started to slowly pull me towards the black hole.

Now let me be clear. Was it the coolest thing I have ever seen and done in my life? Yes. Was it also so terrifying that I was about to shit myself? Also yes.

I could now see that my sword had got a golden glow at its tip and it seemed as if the golden glow from the black hole was now flowing into my sword and then going inside me. At first, it felt good, and then slowly the flow rate increased. Now it felt like I was about to pop from the inside out. It took everything in me to keep myself from passing out. And then suddenly the

image of my grandma flashed before my eyes and I was able to get a hold of myself.

The process completed and the sword again led me to the ship. The process took about 15-20 mins but it felt like I was out there forever. I closed the door on coming inside the ship and clicked on the pressurize button. John told me that if I didn't pressurize the ship properly my true form would get damaged permanently. I am not sure if he was joking but I didn't want to take any chances so I did as he told me.

After settling in. I just asked Cynthia to set up a course for Galactor. As it was time.

To some people, it might seem that what I was doing was completely idiotic. But I had been on the run for about six years. And after losing so many people, I didn't care what seemed logical I had reached a point where I just wanted to end this chase once and for all no matter the cost.

And so, we went off on a journey to my original home planet GALACTOR.

## *Chapter 17*

# **An Unexpected Encounter**

In my journey to the Planet Galactor, I tried to learn more about the planet and its inhabitants. Turns out the planet had a very close resemblance to Earth in terms of its geographic structure, same water-to-land ratio as Earth the difference being that the entire land mass was divided into 3 parts two large ice continents one on each pole which were majorly uninhabited and one large continent around the equator of the planet. There was a desert stretching from one end of the continent which occupied about 10% of the area, and the other 90% of the area was majorly plains where the Galactors lived. The planet also had a single moon like Earth. The planet was also part of a single-star system. And it was the 4th in line of 7 planets in its solar system but seeing its sun's size which was slightly bigger than the earth's sun. It still fell into the habitable zone. The day and night cycle followed a 30-hour cycle.

As we reached near the solar system we switched to thruster to avoid any unnecessary attention, there was a huge spaceship traffic going to and from the planet so we decided to hide in plain sight by keeping a low profile.

From the direction we were approaching the planet, its moon was right in front of us, we had initially planned to use it to hide our presence and under its shadow land in the desert.

“BEEP! BEEP! incoming distress Signal,” Cynthia announced.

Me: “Cynthia. Why are we receiving this distress signal? Does anyone know we are coming?”

Cynthia: “Our Location has not been compromised yet. Distress Signal being received is a specific signal created for the models of this ship. Only specific ships can capture it. This signal was created to secretly call for help in enemy territory. How do you wish to proceed?”

Me: “First find out where the signal is coming from. We have to be careful while approaching it.”

Cynthia: “Pinpointing location. The Distress signal seems to be originating from the dark side of the moon. Exact coordinates have been found.”

Me: “OK. Let’s approach it. But be on alert. If you sense and weapons being targeted on us. Immediately get us out of there.”

Cynthia: “Noted. Setting course for the location of the distress signal.”

As we cruised towards the location, it quickly became pitch black. As we were directly opposite to the Sun’s direction. I left the navigation and landing part to Cynthia as I wasn’t up to it.

As we landed, I asked Cynthia to light up the front light of the ship. As she did it. I could see a ship similar to ours, but it had been damaged quite a lot. There was a giant hole where the side door should have been. It looked like it was hit with a laser cannon. Cynthia’s bio-scan showed that there was someone onboard. But they wouldn’t respond when we tried contacting them on the ship’s radio.

I was worried that the person could be incapacitated to give a proper response. I armoured up and went outside to have a look.

The first step I took went fine but my second step threw me about 5 feet in the air that's when I realized the gravity difference of the place. It was much less than what I was used to. So instead of pushing my luck. I just used my sword to gently float towards the wrecked ship. Upon reaching the ship I could see that everything at the ship's entrance was either charred black or burnt to a crisp. But to my relief, the command center door was still shut and it looked intact. I tried banging on it to get some response. But it was futile. I then used my sword to pry the door open, and after some effort, I was able to fully open it. Upon opening the door, the command center lights started to flicker but they couldn't stay on for long. I could see someone passed out in a spacesuit on the command center chair. I picked the person up and then headed back to my ship. I didn't realize then but my new powers made this task very easy.

On entering my ship and once everything was normal, I took the helmet of the spacesuit off and found out that it was a guy. He was still passed out and a quick examination from Cynthia showed that he only needed rest. This guy looked the same age as Ren but had a more masculine-looking face, his face reminded me of all those male characters we see in movies who are very good friends of the hero but sacrifice themselves in the end to save the hero. For now, I put my plan on hold. And went to take some rest while I waited for this stranger to recover.

I laid him on Ren's bed and sat in the command center chair. And then quickly fell asleep.

## *Chapter 18*

### **The Plan**

I woke up a bit groggy, to find a black figure towering over me. As my vision cleared, I could make out that a knife was pointed toward my neck and the guy I just saved was looking right into my face.

Me: "I wouldn't do that, if I were you."

Him: "What?"

I then pointed him to look behind him. He slowly turned his neck towards the back to see that my sword was pointed at his neck while floating midair.

Him: "Who are you? And how did you find me?"

Me: "Seriously? I save your ass from the shipwreck and this is how you treat me? Pointing a knife at my neck while I was sleeping"

Him: "Ah. well..."

Me: "Don't you think If I wanted you to be dead. I would have already done it by now?"

My words seemed to have instilled some trust in me as he backed up and sheath his knife.

Him: “Sorry about that. But can you also.”, he pointed to my sword hovering near his neck.

Me: “oh yeah. SNAP!” and the sword vanished. “Let’s start from the beginning, shall we?”

He nodded.

Me: “Hi my name is Blake. And this is my ship. I was passing by, but then heard your SOS call, so I rescued you and brought you here. Now your turn.”

Him: “My name is Corneblagh. I was a Sergeant in the Galactorian Army. I was also the leader of the rebellion faction that was against the rule of current king Heouborghblat. But my unit got ambushed by the king’s forces and I had to escape to save my life. A few battle drones followed me and damaged my ship, and after that all I remember that my engines had failed and I was hurtling towards the moon. Apologies for my behavior earlier, thank you for saving me.”

Me: “It’s ok. And I’ll refer you as corn from now on, your name is really long. You mean to say Heouborghblat is now the king. I remember hearing the same from the ship that attacked us. But wasn’t he the king’s advisor previously, then how can he...”

“DETECTING INCOMING BATTLE DROIDS. PLEASE PROVIDE NEXT COURSE OF ACTION,” Cynthia’s alarms blared.

Corn: “Quick turn off all the ships electrical systems.”

Me: “What about life support?”

Corn: “These battle droids don’t have bio scanners. They rely on electric signals for the detection of spaceships. Quick turn everything off, before we get detected.”

Me:” Cynthia, turn every electrical system on the ship off.”

Cynthia: “Noted. Ship now going into hibernation mode.”

And within seconds everything around me was surrounded in complete darkness.

Corn: Let’s stay like this for a while, these droids will take few rounds to make sure nothing is left alive, after that they will head back. You were saying something?”

Me: “Oh yeah. Heouborghblat was the king’s advisor or something previously so how can he suddenly become the king now?”

Corn: “Well, the technical term for him is acting king. Our King, King Souverighblaght had taken ill and was unable to fulfill his duty. So in his absence, Heouborghblat took over until our majesty recovered. But it’s known to very few that he secretly imprisoned the entire royal family and has kept them in lock and key ever since in an underground section of the main palace. In the army, many factions were unhappy with Heouborghblat’s rule, but since he came into power legitimately no one questioned him. But, when I found out about this act of his and raised my voice my entire platoon was ambushed by his forces and we had to either escape the planet or go into hiding. Heouborghblat has very tight control over information and narrative of the king’s sickness, and he has been using that to control the public perception and remain in power. I have a question for you as well?”

Me: “Yes go ahead”

Corn: “how come you are so familiar with Heouborghblat as an outsider? Most people outside the inner circle of the king don’t have much idea about him. And you said about some ship that attacked you?”

Me: “oh yes, I am also a galactorian just like you, but I was brought up on a different planet by my grandmother. She died

fighting the forces that Heouborghblat sent to retrieve the infinite baby, and now I am here to avenge her.”

Corn: “The infinite baby? Who exactly was your grandmother?”

Me: “Does the name Major Greene mean anything to you?”

Corn: “Mean anything? She is a legend around here. The Red Queen is your grandmother?”

Me: “Well yeah.”

Corn: “But I had heard that her entire family got killed in an accident just before her ceremony to become the next military chief. And she was also transporting the infinite baby at the time which got lost in transit as well and the search for it is still going on.”

Me: “oh I see, this is where Heouborghblat’s narrative control started. I’ll tell you the full story, actually the king initially got manipulated by Heouborghblat and wanted to keep the infinite baby for himself for its power. But my grandmother opposed it for which Heouborghblat got her captured and her son executed. My mother died giving birth to me. But my grandmother was able to get away with the infinite baby. I think after my grandmother escaped Heouborghblat double crossed the king and became the king himself, and has been controlling the narrative since then. But from what I know the king is also no saint so what will reinstating him achieve?”

Corn: “See I still find it difficult to believe what you are saying. But for argument’s sake let’s assume that its true and the king wanted the power of the infinite baby for himself. There has to be a reason behind this. Because I grew up on this planet and my father and forefathers also served under the king and his ancestors, and they have nothing but good things to say about the king and his family. Once he is in power proper order will be restored to the planet which is currently very much needed.”

Me: “To be honest I don’t care about the king or this planet, my only issue is with Heouborghblat. And here we seem to have a common enemy I’ll give you that much. I suggest we join forces on this one in defeating Heouborghblat.”

Corn: “Yeah I can agree on this.”

Me: “Tell me this, what is the easiest way for me to face Heouborghblat one on one.”

Corn: “See in Galactorian society the place where one grows up and the culture one grows up in becomes his heritage. And all people of Galactorian heritage are the king’s subjects. But subjects can’t challenge the king’s rule. However, there is a Gladiator rule, in which an outsider can challenge the sitting king’s authority and they have to duel till death and the winner becomes the new king of Galactor.”

Me: “But I am also a Galactorian. How can I be an outsider?”

Corn: “You are Galactorian by birth. But your heritage is the planet you grew up in. So that makes you an outsider according to the Galactorian societal norms. You are what we call an exception to the rule.”

Me: “Ok, so let’s do that then. I’ll challenge Heouborghblat for a duel, while you go and save the king.”

Corn:” Are you sure? The gladiator fights have no rules and Heouborghblat is well equipped for any battle that come his way.”

Me: “Well. Let’s just say I have some tricks up my sleeve as well. But how are you going to save the king?”

Corn: “Well. Let’s just say I have some tricks up my sleeve as well.”

Me: “OH! Okay! It’s a deal then. Let’s get started on our plan then.”

## *Chapter 19*

### **The Finale**

Our plan was twofold, while I indulged Heouborghblat. Corn would go and save the king.

So as my ship started to reach the planet and we entered the planet's atmosphere, Corn directed me to a place to land which was in the desert. I kept ignoring all the radio calls coming from the planet to identify myself or else I would be considered hostile. My craft's speed was enough to get through to landing until the Planetary forces sprang into action. And so, as I landed in the heart of the golden sea of sand, Corn quickly went out to complete his goal. And I stood there waiting to play out my plan. Just as expected, after a few minutes of Corn leaving I was surrounded by ships.

And a blaring message echoed from one of the ships,"  
INTRUDER, IDENTIFY YOURSELF OR BE DESTROYED"

I took a deep breath and said on top of my voice: "MY NAME IS BLAKE CLARK. MY HERITAGE IS FROM PLANET EARTH AND I AM HERE TO CHALLENGE KING Heouborghblat FOR A DUEL."

After I spoke this, there was pin-drop silence around me, only the wind kept howling in the distance. After a few minutes, I could see a small hatch open from the ship that alerted me

earlier, and a floating shape started to come towards me. It was similar to the one that I saw come down and talk to my grandmother on the beach that day.

On coming close to me the floating shape transformed itself into a humanoid form that looked like a court attendant.

Attendant: "Greetings Blake Clark form planet Earth. I am Lorneblagh, I will be king Heouborghblat's representative to you. You say you would like to challenge King Heouborghblat for duel is that correct?"

Me: "Yes that is correct."

Lorneblagh: "Since no one in a long while has ever come to challenge a sitting king, it's a first time for most of us. Requesting you to please be patient while we inform our king of this."

Me: "Yeah sure take your time."

He put one hand on his ear as if trying to listen to something.

Lorneblagh: "Regret to inform you Mr. Blake. Our King says that he is currently busy and will like to take up your offer at his earliest once he is free, which will be 365 days in earth time. Is that ok with you?"

Me: "No actually that is a very long time. I do understand that the king might be busy, in the meantime will you be able to please pass a message from me to your King?"

Lorneblagh: "Yes of course sir. Please tell me the message."

Me: "Ok please pass this message verbatim, Hey Heouborghblat, did you get scared of me or are just a pussy who runs away from fights? Don't worry I won't kick your ass that hard."

Lorneblough kept his hands on his ear again as if transmitting my message to his king. And stood like that for a minute or so, and then he raised his head and with a smile said, "Congratulations Mr. Blake from Earth, our King has accepted your proposal, and will meet you here shortly. Requesting you to please be patient and wait here."

And then he floated away into the hatch from which he emerged earlier and the hatch closed.

This interaction cleared one thing for me, doesn't matter which planet you are from. The male ego is universally fragile.

I then decided to wait for my duel to start in my ship, the other ships kept on hovering above me in the meantime.

After about an hour or so, I could feel the ship shaking. I came outside to see what was going on. As I stood outside I could now feel the ground itself shaking as if a huge monster was walking towards me. And slowly the thumping of the ground became louder and clearer.

**THUD! THUD!THUD!THUD!**

I armored up out of instinct and flew up a bit to see where the sound was coming from, and now I could see it. It looked like a tiny robot on the horizon coming towards me, but soon it started to grow in size and now as it came closer to me, It seemed like a skyscraper had grown legs.

In a few minutes, this humongous battle robot was towering above me. It looked exactly like the huge battle robots I used to see in anime and movies. The only thing was that this thing was 3 times larger than those shown in movies. And to top it off it also had a big sword on its back.

“So, you are the one who came to challenge my authority?”, a deep voice blared from the robot.

Me: “Are you Heouborghblat?”

Robot: “Oh yes certainly.”

Me: “Well let’s get started then.”

I could now feel that all the emotions that I had suppressed within me, come to the surface, and a surge of power started to grow from within me. The golden hue that I saw near the black hole was now covering my armor and was embedded in my sword as well.

I raised my sword and thrust myself towards the giant robot, and in a fraction of a seconds I went,

WHOOSH! BOOM!

The impact was so large that the robot took a step back and a dust cloud appeared. I was now feeling more and more confident, but as the dust settled, I looked up to see that the place where I had hit didn’t even have a scratch.

Heouborghblat:” Very impressive Mr. Blake from the Earth. You are the first one until now who has made this robot take a step back with your attack. Now let me show you what I can do.”

The robot then raised its sword, and it looked like there was a solar eclipse happening, once its sword swung, there was a crater on the ground where it landed, and my ship was sliced in half as if it was made of butter.

I knew fully well now, that I had bitten more than I could chew, but it was a place from where I could not go back even if I wanted to. I again went for my second attack, but before I could land my attack the robot just moved and dodged it, and then hit me like we swat a fly.

BOOM! I went crashing on the ground.

Since the new armor had come this was the first time I had felt any pain, It was as if I was being crushed by a tank, but I still managed to get back up and face the robot again. I was losing my mind and feeling angry and frustrated at the same time, my target was right in front of me, and all the faces of the people that I had lost kept flashing in front of me. And my logical thinking had gone out the window.

Swoosh! BOOM!

Something just zoomed past me and created a crater behind me. I looked up to see that on the right shoulder of the robot, a turret of a laser cannon was glowing red.

“Oh! Shi...” I flew up quickly to avoid getting hit by the laser a second time.

I kept flying away to avoid getting hit by the laser. It seemed like the robot was trying to kill a fly with a laser as it desecrated the area around itself trying to hit me.

I tried to dodge it as much I could but then I slightly got caught in the laser and crashed into the ground. I stood up to see a laser beam coming directly towards me. I raised my sword and started to use it as a shield, the thrust of the laser was so much that I could see my armor cracking and falling. By the time the laser beam stopped, my armor on the right hand had been completely disintegrated, my right hand had been charred black and my sword was on the verge of falling apart. And even my helmet had its right side blown off.

I then coughed out a pool of blood and fell on my knees, feeling too weak to get up.

I was now breathing heavily, barely able to keep myself together.

I could then see that the giant robot's head popped open and something silver flew out of it. In a few seconds, the silver thing landed in front of me. It was Heouborghblat in silver armor.

Heouborghblat: "Are you done now? Is this what you wanted? Now what do you think of me?"

I couldn't move my body but somehow I dared to say, "I still think that you are a bitch."

Heouborghblat: "HAHAHA! It seems you still haven't learned your lesson. Let me make it more clear to you."

And he then picked me up by my neck slammed me to the ground and started punching me.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

By the time the punches stopped, I could see my reflection in his armor's helmet, my face had swollen and looked purple now. My forehead was bleeding, and my right eye had swollen and was shut and looked like a black tomato.

Heouborghblat: "And you thought you could kill me? Me. Who has survived countless years."

Me: "I... I was not here to kill you."

Heouborghblat: "What?"

Me: "Yes.. I... was never here to kill you."

Heouborghblat: "Then why did you do it? Are you mad or just losing it since you are about to die?"

Me: "I was only here to stall you."

Heouborghblat: "Stall me? From what?"

I could barely keep my eyes open, but I could see some black figures approaching from behind Heouborghblat.

Me: “That!” I mustered all of my strength to point to those black figures.

And then everything started to go dark. I couldn’t feel my body, I couldn’t think about anything. It was getting quiet all of a sudden. Then my ears started to lose their function and I could hear the world going silent slowly, amidst the silence I could hear many footsteps around me.

And then finally I got to hear, “Heouborghblat, for the actions of treason against the king and the kingdom of Galactor, you are hereby sentenced to death.”

Slick!

THUD!

And then everything in the world became quiet and I became one with it.

## Epilogue

The news of the acting king being challenged to a duel by an outsider spread like wildfire. In a matter of minutes, the entire planet got glued to their information consoles. The fight was going to be broadcast live. The army was going to accompany its king. The new mech was ready to be tested by its king in battle. And this one duel tied together the attention of the entire planet.

Corneblough knew that this was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. So he made the stranger land in a specific location to the entry to the underground tunnel system which opened in the castle dungeons. Once there, the two unmotivated guards were an easy target for him. He then proceeded to free the king and race to the surface. As the empty court halls echoed with their steps, the stranger's question lingered in his mind. But this was not the time or place for it. Once the king reached the throne room, the royal guards sprung into action to see their king alive and well. The public was still glued to their screens, seeing the outsider barely able to keep up with the mech and getting his butt kicked, but still not giving up. But as the outsider coughed up blood everyone knew what was coming next. They saw their mighty Heuborghblat walking towards the outsider to give him a warrior's death and then raise his arm to give the finishing blow. This solidified the perception of Galactorian might in the eyes of its people and celebrations were about to start. But then

the transmission got cut off citing technical difficulties. And then the news of their king's return overshadowed all other events on the planet. For a common Galactorian, this was a day which would be remembered in history, a day filled with only happiness and victory.

According to official sources, Heouborghblat was then sent to a mission in outer galaxies in which he tragically lost his life in action. Corneblough became the king's closest confidant and subsequently the upcoming military head. But the stranger's question still lingered in his mind. And so after the chaos settled down, one day while alone on a walk with the king he asked the question, "Was it true that the King at one time wanted to take up the infinite baby for himself?". The king stopped in his tracks and explained that yes it was true, and he was at fault. Losing his son had made him vulnerable to the idea that the infinite baby's power could be used to bring back the dead. He was naive then, but now, he has learned his lesson and if Corneblough still thinks that his king is at fault, then he is free to make this information public. Corneblough sighed with relief and then went to sleep peacefully that night.

The infinite baby who had named himself John, survived. The body it tried to protect couldn't survive the impact of the fight. But still, It was now time for him to be born. The memories of his only friend shall stay with him and the new universe decided that this person and his memories shall live through him. So after being born it became his mission to tell the story of his mortal friend to anyone and everyone so that his friend's memories live on. His mother listened to her child's story and engraved it in her heart as well. This was the first story that her lovely child had spoken to her. She joined her child in his mission of keeping Blake Clark's memories alive. Now you might think, how do we know this? Well. We were just reading about him, weren't we?