

## Chapter 5: My Life

The hallway was packed. Students were opening and closing their holographic lockers. Some grabbed their homemade food, while others put away their book. Hanging on both side above the lockers were active promotional posters. They spewed forward the latest shoes and clothing style.

As TeeJay made his way forward, he could feel the students' eyes on him. They were looking at him as he passed by. Not knowing what to do, he tried his best not to look nervous and continued on walking. After getting lost quite a bit, he had made it to the cafeteria.

It was a gigantic arena. Its ceiling was over four stories high, and it was over fifty yards long and sixty yards wide. Hanging high over the heads of the students were various banners of championship won and battles earned. On both sides were cooks preparing food. In between were benches that were already filled up as he entered the room. The flooring was Starlinean marble, and the wallpapers sparkled forward their beauty.

High above, sunlight entered the cleared glass. Vines and exotic plants climbed and traversed their way across the ceiling while television and banners advertised their wares and products. The commercials were ironically drowned out by the conversations of the thousands of students in the court.

Pushing his way through the crowd, TeeJay strolled over to one of the serving area and grabbed his food. With meal and drinks in his tray, he felt the inner court was too crowded for him. After a few minutes of walking, he exited the cafeteria and entered the outdoor eating area. It was only twenty feet wide, but it was as long as the inside eating area.

Decorated umbrellas were placed at every table, along with seating made from the same material as the floor. Various plants and vines climbed along the railing. Only a reach a way were speeding air-cars and the high-street. The sky was blanketed with falling snowflakes. It was a white day. Yet, thanks to the protective shield, the outside yard was snow-free.

He found a table for four right by the edge and took his seat. After a few quick bites, he looked up at the holographic television screen to find out that the scientists had made a breakthrough.

"We're here at the Oathox Science Building," the Reporter explained into the camera, "to detail to you a breakthrough in science. Professor Hope, can you tell us what you have discovered this time?"

The professor, a beautiful lady of brunette hair with glasses replied, "I'm happy to say that this is a victory for the law enforcement of the galaxy. We have found a way to go back to the very scene of the incident through the victims and the accused. We have

discovered a portion of the brain that saved data of what is seen, touched, felt, smelled, and heard at the time of the crime. Because the memory doesn't disappear, we are able to bring it back, even if the person is dead. Thanks to this technology, officers have been able to reopen unsolved case. Here, I'll demonstrate an example. Would you be willing to volunteer?"

After the reporter had agreed, the professor stuck a small cylinder object up the nose and left it there for ten seconds. After the time was up, she removed it and put it into a machine.

"Now, let's see what you ate for breakfast shall we? We'll retrieve your memory from this morning, and look, voila. The screen here projects forward what you saw, the speakers amplify what you heard, and the readings will tell us what you taste, felt, and smelled during your breakfast."

"Hey!"

Surprised, TeeJay jumped at the sound of the voice. Looking over, he saw that it was the girl whom he had bumped into before.

"Did I surprise you?" She flashed her beautiful smile.

"Oh...umm...no, I was...I was just watching the..." he stumbled with his choice of words as he rubbed his head out of embarrassment.

Giggling, she asked, "So...are you going to invite me to sit down? Or should I stand and talk?"

"Oh! Sorry, yeah, go ahead, you can sit," he tried to fake a smile.

Still giggling, she said, "You're funny. So, what are you watching?"

"Oh, nothing really. Just some technological breakthrough. But then again, they're always having miracle breakthroughs," he replied as he took his eyes from the screen and stared into her eyes.

"So, are the rumors true?" She asked with a hint of interest in her eyes.

"What do you mean?" He tried to play it off as if he didn't know.

"Well, there's a rumor that the Quadra champion of Earth is a student here. And that the student is you," she said while looking into his green and blue eyes.

"Do you believe those rumors?" He again acted as if he didn't know.

“I don’t know really. But I do know for one thing. Not many people have eyes like yours genetically. People do them by surgery, or their parents altered their gene to make it so. But, yours came natural didn’t it? I don’t know how many people in the world have them naturally, but I do know one, and he is the winner of the Quadra Tournament,” she replied.

“Then I guess those rumors are true then,” he smiled.

“I also heard,” she tilted her head to one side, “you made a fool out of Spark in the simulator room,”

“Sorry...” TeeJay lowered his head, “I didn’t mean to embarrass your boyfriend.”

At the sound of the word, she burst out laughing, “Haha, you thought that he was my boyfriend? That’s far from the truth. Let’s just say he’s a persistent person.”

“Haha, well, at least his ego isn’t as big as it was before huh?”

“Yeah...” she broke off into a silent thought.

“What is it?”

“Were you scared? You know, when you were fighting the others? Did you ever think about what would happen if you had died?”

“I tried not to really,” he replied frankly as he took a sip of his drink, “When you fight, you can’t worry about dying, because if you do, it will occupy your mind, and instead of paying attention to your opponent, you worry about something else. That would be the deadliest mistake a fighter can make.”

“So, how are you enjoying your first day here?” She questioned him in a honest voice.

“I like it, I guess. It’s bigger than my last school. Too much walking. But I like it. It’s pretty nice,” he said as he threw the cup into a nearby trashcan.

“So, do you have any special lady in your life right now?” She gave a wide grin.

“It depends, are you interested?” He returned the smirk.

They both laughed loudly and jovially. At the sound of their laughter, the other students turned to see what was happening. But when they found out that nothing interesting occurred, they returned back to conversation.

She picked up a green apple and took a small bite out of it, and then turned to him and asked, “Hey, is TeeJay your real name?”

He drifted away for a second, and appeared to not have been paying attention.

“Hey!” She said out loud.

“Oh, sorry,” he apologized, “were you saying something?”

“Yeah, is TeeJay your real name?” she asked again.

“Well, it’s actually my stage name. Or I guess you can call it that. My real name is Thomas-James. And when I was young, people didn’t like saying my full name, so they just abbreviate it to TJ. And then when I started the Quadra league, the fans thought it would be clever to spell it as T, e, e, a capital J, a, and then y. Say the same way, except with four more letters,” he explained in one breath.

“Oh...hey, what are you doing tonight?” She asked out of nowhere.

“Umm...hmm...I don’t know. Why? What are you doing?” He questioned back as he leaned on his chair.

“There’s an air-car race tonight at the Pory District. You should come, it could be fun,” she said in an inviting tone.

“Sorry, but I’m not much of a racer. A fighter yeah...but I don’t know how to race,” he commented.

”Do you have an air-car?”

“Well...yeah...but...”

“Then you got nothing to worry about. Come on, it’ll be fun. You don’t have to race, but you’ll get to see some of the finest air-car around,” she nodded her head.

“Hmm...what’s the catch?” A grin came onto his face.

“What do you mean a catch?” she tried to act innocent.

“All right, come on, what is it? I can see it in your eyes.”

“No, there’s no catch. It’s just...there’s this girl I know that’s going, and she stole my last boyfriend from me, and so...well...I just want to show up with you to make her jealous,” she tried to avoid looking into his eyes.

“Haha, I guess I’ll do it. Better than staying at home I guess,” he laughed as he stared up into the falling snow.

“Awe, thank you so much,” she said as she got up and hugged him. Then, they both came crashing down as his chair flipped over.

Lying on top of him, she started giggling. They lied like that for the next few seconds, and then the bell rang. She got up and helped him off his feet.

“Sorry about that,” she apologized with a blush on her face.

“It’s okay. It happens all the time,” he tried to lie with small red patches on his cheeks.

“That’s the bell. I got to go to class. I’ll call you tonight, yeah? Bye!” She waved him farewell and left.

“Wait! Hmm, Terra, can you get an uplink onto her onboard computer,” he thought as he brushed the dirt off his clothing.

“I’m sorry TeeJay, but she doesn’t have one,” a digitized voice replied.

“Weird...upper citizens should have one. Well, I guess if she doesn’t call me, I can call her,” he said as he reached out his hand and passed it through the protective barrier. After catching a snow, he brought it back and dropped it onto the ground. With a smile on his face, he left for his next class.

The sun waned above the horizon, and the Quadra fighter opened the door to his house. He walked over to the sofa and slumped down with a load sigh of relief. His first day at his new school wasn’t bad. He made a few friends. Thinking back, he wondered how he made it through the classes after his lunch break. They were easy to understand and learn, but he slept through most of the lesson.

The golden sun slyly penetrated the glass window, casting low shadows on the objects in the house. Thanks to the air conditioning system, his home was kept at a cool temperature throughout the day. Realizing that his mom wasn’t home yet, he shifted his feet onto the sofa and lied back on his head.

His muscles ached from the fight at school while his head twirled with dizziness. His stomach growled from the lack of food, adding into the torment.

‘Thank God that tomorrow there’s no school,’ he thought to himself.

A sudden, sweet smelling scene crept up the nostrils of his nose and registered an image in his brain.

‘Guess Mom must have left me food,’ he pondered.

Standing up from the cushion seat, he headed over to the small, compact kitchen area and opened an enclosed capsule to reveal the food his mom had made. He popped open the

refrigerator and removed a drink. He took the two to the nearby glass table and began eating his dinner. The food was a welcoming sight for his stomach. Filled, he brought the dirty plate and cup over to a machine and put it into the machine. Seconds later, he took out the newly washed and rinsed eating wares.

While walking to his room, a nearby telephone rang with great intensity. He pushed an invisible button and out came a transparent screen. Unseen machines started twisting and whirling, and soon, a 3-D image appeared.

“Hey TeeJay!” greeted the girl on the screen.

“Hey,” he said out of surprised, “how did you get my number? I forgot to give it to you.”

“Oh, that’s okay. I’d managed to find it anyway,” she said with a broad grin on her face.

“So, what’s up?” He asked as he walked down the hall and into his room.

As he entered, the original screen disappeared and out came another one by the side of his bed.

“Well, are you still coming with me to that thing tonight?” She replied with a question on her face.

“Umm...yeah I guess, if you want me to,” he answered while scratching the back of his head.

“Haha, you’re funny. Yeah, of course I want you to go. I mean, if I didn’t, then I wouldn’t have invited you in the first place right?” She put her hand over her mouth to cover her giggling.

“I guess, but umm...my mom took the only air-car,” he mumbled in a low tone.

“Oh, if that’s the case, then I’ll come and pick you up yeah?” she said with a brightened face.

“You can do that, if you want,” he said halfheartedly.

“What’s wrong? If you don’t want to go, then just say so, you know? I mean, I don’t want to pressure you or anything,” she commented in a caring voice.

“No...it’s just that this will be the first time I’m leaving my house after school to go somewhere other than to go training,” he lowered his voice along with his head.

“Oh, well, that’s okay then. I’ll make sure you have a lot of fun tonight, mmkay? I promise!” She said in an excited tone.

“All right, when are you coming?” He said, still staring at the holographic screen.

“I’ll be over there in around thirty minutes or so. Oh, before I go, try and dress warm okay? It should be snowing tonight as well, so unless you want to freeze, I suggest you bring a sweater or something. Well, bye,” and with that, the screen returned to its original place and the 3-D image disappeared.

“Terra, can you buy me that jacket I was looking at a few days back?” TeeJay said out loud.

From a speaker high in the room spoke a female voice, “Are you sure? It’s quite expensive.”

“Well, I have to spend my money on something,” he said as he looked at himself in the mirror.

“It is purchased. It should arrive in your inventory in about a minute or so,” said the voice.

“Thanks,” he said as he took off his clothing and stepped into the shower stall.

Soon, hot water came streaming down the faucet. It splashed on his battle-hardened body and bounced off into the air. Steam rose into the air, causing the glasses to condense with water vapors. After his hair was washed and his body was cleaned, the auto dry cleaning was activated. Minutes passed, and he stepped out of the stall fully clothed, wearing his latest purchase. Soon, the doorbell rang and at the entrance was the jovial Erin, dressed in her warm winter clothing.

“Hey!” She said with a bright smile, “ready?”

“Yeah, let’s go,” TeeJay replied as he followed her into the hovering air-car right outside his entrance.

When the doors closed, the electronic display on the dashboard began lighting up. An electronic voice asked for the destination.

“Pory District,” Erin said.

The hydraulic machinery began whirling and the air-car slowly moved sideway, and soon launched full speed forward as it joined the others on the intra-highway. The snow was still falling. Its white surface bounced off the windshield of the flying transportation. Although it was already dark, the lights from the city flew forth with intense beauty, illuminating the roadways and walkways.

Looking outside at the speeding lights, he began thinking about his newly made friend. He had never seen anyone so beautiful in his entire life. Everything about her attracted

him to her. Yet, he knew it wasn't worth it. He led the life of fighter, not of a businessman or of an administrator. He understood that his life expectancy wasn't long. Unless he changed his profession, he thought, he would never live long enough.

Weary of the hanging silence, TeeJay said out of nowhere, "So, what are we going to do tonight?"

"Well," she answered as checked the mirror, "we can go visit a friend of mine who's dying to meet you. Then, we can go to the dance floor if you like. I don't know, we'll just have to see when we get there."

"Who's your friend?" He asked with a note of curiosity.

"Oh, she's just a big fan of you. I told her you were coming, and she got really excited!" She responded with a little smile.

Scratching his head, he said in a frank tone, "Umm...just to let you know, I'm not good at fan meeting. The last time I met a fan, I...how can I say this...let's just say she had to spend a night in the hospital."

"Haha," she laughed heartily, "well, we'll try and prevent it from happening this time okay?"

The air-car pulled into a parking lot, and latched onto a floating platform. Both of them got out on the passenger's side and two speeding car sped right by them at lightning speed.

"Seems like they're racing already," she commented as she led him into an outdoor platform where hundreds of others were already gathering.

As they pushed their ways through the crowd, TeeJay felt a hand grabbed his shoulder. Turning around with his fingers around his necklace, he saw that it was an old acquaintance.

"Listen...I'm sorry," Spark said as he beamed a threatening look at his two lackeys to apologize as well, "I didn't know that you were...well,"

"It's okay," the fighter smiled, "I had fun,"

"Hey Spark!" Erin said with a bright smile as she appeared next to TeeJay.

"Hi Erin," the giant said in a lowered tone, "you look nice,"

Just as the jovial girl was about to respond, a shout came somewhere up front that two cars were coming directly their way. As the crowd dispersed to get out of the way, the

five stood there until they saw what the panic was about. Not too far away, two air-cars were speeding directly at them and the two drivers had already jumped out.

Realizing that there wasn't enough time to run, TeeJay pushed Spark and Erin out of the way and shouted, "Get out!"

He reached for his crystal, which instantly transformed into the blue-glowing Quadra sword. In lightning speed, he slashed the first air-car in half, sending the two sides flying off into the distant. He turned his head to watch the magnificent explosion in the distant when an alarming shout caused him to turn around.

"Shoot..." he said as the lights from the second on-coming air-car flashed his eyes. He managed to raise his blade to defend himself. But, the force from the oncoming object sent him spiraling backward. He felt a sharp pain from his back as darkness overtook his eyes.

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