

Book cover by Numair Azman



THEO SPEARS AND THE GOLDEN
DIAMOND

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Theo Spears
&
The Golden Diamond

Chapter 1.

I think I had the best life in the world. Yes, *Had*. It isn't that nice anymore. Not when you have to train every day and have to hear lectures on how to prevent death every hour. Well that's how life is at Zosicentia School for Warriors. If you are a warrior then you must already be familiar with this name, for all of you who aren't well I simply loathe you. If you think that this is some fairytale story then I'm very sorry to inform you that you're mistaken. If, by any chance, you take this as a comedy and a good laugh then to me you are the most naive person alive. Before you start reading let me inform you that I was forced to give an account of all of this. If it had been left on me, I would have never looked back to those dark days. Well now without any further delay let me give you a little background on how I landed in this school.

I, Theo Spears, had a normal life. I lived with my dad, still do during the summers, in a luxury apartment in Manhattan, New York. I went to prep school, had a lot of friends and was also captain of the soccer team. My dad, Dean Spears, and I used to go camping every summer as a way to relax after a long and tiring year. My dad was an engineer and a graduate from Harvard. This year we were planning to spend a month in the wild, unlike the usual three weeks. After a long hike up the mountains, during which my dad told me about his encounter with a python, we reached our favorite camping site. It was a spectacular site, surrounded by a lot of pine trees; we had built a little fireplace in the corner when we first hiked here. It had a homey feeling and the smell of the pine trees always made you feel pleased and relaxed. After setting up our tents and starting a fire, I and my dad started making dinner. We had a hearty dinner of sausages and steak. Both of us were so stuffed, that we fell asleep as soon as our heads touched our pillows.

"Theo! Get Up Buddy! It's already six!"

"Alright, I'm up!" I said, grabbing my wristwatch and muttering a few bitter words under my breath. I hated getting up this early during holidays. It was the only thing

that I hated about camping. The sun had still not risen and there was peace everywhere. I pulled on my sweatshirt, then got out of my tent and was met by a cold wind and the smell of cheese omelet. My dad was busy cooking our breakfast. I grabbed an apple from the basket and smiled at my dad. I had the best dad in the world. He was a tall and handsome man, with curly brown hair and emerald green eyes. I was the total opposite of my dad; I was a short, stern looking boy, with straight black hair and big brown eyes. The only thing we had in common about our appearances was that we both had the same warm and welcoming smile.

“Where are we heading today?” I asked, grabbing my plate.

“We’re going to go down to the lake and try to catch fish for dinner. How does that sound?”

“Gghraat,” I said, munching my omelet.

With bags on our backs, we set out on our trek down the lake. We were half way through when something very unusual and unexpected happened. We were walking merrily down the hill, singing a song, when we heard a peculiar sound come from the trees nearby and saw a green eye look at us. This made my heart skip a beat. Someone or something was following us. I looked at my father and realized that he hadn’t noticed a thing. Trying not to create a scene, I ignored the eye and told myself that it was just my imagination. *I was very wrong.*

After walking a few kilometers, I saw something that made the hairs on my back stand up. There was an animal skeleton lying in the trees. My dad had noticed my worried expression. “Everything alright?” he asked with his reassuring smile. “Yeah, that skeleton just freaked me out.” I said, returning a weak smile.

We were just about to reach the lake when I heard a roar from behind and the next moment there was a tiger on my chest with a masked man sitting on top of it. Its face was so near to mine that I could even smell its horrible breath. Its eyes were the same green eyes that I had seen a while ago. I kept looking at it as it clawed into my chest. Suddenly a stone hit the tiger’s head and I heard by Dad shouting from behind, “Hey! Leave my son alone, you filthy beast!” Obviously the tiger took this as an insult and leapt towards my father. I quickly got up and was about to run towards by father who was trying to hold of this beast, while the masked man was trying to knock him off his feet with his sword, when I heard another ear splitting roar and as I looked around , my heart skipped a beat. Coming out of the shadows were more tigers with

masked men sitting on them. As I concentrated I soon realized that the tigers were not ordinary tigers that you would find in a zoo. In fact they were the size of a killer whale with fangs dripping with blood and menacing green eyes. I stepped a few paces back and bumped into my father. I looked at him and saw his pale face. We were trapped from all sides. The tigers were advancing towards us, with those men on their backs. Although their faces were veiled, I felt as if they were smirking. I looked around and saw my backpack lying few paces away. If I could only get to my backpack, I thought. I remembered that I had placed a tennis racket in there. I knew that the racket wouldn't be of much use but at least it would hold them off for a while. Without thinking for second I leapt towards my backpack with the tiger behind me. One of its claws slashed against my pants and I could feel the blood dripping out. I quickly got hold of my back pack and took out the racket only to have it knocked out of my hands by one of the masked men. He leapt of his tiger and advanced towards me. I quickly grabbed the racket as the tiger followed by the masked man advanced towards me. In the distance I could hear my father's shouts as he tried to hold off the rest of the tigers. I knew I had to get to him quickly. What could a lone man to against eleven humongous tigers and armed men? My heart was beating like a hammer against my chest. "Go away! What do you want from us?" The man uttered a disoriented laugh but the tiger did something that made me lose my appetite for a week. At first it plunged towards me but while it was still in the air, it bowed and then its body turned and twisted and the next moment it was *gone*. I stood there in shock and tried to digest the fact that I had just made this tiger disappear. I looked at the man and saw that he had stopped too but then he leapt in the air and advanced towards me. I quickly brought the racket in front of me and hit him on his arm. To my utter shock his arm began to disintegrate until there was only dust left. I looked at his face and gasped. His entire body was turning into dust. I looked at my racket and realized that I had broken a few strings. Ignoring the disintegrating man, I rushed towards my father only to find the tigers gone and dust scattered everywhere. I looked around as if waiting for them to reappear but nothing happened.

I heard somebody moaning near me and for the first time in the last fifteen minutes or so, I realized that my dad was badly wounded. "Dad! Are you alright?" I said kneeling near his face.

"He will be perfectly fine." said a cold and menacing voice somewhere from the trees.

I looked around to see the owner of the voice and saw a tall man, I mean really tall

(six or seven feet), with a dirty French beard and square shaped glasses standing a few inches away from me. He had an Irish accent and cold blue eyes, but there was something about those eyes that gave you a feeling that this man could be trusted. He was wearing the most extra-ordinary clothes that I had ever seen. He was wearing what seemed like armor with a picture of what seemed like a battle field. This was golden and red in color and I could have sworn that the picture was moving and glowing. The picture of men dying and crying out silently with blood dripping from their fatal wounds while an enemy silently laughed watching their lifeless bodies as the soul got sucked out , gave me goose bumps. Below the armor were knee length shorts that were clinging to his skin but instead of cotton they were made of steel and bronze. He was wearing socks but to my utter surprise the socks kept on hissing as if there were snakes piled inside them and they kept on changing color. For a moment they were green and the next moment they were a very dirty pink. "He sure needs fashion lessons" I thought.

"Do not make fun of my cositine." said the strange man.

Too shock for words, I asked, without realizing what I was doing, "Who are you and did you just read my mind?" "Introductions can come later; first let me heal your father's and your wounds"

He took a thin, weird shaped bottle with a golden lid from his pocket in his shorts (My mouth fell open) and poured a few drops of a yellowish green colour liquid on the places where the tiger had attacked my father. Then with the wave of his hand he made the blood stop dripping from my father's fore-head and a second later my father looked as fit as a fiddle. He then placed some of the liquid on my leg and I suddenly felt a surge of energy passing through my body and the next moment the wound was gone.

"Theo, where are you?"

"Dad! Right here, are you alright?"

"I'll live," said my dad, giving me a weak smile.

"Well, now if you both don't mind, I would like some refreshments," said the man and with the wave of his hands he made three bottles of awkward looking liquid appear from thin air. This man was beginning to freak me out. He passed the bottles to us and starting drinking the liquid. "Well, what are you waiting for? Drink!"

“Who are you?” asked my dad in a stern and angry voice.

“Commons, can’t wait for a moment.”

“Excuse me?”

“I am Gregory Quindich, but I prefer being called Professor Quindich.”

“And what exactly do you want from us, Mr. Quindich?” My dad said in an irritated tone.

“Before I tell you what I want and why I am here, I would prefer that we get back to your campsite, it’s getting rather dark.” Replied Quindich, with a menacing smile.

I turned to my dad, expecting him to refuse but to my surprise he said “Fine.”

After a quite walk, during which Gregory Quindich kept on muttering about “Commons and Their Absolutely Rubbish Lifestyles”, we finally reached the campsite. This time the pine trees didn’t give that welcoming feeling. After seating himself on one of the chairs, he began to speak.

“You are Dean Spears, engineer from Harvard, I assume?” he said looking at my father. My dad’s face was turning pale for some unknown reason.

“Yes.”

“And this is your son, Theo Spears?”

“Yes.”

“Theo, do you have any clue on how you made that tiger and man disappear?” he said, looking at me with those cold eyes.

“No, Sir.”

“Would you like to know?”

I looked at my dad and then said, “How?” I clearly wanted this man to leave now.

“Well, the reason is that you are the Destined Warrior, my boy” he said, with his eyes gleaming more brightly than the sun. As I examined his eyes, I realized that there was a deep gash just on the edge of his right eye as if he had got it while fighting for his

men in a battle. His face was handsome apart from the wounds that he had. He seemed like a brave warrior who would go through anything, thick or thin for his men. Suddenly, for an unknown reason, I felt great reverence for this particular man.

“Could I please know what you are talking about, Mr. Quindich?” My dad said, in a curious and highly irritated voice.

“You want me to elaborate I assume.”

After a moment’s silence he continued. “Mr. Spears, the fact is that your son, is not an ordinary person, he is an extremely gifted child.”

“I already know that Mr. Quindich.”

“You do not understand, Theo have you by any chance done something very unusual and unexpected?” he asked, turning to me.

“Well, I ...” my mind skimmed through all the atypical and weird things that I had done but I quickly snapped out of it and said “but those were all accidents.”

“No, my dear boy, these are not accidents. These are the signs that we seek in our warriors.”

“Sir, would you mind telling me how I made that tiger disappear?” I asked.

“Yes, we should be getting to that. You see my boy , when the council sent me to fetch you I just wanted to confirm that you were the Destined, so I set that tiger and the men on you.”

“You did what!? Are you out of your mind!” yelled my dad, getting out of his chair.

“Calm Down Dean.” He said casually.

“We both could have been killed!”

“That would be impossible; I was watching you all the time.”

“Sir, so how DID I make that tiger and the man disappear?” I interrupted. I was beginning to get curious.

“First of all, that was not a tiger, it was a Gylook and secondly that was not a man. It was merely a statue that I had filled with some temporary magic; just to test your skills.”

“ You made that statue alive?” I asked totally bewildered.

“Not alive, just temporarily active. We keep these statues for training you know. Very useful things. In the past, we had to waste slaves for such purposes but the world is much kind nowadays.”

“ You used to slaughter slaves?” I asked totally bewildered and disgusted. When Quindich didn't reply I asked, “What's a Gylook?”

“Yes, A Gylook, I am sure you noticed its size. It was almost the size of a whale. You can't call that a tiger now, can you? It is a mythical creature. They are very rare. We breed them in special caring centers around the world. If I am right , there are only 67 left.” “Anyway, getting to the point. The reason you made that Gylook disappear was that you have a gift of making creatures, all kinds, obey you on your slightest command. When you made the first one disappear, I sent all of the others back to the breeding centers since you had already passed the test. Only the Destined warrior has that ability.”

“Who is the Destined Warrior Exactly?” I asked.

“He or She is the one who fights the dark creatures and beings and who defends us from the dangers that dwell in the wild. A very gifted warrior, the warrior of warriors. Born only once in a century or two. Brings with him or her, great pleasures and triumphs but....” He said, with his eyes dark and clouded, “Also sometimes brings catastrophe, arises untold evils but ofcourse it is he or she's duty to protect and let live. To save the commons from disaster and keep our world structured and at peace. It is a great privilege to be standing next to you, Young Theo, a privilege indeed.” He whispered and bowed. I gulped. The Destined Warrior? Me? This guy had made a very big mistake.

Reading my mind again, he said “I have not made a mistake Young Theo, you certainly are the Destined Warrior.”

“ But I don't know anything about magic or fighting monsters! I won't survive a day!”

He laughed and replied “ Don't get so worried. That is why I am here. To take you to our training school and make you a true warrior.”

“My son is not going ANYWHERE!” My dad shouted.

“Calm Down, Dean, I assure you nothing will happen to him while he is with us.”

“You Freak! Do you think I would let you take my son to this training school just like that!”

“Dean, could you mind coming with me for a moment? I have to talk to you about certain matters,” he said, eyeing my dad curiously. After a moment’s hesitation my dad arose from his seat and followed this weird stranger into the woods. I was given strict instructions not to eavesdrop or follow them. I casually seated myself on the chair and waited impatiently. I could hear a few shouts and screams. A few gasps and cries but I couldn’t catch any word. After what seemed like endless hours my dad, with his white pale face, and the man returned.

Dad stared at me with watery eyes and then in a trembling voice said, “Theo, if you want to go, I will not stop you but the decision is completely yours.”

At first, I thought that Quindich had given my dad a life threat or blackmailed him but after a few confused moments, I let that idea drop. It just didn’t seem right. I thought for a while and then agreed to go to this warrior school. Dad hurried towards me and gave me a hug and I could have sworn that he was crying.

“You have time, I will come and pick your son from your house on 23rd August.” said Quindich, looking at my dad with his stern and emotionless eyes.

“School begins from 24th, we have to get your equipment and a few books.” He said to me.

“But what about my current school?”

“What about it?” Quindich replied.

“Well I just can’t leave like that,”

“Well If you are rather interested in learning how to add numbers and learn about chemistry rather than saving the world from war and destruction, then it’s your choice.”

Before I would say anymore my dad interrupted.

“I will come with my son.”

“Ofcourse,” Quindich replied with a smile.

“Well then , I must be going now. I will see you on the 23rd of August.”

Before we could say anything he got up , walked into the trees and with a nod disappeared.

Without saying a word to each other, we went into our tents pretending that we were going to sleep. I knew that both of us wouldn't be asleep until hours later. I lay in my bed thinking about everything that had happened today. The Destined Warrior. The name gave me goosebumps but it also made me ecstatic and very excited. I had forgotten to ask Quindich the name of the school I was going to. I wonder what it looked like and for hours I kept on thinking about all the things I was going to do , although I didn't have a clue. Well I would soon find out. After taking of my wristwatch and changing into my pajamas, I jumped into my sleeping bed and was soon fast asleep. When I got up in the morning I was sweating a little bit.

Chapter 2.

Time seemed to fly by. We spent the rest of our trip fishing , swimming and trekking the wonderful forest . Neither I nor my dad mentioned Gregory Quindich’s visit, infact we didn’t talk that much anymore. To be honest, this was the worst holiday ever. We returned to New York on the 15th of August. Dad had extended his leave. He clearly didn’t want to leave me alone. I guess he was just scared that something out of the ordinary would happen the moment he left me alone. I spent most of my time on the computer and playing soccer with my friends. Dad and I used to watch a movie every night and to be honest , that was the only time when dad didn’t seem worried. The rest of the time , he always had a worried expression on his face as if he wasn’t going to see me again. On the 22nd I started packing , although I had no idea what to pack. I packed a few clothes , my trainers and for no special reason, my maths book. While we were having dinner my dad asked me “ So have you packed anything ?”

“A few clothes and shoes. That’s all, I couldn’t understand what to pack,” I replied.

“Look , you still have a choice , Are you sure you want to...”

“Dad I’ve made my mind , I’m going. I think this is what I was born for.” I interrupted.

Seeing his sad expression I continued “Dad, it will be just like school. Only it’ll be boarding school. I will still see you on the holidays. Please Dad, I really want to go.”

“Alright, I’m just worried. I don’t even think these freaks have internet or mobile network, how are we going to keep in contact?”

“ I’m sure they have some way dad, they live in the 21st century too!” I joked.

“Whatever you say buddy” My dad said , smiling but I could still see tension in his anxious eyes.

I went to sleep early that night. I was just so excited and tense. When I woke up , it was still dusk outside. Anxiety was killing me, so I didn't go back to sleep. I made myself an omelette and ate it on the balcony. Today I would be leaving this place , not knowing when I'd come back. There was a weird sensation in my stomach. I felt both sad and excited at the same time. I thought about dad and my gut twisted. He was really worried. I would miss him a lot but then again I would be seeing him in the summers. Anyways he would be so busy in his work that he would forget about me. The hours ticked by and before I knew it was 9 a.m.

"You're already up?" My dad said , walking in to the living room in his pajamas.

"Yeah, I couldn't sleep. I'm just so excited!"

My dad smiled and then asked, " When did he say he was coming?" Dad didn't like taking Quindich's name so whenever dad used "He" I understood who he was talking about.

"Didn't say."

"Well, are we going to wait all day for him?" Dad said, losing his temper.

"He'll come dad, have some toast," I replied , trying to calm him down.

"I think you should go and get dressed." Dad said.

"I was thinking the same." I said getting up from the table and walking to my bedroom.

After putting on a new pair of jeans and a New York Yankees shirt, I walked out of my bedroom and into the living room. Dad had also changed his clothes and was pretending to read the newspaper. "All dressed up?" he asked. "Yes."

At around 10 a.m, there was a knock on the door. Before I could get up, my dad had already reached the door, clearly he was more tense than I was. As soon as he opened the door , I saw the familiar face of Gregory Quindich. He was dressed up in normal clothes and he looked very awkward. He was wearing jeans which were torn at places and a worn out shirt. He was wearing sneakers and a New York Yankees cap.

"Good Morning Dean."

"Good Morning."

"Hello Theo, How do you do?"

"Ahh.. Fine , what about you?"

"Absolutely Fine," Quindich replied with a smile.

"Please sit down, Mr. Quindich," said Dad.

"No, We are already behind schedule!"

"Well then let me get my mobile, Theo go get your bag."

"Alright."

I quickly rushed into my room , grabbed my bag and after a quick look around the room I left . I wouldn't be seeing this room for a while.

Outside , Quindich was looking at a picture and my dad was clearly telling him the history behind the picture. "I'm ready." I said ,loud enough for them to hear me.

"Well then , let's get going. Dean are you sure that you are coming with us?" asked Quindich.

"You don't have to go Dad. You're already late for office and you had that important meeting today , didn't you?"

"Meetings aren't as important as you, Theo, now no more arguments!"

"Dean I think Theo is right. Anyways, where we are going I don't think they'll let Commons enter the place. Safety precautions. You don't have to worry. Your son is in safe hands."

"But you said!"

"Dad ,please!"

"Well, Alright." My dad said after thinking for a moment.

After giving my dad a tight hug , I left the apartment with Quindich.

"Sir, where exactly are we going?"

"I would prefer professor now, since I will be one of your teachers at Zosicentia."

“Zosicentia? Is that the name of my school?”

“Yes, Anyways we are heading to the Brooklyn Bridge.”

After grabbing a cab, and having a rough ride through the traffic we finally arrived at Brooklyn Bridge.

“Professor, What are we exactly doing here?”

“We, Theo, are waiting for our mermen.”

“Mermen?” I said, totally shocked.

“Ofcourse, what did you expect? Yachts?”

“ But Professor I don’t know how to ride a Merman and where exactly are the Mermen going to take us?”

“Too many questions, anyways you’ll be fine with the mermen and we are going to Los Angeles. From there we will fly to Dublin.”

“Dublin? Isn’t that in Ireland?”

“Our rides are here.”

They certainly were here. I saw two huge mermen swimming towards us. Their upper bodies were just like human, but a little greener and their teeth were yellow. The lower part was scaly like a fish’s body and was shaped like a fish’s tail. It was also green in colour. The mermen had a very horrible scent. It was as if somebody had opened the sewer but they seemed jolly gay. They seemed more excited than I was. “You Go First” “I don’t know how to ride a merman, professor” “Just get on its back, You’ll be fine.” Butterflies were flying in my stomach now. After taking a deep breath, I jumped into the sea and onto the merman’s back .It gave a cry of delight and tried to shake my hand. “This is easy.”

“Told you” said Quindich getting on to the merman.

Suddenly, Quindich gave a very peculiar cry and the mermen started to swim. They were going so fast that I couldn’t even open my eyes. A second later we were under the sea. I closed my mouth and tried to close my nostrils. I wasn’t a very talented swimmer but I was good at holding my breath for a while. After what seemed like

hours we were back above the sea. To my utter disbelief we had left New York Behind and were now swimming through the open sea. The hairs on my back rose. What if a shark attacked us? Reading my mind again, Professor Quindich shouted "Sharks are scared of mermen and they hate their scent so don't worry, nothing is going to attack us. Anyways, we are almost there." And as I looked ahead, I could see the outline of a city and as the seconds passed I could clearly see a beach up ahead. The Mermen dropped us into the sea when it was only a few feet deep. Professor Quindich said something in Mermish and the mermen bowed and sped away. "Well , what are you waiting for? Lets swim!"

After a few minutes we reached the beach, drenched in water from head to toe. "Come on. Let's get you dried up" We walked for half an hour more during which we left the fun-loving California crowd behind and entered a deserted area. Making sure it was safe , Quindich waved his hands and uttered a few words , and the next moment I was totally dry. "Professor, Are you a wizard?" I asked suddenly. Quindich laughed and then said "No my dear boy, but I know a few spells and incantations, to be precise two hundred and thirty-seven. I am a warrior my boy , but all warriors need to know basic magic if they are to survive the deadly world in front of them." He replied with a wink.

"So where are we going now, professor?"

"Now we are going to Beverly Hills, I am sure you have heard of The Hollywood Sign?"

"Yes Ofcourse, but what are we going to do there?"

"You'll find out."

"We would have already been in Dublin by now, but I am not allowed to use advanced skills with you around"

"Professor , do all the students get to the school like this?"

"Well, all the first years do , but we don't send highly-trained warriors to receive them. But you are a special case, as you know already."

"Yes, The Destined Warrior."

"Precisely."

“Let us catch a cab now.”

After another bumpy journey , during which Professor Quindich kept on muttering about how Commons survived without technique , skill and magic , we finally arrived at the Hollywood Sign.

“Professor, what exactly is going to pick us up this time?”

“Well, I wanted to use dragons (My eyes widened), but the council thought it would be too dangerous and risky. A Common could spot it. I mean honestly, how can they spot a dragon with the air traffic control!?”

“The air traffic what?”

“Yes, it’s a force of magicians we have in the air so that Commons don’t see anything magical or mythical. ”

“So what is coming to pick us up this time?”

“Wait a moment , three steps to the right and four steps up. Ah. Here we go, *Secreto Incantem!*”

As soon as Quindich uttered those words , part of the “H” disappeared and a cupboard kind of thing appeared. Quindich took out two carpets from the cupboard and after restoring the “H” sign he said “ Well this is what we are going to use. I’m sure you’ve heard of flying carpets?”

“Yes , but I didn’t think they actually existed” I replied, totally astonished. All the things that I thought were made up and only imaginary , actually existed.

“Professor , how exactly do these work?”

“Well, let me demonstrate, it’s as easy as ABC , so do not worry.” he said with a reassuring smile.

He spread the carpet on the ground, uttered a few strange words and waved his hands and pointed them at the carpet. The next moment the carpet gave a little jerk and started to rise in the air. Quindich sat in the middle, rolled the front of the carpet a little and gave a slight push and before you could say ABC , the carpet starting rising in the sky and started to fly at full speed. I just stood there, with my mouth open, looking at Quindich as he flew in the air, totally relaxed, actually he was really

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