

Spirit Story

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“I’m not saying I’m going to change the world, but I guarantee that I will spark the brain that will change the world.” – Tupac Shakur

“I didn’t choose the thug life; the thug life chose me.” – Tupac Shakur

“My mama always used to tell me: 'If you can't find somethin' to live for, you best find somethin' to die for.'” – Tupac Shakur

“Love what you do and do what you love. Don't listen to anyone else who tells you not to do it. You do what you want, what you love. Imagination should be the center of your life.” – Ray Bradbury

Author's Note

I respect all religions and religious beliefs from all people of every race, gender, and ethnicity around the world with me writing this novel, thank you.

Chapter 1

It was pitch black. The dark space lay silent as the orb of energy blasted through the air, surging through with intense force. The restless soul kept charging through the air dodging asteroids, and small remnants of debris. Its pulsing energy rippled around the light, blue sphere with intense acceleration, emulating the look of being its own asteroid itself. It traveled through space until it came into view of the planet's atmosphere. The soul's energy shone bright as it struck the ground with great force. The lustrous orb of energy landed safe on the strange planet.

The orb's shape dissipated on grassy plain beneath it and began to spread across the land with a glow. The bright energy lit up and formed into the body shape of a young man—his body stood stiff as a rock on the cold, dark earth.

His body lay on the open prairie surrounded by forest and slowly his eyes clenched in and his body began shifting back and forth before he began to lift up his head, staggering in confusion. He placed his hand against his head and opened his eyes. He looked around back and forth like a lost child trying to find his way.

“W-where am I?” His head rung with an intense headache, which felt like a ringing bell had just sound off near his ear. “Argh...damn...my heads killing me...where the heck am I?” He gleamed out and looked around again now with head cleared from his initial waking, a huge open space of grassland came into around him with forest encapsulating the plain walls on all sides. He sat there in a gaze and blinked twice in a perplexing manner. Choosing to no longer waste time, he began to get up as he thought to himself of what got him into this puzzling situation. He lifted his feet off the ground and began to push his arms up from his knees and stood tall in the grassy field. Again he looked around back and forth with much intensity, sliding his eyes across the field trying to scope out what was there. He saw grassy, bright fields and much open spaced, much to be desired to explore and travel across as it ached at him on which way he should go toward. He soon came to a decision in his mind to take the route behind him since he felt it was the safest way and it was the closest route nearby him at the time. He shifted his body in a steady motion, spinning his right arm with his left hand on his shoulder trying to adjust his body to the aching slumber he just awoke from. He faced the dark forest and took a mild gulp in and began to walk toward it with intense caution. He sauntered closer and closer to the shadowy entrance until his figure vanished as it became encased in the twilight dusk of evergreen, shadowy forest surrounding him all around.

The boy continued forth through the ominous thicket. The darkness seemed meeker than before when he entered the woody area from the outside space. As he traveled along the woods and tree leave tops cascaded small rays of light and luminosity that helped brighten the area and

mood a tad more and made it dash less spooky than possible. Maybe it being daytime in this strange place he was in was a major factor the boy thought to himself. He continued forward among the shining gold evergreen and quickened his pace as he approached a closing exit pass a few meters before him. He scurried through the thicket with intense haste. The boy emerged through the thicket and appeared out into another wide-open space. Not as round the previous but just as widespread and clear to the naked eye the setting seemed to the boy. As the boy continued to look around the area for any signs of life or civilization, he came across a nice, vivid lake off to the left hand side his positioning in the open space. Its waves gleamed with bright shining strokes as the ripples refracted the starry sunlight striking down the clear surface. As he looked across towards the starry ocean waves in the moderate distance far past his own, he began to see two small dark silhouettes forming in his line of sight. He squinted his eyes in anticipation of what these figures could be; he soon came to the realization that they could be people. People who could tell what was going on and where he was! He had to know. He leaped forward away from the thicket and ran down across the riverbank towards the cryptic figures.

“Hey, you guys!” screeched the boy in haste “Are you guys from around here? I’m trying to figure out where I’m at.” As he trucked across the rough terrain, he caught up to the dark figures before him in which revealed to the boy two shadowy black dressed looking males turning around in a slow motion as he halted panting from his mild sprint. The males looked to be light skinned, with skinny but tough physiques to their mild build. They wore dark shades with black outfits on both of them, one encased with an open black jacket over a dark shirt, with matching colored attire and the other had the same look with no jacket designed on him just showing a black t-shirt over his black jeans, with similar matching dark colored extra clothing over what he was already wearing. They looked at him with intense disdain. They almost looked like secret agents that had felt like they’d been caught in the thick of the act of their next important mission, ready to eliminate the single witness at a moment’s notice. They stood stiff, gripping their hands on guard as the lone feeble boy came forward in front of them.

“Hey—,” the boy exhaled wheezing, “do you guys know where I can find a town or city? And where is this exactly? I’m not so sure where I am and if I’ve been here before. Ah, I guess that’s too many questions at once, I’ll should you probably tell my name fir—”

The man to the right charged him fast almost like a speeding bullet, blasting forward a right punch to the boy’s left side. He reacted in time and managed to ease by it with a swift dodge to the right. The boy’s face became more perplexed with the sudden shock of the situation.

The man in shades followed with a few high jabs and punches toward the boy with great speed. The boy blocked and guarded strong, shifting his arm in a cross in reflex to the fast paced action. The dark clothed man followed his quick jabs with a final martial art like punch that broke the boys guard fast and caused them to skid back several inches before they both broke off and jumped backwards, with both standing on guard for the next move.

“What was that all about? Geez, you guys sure know how to welcome somebody. A simple hello would have sufficed.” The dark clothed warriors did not listen to his words or jokes. The other dark clothed partner wearing an additional black jacket positioned just behind his cohort, reached down toward his side aiming for his waist and reached deep into his holster and pulled out a gun, aiming it straight at the boy’s face with no remorse or emotion.

“Hey, no need to get crazy now! You guys are pulling a gun on me? I didn’t want any trouble, I just wanted to ask you for—” He fired at him without hesitation. The boy saw the shot coming much better now that he was done with his little sparring match from earlier and he had a considerable amount of distance from this target compared to before since his first opponent

charged in much closer to him. He dodged the glaring red bullet fast that grazed his upper shoulder; he then noticed that the shot was that of a laser beam and not of a normal bullet shot.

The dark jacketed man continued firing. Waves of red laser beams accelerated at the boy's position. He tried to maneuver around them like the best dodge ball player out there. His body twisted and turned back and forth, dropping to the ground and leaping upwards trying to escape any brute attacks from the maddening assault. The shots stopped firing. The boy looked up from the mild smoke in the air. And witnessed a change in behavior between both the assailants in front of him.

They began lifting one of their free hands up, holding them in a straightforward motion facing towards the boy. The boy's face stayed confused, struck with immense complexity and confusion, and his eyes soon began to falter and wane as he began to see the palm of their hands light up with great intensity. Bright red and blue lights, each separate from both the men lit up in their palms. The red light emitting from the jacketed one matched the color of his earlier gun that gave the boy already such a hard time before. He couldn't believe the amount of power that was just about to strike him next, since with the intensity and speed of the prior beams of energy, the next two attacks aiming toward him now seemed as if they were charging, building much more power, intensity, strength to try to take him out in one blow. He knew whatever they were about to do that it wouldn't be good, and tried his best to leap out the way while crossing his arms, but soon realized it was futile since he felt the power and speed of the next two blows were to be much more powerful.

He braced himself, clenching his fist in anticipation of the foreseen attack. His eyes closed with strong force, he didn't understand it or know what was going on but the boy had no time to contemplate before these high-powered energy beams launched at him to send him to oblivion. He felt all was lost and continued to brace himself for the inevitable. The charged beams of raging energy surged through his eardrums like lightning and he felt all hope was lost until all went silent around him. Time itself felt like an eternity and its as if everything had begun to slowdown in slow motion.

The boy didn't have enough time to react before a huge flash of white light shone down right in front of him from the clear blue sky, encasing the dark clothed soldiers at every angle imaginable before the boy's very eyes. The boy's face stood in awe as the ray of light blasted through earth, disintegrating everything in its path, almost like an atomic bomb was set off just before him. The boy blocked the intense light with eyes closed and arms up until the intensity began to subside with ashes among the red earth, recovering from the immense magnitude of the attack. The boy began to place his arms down as he heard a voice call out from above.

"Hey, down there. Are you alright?" A shining figure gleamed in the sky descending towards the boy at a modest pace.

"What? Who's there? What do you want with me?" He squinted his eyes as remnants of the bright light still flashed with vigor in his retinas, as the remaining bright light subsided in the air, with the adjust of his eyesight, he witnessed a floating female figure hovering on a cloud, several feet up over his head. His eyes grew wide as day reflecting facial expressions with a variety of emotions.

"Whoaaa! What is that?" His eyes stood fixed on the female figure.

"Hey, I'm a girl you know, I'm not a simple object," she giggled. The boy's stare stood stiff and strong. The suspended girl began to edge closer, hovering in talking distance as she smiled even more with her hand against her mouth, as if trying to hold back another giggle, she

closed her eyes for a few moments, still smiling with playfulness, she uttered her following magic words.

“I’m an angel.”

A dark silence struck the air. The boy’s head felt like it jerked back a bit upon hearing her. He wasn’t too sure if he heard correctly or if anything made sense anymore. They continued staring at each other with immense focus. The boy’s face stayed stunned as he kept staring into her eyes with a robotic effect.

“...”

“What?” said the floating girl confused.

W-wait, you said you’re a what again?” shaking his head with his eyes closed, as if trying to wake up from a potential dream.

“I said I’m an angel. You know, like the ones that can fly and that have wings and everything, although I’m not wearing any right now, we generally don’t like to wear them, we can get around just fine without any wings to wear.”

The boy stood there with his eyes as wide and stiff as ever, finally blinking, mouth wide open, trying to assess the situation before him a little better. Taking his eyes off her for a second, he placed his blank stare off into open space, and then looked straight at the palm of his hand.

“But—but that can’t be, there’s no angels in the real world. Are there? This doesn’t make any sense... Wh-where am I... exactly?”

“Oh you’re just in the *afterlife*.” Her body still laid forward, hovering along the cloud like a snake in the air with her hands against her chin, posing as if she were lying on a couch. “You’re on another planet in another dimension.”

The boy went back to staring at her with all seriousness. “What... what... did you... just say...?”

“I said you’re on another planet. You’re in the afterlife!”

The boy’s facial expression transitioned from an awestruck fascination, mouth wide-open and all, into a massive smile of excitement and relief.

“Ar-are... you... SERIOUS!” The boy’s face lit up very strong. “SERIOUSLY! I’M IN THE AFTERLIFE! I’M SERIOUSLY IN THE AFTERLIFE? YOU’RE NOT PULLING MY LEG ARE YOU?”

“Nope,” said the hovering white angel still suspended just over the boy’s eyesight, “this is the afterlife. You’re a lucky soul to have me come along when I did, you would have been toast if those blasts hit you at your current level. They should be really careful to where they place those androids. Somebody could definitely get hurt if they spot someone suspicious by accident who’s innocent. But anyways so—”

The boy wasn’t listening. He bent over with his head down, his hands trembling. His body looked rattled like it was just about to explode with emotion.

“Hey, you don’t have to push yourself, I’m sure the situation had to be a traumatizing experience for everyone—”

“YEEEEAAAHHHH!” The boy’s face was balled with excitement as he lifted his arms up in the air with a big smile like that of a cheerleader.

“This is like so awesome! This is so awesome!” The boy started jumping up and down back and forth, thrusting both his fists in a punching motion fast with a huge smile basking with positive energy. He was ecstatic and excited beyond belief.

“Calm down, calm down. What are you so excited about?” said the perplexed angel.

The boy slowed down his actions and directed his smile, eyes open wide toward the beloved girl in the sky before him. His fists were still clenched in trying to contain the excitement he was feeling all over surging through his body.

“Sorry, I mean... Do you know what this means? That’s there’s an afterlife! That there’s really an afterlife! I’ve always dreamed of that! Everyone’s always dreamed of that! Some people always believed there to be one, with so many religions out there.” The boy started jumping up and down even further. His excitement exuberated through the air as he swung his arms back and forth, trying to contain it all in but couldn’t help continuing leaping for joy.

“So many people we’re hoping for this! And here it is! I mean some people still don’t believe... you see, when I was still living on Earth... and... so wait... hold up. I’m getting to ahead of myself. Where am I? Is this Earth? Or is this someplace else? This place doesn’t seem like Heaven or Hell exactly.”

The boy ended his sentence with a perplexed look on his face, and the girl giggled again in jovial playfulness.

“Close enough. I wouldn’t call this Earth exactly. I’d call this Other Earth, that’s more like it. That’s where we are.”

“Other Earth?” The boy’s face continued on with a straight face of perplexity and confusion. “What’s that? Where is that?”

“Like I said the afterlife.” Her constant giggling never ceased. “You’re a pretty funny guy aren’t you? But anyways, so yeah the place we’re standing on right now is called Other Earth. That’s the name the inhabitants here have called this planet were standing on right now. It’s an alternate Earth existing parallel to the original, in a parallel universe. The parallel universe is named the Spirit World. That’s where we are right now.”

The boy’s face lit up like a happy schoolboy. “Yo! That’s crazy man! So, I’m like in another world?”

The floating girl nodded in reply. “Yup, in an entirely new universe.”

He couldn’t believe it. This was really happening. The boy placed his hands over his head, gripping and clasping his hair as if trying to pull it out in response to all this excitement.

“I can see your quite surprised, said the floating girl, “there’s a lot more to say really. To summarize the continent were standing on right now is called Neo-Pangaea. And the country is a single-unified country called the United Republic of Moder. People here usually say Moder or URM for short to make it easier to refer too. I’ll get into the details of all that later on.”

The boy’s face remained flustered. “Jesus Christ, this is like too much at once... I’m seriously here.” The boy rubbed his face from the top down with his sweaty drenched hands. All the hopping and skipping seemed to have gotten to him.

“Sooo... wait... what are you again? What’d you say you were again?” he repeated, gazing up at her with a curious expression.

“Like I said, I’m an angel, *angel*.”

The boy continued to give her a strange look. “I’d normally have a hard time believing you right now if it weren’t for me witnessing you before my eyes hovering before me like this. With the white suit and everything.”

“It’s a dress,” the floating girl said correcting him, “since I’m a girl after all, all the angels have to wear these when in our formal setting, or if we have to work someplace. I’ll change into my casual attire later on, but anyway...” The floating girl began to alter her position until she became upright, hopping off her cloud, still hovering in the air in place just above the boy.

“My name is Lily, I’m an angel again and I was sent here to retrieve your soul and guide you back safely from harm’s way. We’re able to detect stray souls that might not end up in the landing sites that we intended and setup. We predicted your arrival a few weeks in advance but I couldn’t actually detect you until moments after your arrival, I only got a rough estimate of the area you would land. You were described as being special, a special kind of soul landing, so I was notified specially to come pick you up on time as close as possible. But I don’t know the details on why you’re so different, so I was very excited to see you up close.”

“Whoa wait, that’s too much at once. What are you saying? Stray souls? Landing site?” The boy bobbed his head to the side with his eyes closed in confusion. “I’m not sure I’m following you here.”

“Well listen, that’s not so important anyway, what’s important is that I’m here to pick you up now. You’re a lost cause without me, because you would have been murdered again by those security bots, and we wouldn’t want that happening now would we.”

“Oh yeah, that’s right!” The boy’s face lit up again with energy. “Those freaks attacked me for no reason, and I was just trying to ask for directions! What’s up with that?”

“Those were security droids, androids specifically designed for guarding the area,” she said nodding her head. “They were designed to be dressed in black like secret agents and look like bodyguards. They have the speed, stealth, and reflex capabilities of a ninja along with powerful martial arts strength and armed weaponry on hand. If they feel the need to they have built in beams of energy they can use to fire at their opponents as well, but there not supposed to do that normally unless they encounter a strong opponent. They were just picking on you I presume, unless maybe you are that strong? You don’t look it but hey what would I know since we just met today.”

The boy’s face became flustered. “Hey lady, don’t underestimate me, I’m plenty strong. I was just caught off guard and surprised when they started shooting lasers at me. I mean how was I supposed to react?”

The floating girl chuckled again once more. “Alright, alright, I understand, your plenty strong.” The girl got back on and began shifting around the boy on her cloud, gliding in a slow motion through the air. “But more importantly, what is your name? I’ve already told you mine, its Lily if you’ve forgotten.”

The boy nodded his head back and forth. “Yeah, yeah. My bad, so the name’s Sean. It’s pronounced like Shawn not Seen. That’s a common mistake people make a lot.” The boy began to scratch his head for the next detail of his introduction. “I’m twenty years old and um—I like action movies and video games and um—”

“Slow down, slow down. I didn’t ask for your life’s story, just your name was fine.”

“Oh, ok. I can’t afford most of that stuff anyway, I could only do that stuff if they allowed for me to at the library, back on Earth and all that.” The boy scratched his head again in confusion looking up at her. “So what happens next?”

“Well I suppose I should tell you why you’re here, or what you could possibly be doing if you’re up for the challenge. We’re very close to the main city of this land we’re in right now. I should bring you over there to sign you up for the tournament.”

“Wait, what was that? Did you say tournament?” Sean’s eyes soon began to brighten with excitement.

Lily nodded her head, “Yeah, we have something called The Millennial Tournament here. It’s a tournament held every thousand years to commemorate the founding of our planet. I think you’ll fit in nicely.”

Sean's face was flushed with rays of joy and delight. He couldn't believe what he was hearing. He was ecstatic with excitement and clenched both his fist together in eagerness as he held a huge smile across his face. "That sounds amazing! I didn't know they had a tournament here! Yeah, sign me up in heartbeat! I've never even been in a tournament before! I've only been in street fights with bullies and thugs and stuff back on Earth. Wow I can't wait to see what the stadium looks like!"

Sean put his hand on head and began to clasp his red and white baseball cap, trying to contain the excitement emanating through his entire body.

"Well, we should get going then," said Lily. "If we stay talking here we'll miss the preliminaries."

Sean nodded his head forward. "Alright, great but what am I going to do? I can't fly!"

"Don't worry about that," Lily's face lit up with confidence, "because I have a way I can help you fly, at least temporarily."

"How's that?"

Lily took a deep breath and began to close her eyes. She followed her actions by putting her hands together in a praying motion until a ball of white light began to appear. The white light ball was opaque and luminous, resembling a ball of energy that surrounded the entirety of her hands. She began to take them apart now creating two balls of energy for each hand and aimed it towards Sean's feet. The balls of energy launched out of her palms and landed straight on Sean's feet. Sean's face lit up as she was doing this, as he could not fully comprehend what was going on. His feet lit up with a bright, white glow and right after a sudden rush of pulse waves rose out of the ground, lifting up parts of his clothes like a powerful under breeze.

"Whoa, what did you just do?" said Sean, staring down at his feet with great wonder. "Did you give me some superpowers or something?"

Lily chuckled at his remark. "Well not exactly but close. I gave you a temporary ability. The ability to fly."

"Wow, really?" Sean began examining his feet in great detail. "That sounds amazing! But how do I actually do it for real?"

"It's easy, just close your eyes and imagine yourself levitating in the air, or at least lifting off the ground."

Sean gave her another bedazzled look and she shook her head to him as he shook back in return. He began to shift his arms with clenched fist in front of him, prepping himself for leap. "Alright, I'll give it a try." He closed his eyes, took a deep breath, and imagined himself lifting off the ground, visualizing the experience the best he could with vivid effort. As he pushed forward, his mind relaxed and soon his feet began slowly escalating upward, hovering in the air like a bird embarking on its first flight. Sean looked down to the ground in amazement as he hovered nonchalantly in the air.

"Whoa, look I'm doing it! I'm really flying!" said Sean.

"I can see that," said Lily. Lily hopped off her cloud, situated herself in the airborne. "Alright, so we better get going, we don't want to be late than we already are." Sean started trying to boost himself up higher in the air but failed ultimately as he lost his balance, almost in a tripping motion. He wallowed forward; shifting his hand back and forth trying not to fall while Lily grabbed his hand just before any impact occurred.

"We don't have time for any practice. I'll have to hold your hand on the way there, since you can't fly yourself."

"That really sucks, I wanna learn to fly on my own," said Sean, grunting to himself.

“Maybe later, but enough talk, let’s get out of here.” She took his hand up in the air as she hovered to higher ground. They rose up through the air high, cascading the horizon as they flew off into the distance. Leaving no trails behind them, just a bare wasteland.

Chapter 2

The sun was restless as they glided through the sky, traveling at modest speeds as the city came into view across the distance.

“Is that it up ahead?” said Sean.

“Yep, shouldn’t be much longer now,” said Lily. “We should be able to make it just in time going at this speed.”

“What were you saying before, by the way? About this tournament and everything.”

“You’ll see when we get there. It’s too much to explain right now. We’re almost there...” They continued blasted through the air at modest to fast speeds, passing over prairies, plains, and lakes along the way. They each different shapes and sizes, some large, some round, cool, crystal light blue reflections shone through the clear transparent waterways just below them, each getting smaller and smaller as they shifted by the only for a brief second. The land below them looking like building blocks you could pluck up with a simple gesture of the hand. They came further into view as time passed and came just over the top of the city grounds. They looked down at the plot of land with caution.

“Ok, so from here...” Lily said, adjusting her weight and position, “we shall teleport our way in.”

“Teleport? How are we going to do that?” said Sean, perplexed.

“I have the ability to do that as well.” She further gripped his hand standing them both upright. “Hold on tight...” A flash of white energy encapsulated both them, and before they knew it, the emanating energy blipped them off in an instant, showing no signs of them being there before. The quiet sky stood still as the soft winds blew by in the skyline.

They traveled to what had felt lightning fast and suddenly appeared before an open hallway, void of any people or life, just silence and open space and narrow ways leading off to undiscovered spaces. “Looks, we made here ok.” Lily was wiping off her dress, shifting it back and forth to push out the wrinkles and folds. “All this air travel can really mess with my outfit.” Sean let go of her hand and began situating himself. He had been through so much already and tried to compose himself with all the flying, fighting, and plethora of information. He started looking around curiously, observing all the nooks and crannies of the room; all the corners didn’t escape his eyes as he looked around. Lights were all over the ceiling; opaque public building like architecture riddled each wall across each turn. It seemed like they were in some moderately important place to him, it looked like a fairly public space with the way the walls were built and the atmosphere it gave off to him through the lack of a family house feel you’d feel at home.

“That was pretty fun, so where are we anyway?” said Sean as he kept looking around. “This place doesn’t look like the arena.”

“It’s not...well at least not the main one exactly. Were at another arena, much smaller than this one. This is just the main office building placed right next to it. We’re here because I have someone for you to meet first.”

Sean continued looking around curiously, almost as if not paying attention. “Oh, I see...so we’re in another arena.”

“All right, let’s go. I got to get back to the Promised Land soon, so we can’t be wasting any more time.” Lily began walking forward and guided him down the hall. Sean followed with haste and began jogging forward to keep up with her fast pace. They came around a corner to find a much larger open space and a desk that looked like a main desk type of area. Windows could be seen beside it and across throughout the room along with an entrance doorway and a matt to match the furnishing. Bright lights lit up the room nicely and illuminated it fairly strong to create a casual public atmosphere surrounding them. But they weren’t the only ones there, behind the desk stood a rather tall, big black man, with sturdy shoulders and dark glasses. He wore himself a nice hat and semi casual outfit that still looked very formal enough to let you know he may be working here of some kind. The tall dark man noticed them coming around the corner and waved with a greeting fashion, signaling them to come over for initiating discourse. Sean and Lily walked over to the counter with haste.

“Hello there Mr. Francis, good morning to you,” said Lily bowing her head.

“Good morning to you too Lily, what brings you on over to these parts,” said the burly black man. “We’re not used to seeing too many angels over here that often.”

“I’m just here to drop off a delivery. You see this boy here needs assistance...” She pointed over to Sean in an introductory fashion

“Oh and who is this young fellow here?”

“This my good sir is Sean; he was a stray soul I found out in the woods. He’s said to be special in some way, but I don’t know why, I was just instructed to retrieve him upon arrival. We were hoping to sign him up for the tournament, that part was strict orders too.”

“Hmm, I see.” Mr. Francis looked over with a sharp look and inspected Sean. Sean couldn’t help but feel slightly embarrassed, but he stood still with a common smirk on his face until the burly man chose to speak again. “He certainly looks fairly fit, a little on the smaller side than most fighters, fairly skinny too. But we might be able to move him in.”

“That’s great news! Since your one of the main heads of the Committee I figured you’d be the perfect person to ask for permission for this. You Committee members are always having your hands full with managing the tournament that I was hoping you’d be here still with the whole preliminary rounds going on right now. I’m glad I got caught you before you left.” said Lily, in a very longwinded fashion.

“Yes, we are quite busy. We received a lot of fighters this time around; they must be really getting hasty for battle this time of year. I’m actually on break right now so I actually wanted to get some peace before I headed on over just as a bystander to see how it was going, but I’m in no rush to see it. I already got a look at the applicants and I got a good estimate on who’ll make it to the final rounds, so I’m in no rush to see it,” said Mr. Francis.

“Well I hope you can get him signed up before they end. This one looks pretty fired up for battle, I can feel it.” Lily waved over at Sean. “Don’t be wary Sean, you haven’t even said hello yet.” Sean’s face lit up as she instructed him to induce a proper greeting.

“Oh, I’m sorry my mistake.” Sean took a slight bow to Mr. Francis while maintaining eye contact to him over the counter. “Hello, to you sir. My name is Sean.”

“Good day to you too, my boy. You look mighty athletic for a boy your size, do you work out?”

“Well no...not really...maybe sometimes. I suppose I got it all from just fighting bullies on the streets so much.” Sean said, bashfully. “They weren’t all that strong usually, I guess that gave me a sort of workout every day.”

“Oh, we got ourselves a street boy, eh?” He reached his arm out to shake and Sean responded to the gesture and proceeded to shake back. “You’ll fit in nicely, my name is Albert D. Francis. I’m one of the only African Americans you’ll see around these parts. But don’t worry you’ll get to see a fair amount of us all ‘round here and the rest of the continent.” They let go of each other hands still facing each other.

“I see.” Sean began to stammer a little in his words. “That’s good to know, um sir. It’s nice to meet you.” Formalities weren’t his strong suit.

Mr. Francis made a slight chuckle in his voice. “You’re a strange one aren’t you? I like that. Might make this place a little more interesting ‘round here. It can get a little too peaceful sometimes y’know. Some days you need a little more excitement in your life, y’know what I’m saying?”

“Yes sir, I sure do.” Sean made a mild smile to him. “I know what exactly what you mean.” Sean wasn’t too sure really if he did or not, but he went along with what he was saying anyway, since he seemed like a pretty nice guy.

“Alright then should we head out? We won’t be making much progress standing around here,” said Mr. Francis.

“Yes, yes. You all should get going. I need to get back to my duties myself, so sadly I won’t be able to accompany you on your journey. Best of luck to you Sean.”

“Yeah, same here.” Sean waved goodbye to Lily as she rose up in the air and went straight into the wall, headfirst like a ghost, disappearing from the room in an instant like she was never there.

“Wow, she can really do that?” said Sean, with his mouth gaping wide staring at the ceiling.

“Yep, all angels can go through walls, there almost like ghosts in a way,” said Mr. Francis. He reached in his pocket and pulled out a big, burly cigar, one big enough that it looked like he could smoke it for ages, and he lit it up quick, sparking with yellow light and took a deep breath and exhaled smoke between his sturdy, dark fingers. “We can go but let me get my son Darion first. He’s lazing around in the back.” Mr. Francis turned around facing towards the wall behind him. A door came into view, which was a sudden surprise to Sean because he hadn’t beforehand while they were busy talking. “Darion, Darion. Get your ass out here boy, we gotta get up on out of here and head over to the stadium.” He knocked on the door hard enough to hear from the other side. After a while, the silence broke and the door opened to reveal a younger black male with a jacket on and similar black shades. He stumbled a bit through the door entrance before he situated and spoke.

“What up pops? What’s with the ruckus? Why you trippin’? I’m just chillin’ in the back, I ain’t doin’ nothin’ wrong, *Jesus*, I’m just listening to music...”

“Boy, don’t use that tone with me. We don’t talk like around here. I’m calling you cause we gotta go now. We have to escort this boy on over to the stadium.”

“Oh, I see.” Darion looked over at Sean across the counter causing him to smirk awkwardly a bit. “Wassup, the names Darion,” he said reaching out his hand over the counter towards Sean’s direction. “How’s it goin’ man?”

“I’m cool, the name’s Sean. Nice to meet you.”

“Same here.” They shook their hands a little longer before letting go and shifting around for their next course of action. “You knew here?” Darion said, gracefully.

“Yeah, I hardly know what’s going on actually. One minute I’m in a forest and some plains in the middle of nowhere, next minute I’m greeting you through the introduction of a supposed angel.” Sean chuckled at the words he just uttered. It flashed in his mind for real that he barely knew what was going on and he found it all amusing.

“Yeah it sounds like you’ve been having a crazy time, yo,” said Darion. “Don’t worry man, things will probably start making more sense for you in a few.”

“Ok.”

They began to lose some eye contact and started shuffling around their feet across making casual gestures to lighten the mood. Mr. Francis went into the lit room behind the counter and after a few moments came out flicking the light switch off behind him as he looked over at them both.

“Alright now, shall we go then?” said Mr. Francis. Both boys nodded and they shuffled their gear in place and Sean followed them as they stepped out of the counter and left out through the main entrance in unison.

Chapter 3

“I would like to start off this seminar as punctual and straight as I can today. We need to stand up better for women’s rights. We need to make a difference and end all this sexist nonsense now.” A medium sized man stood tall at a podium in a conference room, eyes all across the gargantuan room faced toward him with great intent. People stood on each side seated in the chairs as he spoke more inspiring words, nodding and coughing as the atmosphere took its course in the silent setting.

“I’ve met with several clients the other day, all women who have gone through much stress with abusive and unfaithful men in their lives, two beaten and one disrespected for her roles as a women and daily life activities. They all came to me for counsel relatively the same day, the first two crying their eyes out while the other didn’t shed a tear but needed somebody to let off steam and express her thoughts and anger to readily,” the leading man said. “These women are but a small representation of countless individual women who are tired of the general rule of man and wish to freely express themselves and do what they wish without the control of man dictating what they can or cannot do. We all need to work together, as men and women, and push to move forward as a collective to equality and peace for all. We need to respect each other and everyone equally.” The man stood still at the podium with a casual look on his face, having his hands up toward his audience as he spoke his true words. The crowd on each side stood stiff and stared back at the man with much intensity, soon after a mini clap was heard in the background leading them on to semi-applause, lifting the rooms atmosphere and lightening the stark mood.

“We’ve been on this planet too long to be treating our own kind this way, both Earth and Other Earth. We need to start making a difference for both genders and we need to do it now.”

A silence struck the room once more. One man began to raise his hand up which triggered the man standing at the podium notice and call on him. “Sir Noah, if I may call you that, I whole-heartedly agree on our stance for continuing the support for woman’s but I would like to personally ask as new member here at the PHD Department, on how we intend to pursue such endeavors, what’s our next course of action?”

The man with a white coat at the podium now with a name shuffled in his pocket closing his eyes as he brought out a lighter and a cigarette. His white coat was bright and strong, it resembled the aesthetic of a lab coat, and it had pasted on the side the words, *PHD*, and his coat stood huddled strong over his shoulder as he put his finger up to answer.

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