

Guardian Chronicles

Homeworld

Prologue by Matt

This time Etan gets kicked out of the core, Argaria comes under attack and a mysterious new enemy arises. And you thought your job was tough. Come and join us for another journey of fun and adventure as we explore a whole new world.

Part one

The winds of change

Selar's report

There is a problem with Etan. The future timelines I once saw for him have recently changed. At this point he can still be saved from this new outcome, but at what cost?

Etans view

I started out the year trying to become air. Master Leo told me that it would be the hardest of all the elemental changes to make. Air molecules are free floating and energetic. Changing to any solid mass is simple in comparison to the balancing act of changing to a gas. Too little energy and I return to a solid, too much energy and I could dissipate myself altogether. I have to build enough energy to disintegrate my body without drifting apart. Master Leo told me until I have it down pat, not to try it unless he was there to help. Once again I closed my eyes and concentrated. It helps me shut out the world and focus. Older Guardian's don't have such concerns as centuries of discipline have honed strong mental focus.

Having learned from the fire incident I didn't try to change my whole body at once but instead just my hand, which was a good thing, because my hand exploded. I concentrated on my atoms, using my light energy to cause them to lose cohesion to each other. But then the light energy built up to much pressure and it disintegrated. I over did it, just a bit. I was in shock more than anything. Master Leo rushed over to heal me but I told him I wanted to heal myself. Even after I had healed I was still shaking a little from the event. It took two more weeks of practice to get a stable change. At one point I did get stuck as gas for a moment but Master Leo was there to help. I'm glad this wasn't like when I got stuck as water. This time I wasn't confined to an element during a battle situation.

As air I could feel people's breath. I let myself stretch-out and just totally relax, floating with the breeze. It's funny sometimes what you remember. This experience reminded me of childhood incident. When I was a kid I used to lie back in the bathtub and relax to the point where many times I would fall asleep. The first time I did it my mother freaked out. I guess she was worried I had drowned. I was only five at the time but I was still embarrassed over her and my aunt standing over me shaking me awake. For awhile after that time she wanted me to leave the bathroom door unlocked so she could check on me. In any case becoming air had the same relaxing sensation. And yes I got so relaxed one of the times I did fall asleep as air. I didn't have a mother to wake me this time, just a windmill. I never knew air could get dizzy. As I progressed Master Leo advised me to spin as fast as I could to make a dust devil; this made me lightheaded in the process.

Master Leo's comments

Once Etan learned to keep his consciousness in the middle of the funnel and let it spin around his consciousness he picked up speed and power. A week later he became a full blown tornado. Two months later he also learned to become smoke and stun gas. In his extra time he practiced a few more bio skills like: night vision, sonic hearing, acid spitting, venom, poison and environment camouflage. He is advancing quite rapidly.

Commentary

At the four month mark Etan began practicing basic mental abilities. He already knew how to read most humanoid minds. But now he would learn how to affect their emotions. Mia and Samaria gladly volunteered for him to practice on. After two weeks practice he could make them happy, sad, afraid, or even calm. After that he moved on to a more difficult skill.

He tried telekinetic but was unable to grasp the link. After classes in the fifth month Etan was practicing in the gym when three first year guardian trainees came in. They were still trying to learn a basic shield. That skill wasn't that hard for Etan to learn as; he was familiar with the earth's magnetic field. He pulled out his computer pad and showed them how a planet's magnetic field worked. He explained how it was similar to a regular magnet. This seemed to help and within a few minutes they all had a basic shield formed. It made him feel good to return the favor to others. Later that evening Master Selar said he wanted to talk to him about something. "Why did you take it on yourself to teach the first year trainee's" Selar asked in serious tone.

Etan's comments

Immediately I felt a sense of dread. I didn't think anyone would mind me helping the new students. I told him "I'm sorry if you are displeased I promise not to do it again." I didn't know how much trouble I was in this time. He looked at me with empty eyes "An apology does not answer my question, I want a straight answer." he stated. "I was trying to help them. I knew what was keeping them from creating a shield. I thought I could help." I explained. "Do you think Master Leo has lost his ability? Maybe you think he doesn't know how to teach anymore?" "No. master Selar, not at all. He is very competent." I answered quickly. I couldn't tell if this was a test or Master Selar was actually mad. In reality I am nearly 80 years old but Selar always made me feel like child. Of course he was thousands of years old, so to him I was a child.

Selar's expression was impossible to read. "Did you not stop to consider that maybe he was letting them struggle through it for a reason? The experience could be necessary for their growth? I didn't change you back from a girl did I? You had to learn from it yourself, and because of it you became stronger." True I thought, but I wouldn't have made it if it wasn't for Alsea. "Master, Alsea helped me, I wanted to do the same for someone else." He still hadn't showed any expression at all. "Go, we will continue this conversation at a later time." he ordered. I quickly got out of there and went to my room. I asked Matt, what was going on. He responded "I am not allowed to discuss this situation with you. Master Selar will discuss whatever details he sees fit when he chooses too."

The next day Alsea, 1, nor Master Leo would talk to me about it. After school I was told by 1 that I was to stay in the dorm room for now. I was also told not to turn into a girl. That was so I couldn't get any emotional comfort from my friends I'm sure. This was really awful. No one would tell me what I did wrong here and Master Selar wasn't talking to me. I was alone. Even Reaper was gone on a mission for the next two weeks. I was sitting alone after school on the edge of an open pit. One day it would become an ocean. It was part of the ongoing terraforming project on this planet. On the opposite end of the huge gulf it was beginning to be filled.

It was quite a monumental task, like my life right now it seems. This world was relatively flat before but now here was a huge open crater. Of course all I was seeing was just one small section of the rest of the project. Guardians could open a permanent door in subspace to connect two places. In this case, this barren world was connected to an ocean

planet. A few scattered islands is all it had for land. The material from this world was being traded for water from that one. The extra matter from both was being stored in a subspace facility. As this world gained an ocean that one would gain land. The rate of flow had to be carefully balanced as not to destroy the oceans world's bio-diversity. If I could only find the right balance in my own life, I might be doing as well as this project. Its funny, focusing on the wonders of nature always seems to help me sort things out.

As I continued to toss everything back and forth a first year trainee came up to me and sat down. It wasn't one of the ones I had helped before. He was slightly shorter than me and kind of reminded me of Argyle. "Hey Etan, what's up?" I smiled politely and said "Just thinking and you." He nodded " Yeah me too. I could feel that he was just as depressed as me. Apparently I'm not the only one who finds this to be a good thinking spot. He plopped the ground and said "I haven't been able to get going on any of my powers yet. If I can't get them soon, I don't know what I'm going to do." I liked helping people but I really needed to sort out my own problems. My grandmother used to say "you got to sweep your own porch before you sweep anyone else's." She meant fix your own issues before you try to fix someone's else's problems. Sometimes that was true but sometimes not. I mean if you never helped anyone unless you had no problems then you would never get around to helping anyone. Who doesn't have problems? Morally I had no choice but to at least try to help him in any way that I could.

The despondent gaze in his eyes looked familiar. I've seen that face in the mirror many days. "We haven't met before but my name is Son-orc. "Out of habit I sighed heavily "I wish I could help, but Master Selar is angry at me for helping the others." He looked at me curiously "Why would he get mad over that?" I shook my head "I really don't know, I would think He would be happy for me to help them, Guardian brotherhood and all."

"That's a bummer, what are you going to do now?" Son-orc asked. "I'm not really sure, I guess I don't have a choice but to wait it out and see what master Selar tells me." He agreed. "If I can't get a break through by the end of the week, I'm going back home." I put my hand on his shoulder "Tell you what, tomorrow lets go ask Master Leo's permission if he will allow me to help you." He looked at me confused "Didn't you just say you got in trouble for helping some other students." He asked "Yes, but it may have been because I did it without permission. Now we will ask permission." I told him, but then I changed my mind. I felt a surge of stubbornness come over me. The last few years I've been working on becoming more Argarian and less human but stress had brought out my human nature. At the core I'm stubborn, pessimistic and somewhat sarcastic. I have a deep desire to help others but I fear my own inadequacies. I'm what most people would call a complicated person.

I couldn't let this opportunity pass me by. He needed help and I was going to help him. A strong sense of defiance took over my mind at that moment. So I said "You know what, trouble be danged. I'm going to help you anyway, because it's the right thing to do." For the next hour I lead him in the exercises and helped him focus. By the time I finished he had the shield down pat. I felt good, but now I felt afraid. Should I really have done that?

When we were done and he was ready to go he said "Master Selar is probably going to be angry with you." I nodded. "You're probably right, but I'm still glad I helped you." He shook my hand and thanked me. "A week later I saw Son-orc again. This time he asked me to show him a form change. "I don't think I should do that. Master Leo has not gone over that with you. All I did before was helping you a little with what you already were learning." I explained. "Did you get more trouble for that?" I shook my head and told him "no not yet. But the strange thing the first time he didn't actually say not to help. He just asked me why I did it, and then made a comment about Master Leo. In the past he made it clear what he did and didn't want me to do. The fact that he is being unclear here is very odd." He looked just as confused as me "What do you think it means?" I shrugged "The only thing I can think of is it's some kind of test, because Matt won't talk to me either." He nodded and seemed to agree. The only thing I can do is to wait for Master Selar to tell me what he wants. He probably has a reason for all this; I just don't know what it is yet." We continued to chat for while; it was good to have someone to talk to anyway.

Dark swarm report

1000 agents are on their way to targets, and receiving agents already in place for hand off. Guardian targets on the list must be kept under watch at all times. Silent agents are not to engage delivery agents unless otherwise ordered.

Argaria part one

A few days later, the whole school was in for a big surprise. Master Selar set the palace ship to lift off from the planet. The last time this happened I had been busy with coordinating events of a disaster, so I didn't get to enjoy the experience. The anti-grav kicked in and the whole palace began to lift up. The ship was originally an old mining vessel converted into new purpose. It was designed to create a hole in the ground the size and shape of the ship so the buildings on its upper deck would be flat with the surface of the planet. Mining drills would come out the sides underground and begin making access tunnels. The entire complex was made up of the school, dorms and Selar's palace. We were essentially about to take a trip in a flying city. As we exited the hole a great deal of excess dirt fell off from all sides in a cascading fall. Seeing something like a water fall made of dirt was a new experience for me.

Once we got to orbit we continued forward at a slow pace while the ship built up the necessary power to do a hyper jump. When the time came a few of the lights dimmed for a few seconds. I guess opening a hyper space tunnel for a city sized ship takes a great deal of power. As the solid beam of energy leapt from the front of the vessel a tiny sun formed in its wake. After a few seconds the tiny sun collapsed in on itself creating a blue spinning vortex. We traveled across the galaxy in just over three hours. When we exited we were at the Argarian home world. I hadn't had a chance to see it up till now, with all the crazy events happening in the last three years.

Every fifty years, the home world had a home coming for all Argarians. I had been reborn as an Argarian when Master Selar made me young so this was my home too now. The Argarians were the species that the guardians came from. They can control both matter and energy. All Argarians are linked by both a conscious and subconscious link that allows them to share each other's experiences and skills. As a consequence because they live for thousands of years, they continue to grow in power as they age. Fortunately they are a peaceful people who wish that same peace to all civilizations.

Originally their home world was an actual planet. But it was destroyed by a powerful enemy. The first Guardian saw this coming many centuries before and led the people to build a new home world. It was a large hollow sphere about the size of Jupiter. It had two main parts, the outer shell and an inner shell. The outer shell was shiny and reflective like a mirror in space. It was made of solid Neutronium harvested from a collapsed star. Neutronium is so strong it is almost impossible to destroy. It takes guardian energy or very high tech device to affect it at all.

In between both shells are factories, cargo bays and the machines that provided services to the planet. Underground of the inner shell is two water systems that connected the entire planet. The first transports water to all areas of the planet and the other mixes all bio-waste and redistributes it to up into the soil for re-absorption. They don't need trash collectors. There are small dump holes in every house and business for all bio-waste including unused food. Non bio-waste is reused in the replicator system to create future items. It's an efficient and clean system.

The living section is in the inner most shell. It has the same approximate habitation as around 1000 earth like planets. It has oceans, forests, deserts, wetlands, grasslands and mountains. Everything you would see on a normal planet, except volcanoes. Yep I'm definitely going to like this place. The Argarians had even collected thousands of species of plants and animals that were on the verge of extinction, including a few from earth. I hoped they had some dinosaurs somewhere. It was really quite amazing.

As we approached Argaria's perimeter a huge outer door opened. The palace ship glided through the door. The space between the shells contained structural braces. They were similar in style to a bee's honeycomb. A great many cargo and trade vessels zipped back and forth like buzzing flies. Robotic drones loaded and unloaded the cargo at freighting speeds. As we approached the inner door the scene changed.

As the inner most doors opened I couldn't take my eyes off the window. It was like a planet had been turned inside out. It was similar to the concept to that of a Dyson's sphere in earth's science fiction though not as large. In the middle of the shell was something a miniature sun. I guess I shouldn't be surprised since the Guardians had the best tech available from thousands of galaxies. The deserts contained crystalline technology that used the heat and light to grow. Some of the crystalline structures towered over three thousand feet high. The light reflecting from them made them glow like colossal light houses.

The swampy areas have bio tech that grow like trees. When a person needs to expand a house or building they put a growth hormone on the chosen wall inducing the plant to swell. A new room will form and be completely grown within a few weeks or months depending on the needed size. Argaria has no pollution and the cities are not over crowded. Even the capital city has trees and shrubbery spread throughout the landscape. This is a stark contrast to earth's big cities. Every area had tech that matched the conditions of the terrain.

The Argarians believe in living in harmony with nature not destroying it. Since there was so much room to go around even with billions of inhabitants on the planet there is no fight over land space. I couldn't imagine a more perfect society. There was a large field outside the capital city that had been prepared for Selar's palace ship to land. When we set down and I noticed something I hadn't seen before. Floating in the sky above us was colored crystalline structures. It gave certain places a rainbow like glow. I guessed they were probably cargo depots or some kind of trade exchange, because there was a never ending chain of small vessels going to and from them.

Master Selar called me in before he left the ship "You may look around the planet for the rest of the day. But starting tomorrow morning you will report to this site and help out." He handed me a letter with my instructions. It gave the place for me to go to and the times I was to work. I waited to see if he was going to say anything else but he didn't so I just said "Yes master Selar." and waited for him to dismiss me. I would to love have visited all the natural wonders that had been created here but with so little time I just walked through several markets. I was greeted continually by people in the crowd. I guessed it was because they recognized my silver uniform.

Most of the alien species here were humanoid. I saw a few non human types though, a reptilian, an amphibian and even a yeti. I wish I could go back and tell all the science fiction writers on earth what I've seen. It was fascinating how many things similar to earth there were here. There were several sections of open markets with carts vendors. Actually it was a lot like an outside flea market. Food, clothes, jewelry, and most anything you would like to buy was here.

Dark swarm commander's speech

I address you today to put to rest your discouragement. Our recent defeat is just a temporary setback. Even while the battle raged on our scientist discovered a whole new crystalline mineral that can channel dark energy. It will take several centuries for us to mine enough to use to build the facilities necessary but when complete we will convert the entire galaxy at one time. Then the Guardians will be gone forever, and we will rule. Until then we will work silently behind the scenes creating unrest in the populations.

1's comments

Being back on the home world is great. Hopefully one day many more planets will be like Argaria, peaceful and prosperous. Etan wanted to talk to me about some problems he was having but Master Selar forbid me. Selar didn't even tell me what the details were. But he said that when Etan came in, to turn him away. It was a very odd behavior for him. Most of the time he carries himself in a fatherly way but lately he has been distant.

Silver lining

Etans view

Home coming was a month long celebration. During this time each Guardian must spend an allotted amount of time serving others in charitable activities to show thier humility. I was instructed to go to a local trade market where a free cafeteria was available to the public. Mostly this was for visitors to the planet that were low income. My instructions said I was to spend eight hours a day here, with one day off each week for the next two weeks. That part alone was discouraging. This was my first trip here and I had to spend the whole time working. All the other students were getting the two weeks off from school. You would think that saving the galaxy twice would have earned me some vacation time by now. But Master Selar was obviously mad at me, so this was my punishment. I had tried to help out my fellow students but maybe I should have just minded my own business.

The cafeteria was called the bright and morning star. As its name suggests it was a bright and cheery place. At the expense of being an old grump at the moment I didn't feel like being bright or cheery. I would have rather worked in a dark dingy place that fit my mood. As I entered the front one of the waitresses directed me to the kitchen area. I took one last necessary internal growl and pushed on.

Three silver Guardians were getting ready for the breakfast rush. As my old self I would have been around the same height and build as them but now in Argyles form I was shorter than almost everyone, even most women. I had hoped master Selar would see me taking Argyles form at this time as sign of humility but I don't think he even noticed. I knew the three were full silvers and not training because of they each had the cape. Oh great! I thought. The next two weeks would probably be filled with a guardian version of lets torture the new guy. I figured they would give me all the worst jobs, like putting me in embarrassing situations, or making me do some ridiculously redundant task just for their own sadistic pleasure. But when I arrived it wasn't like that at all.

I was meet by smiling faces "Welcome brother, come on in and join the fun." The nearest one said. Well that was a different start than I had expected. I sighed, this time with relief and introduced myself "My name is Etan, Master Selar sent me here to work." He nodded "Master Selar told us you were coming. I am Celestial and this is Vortex" He said pointing to the silver beside him "over there working on the dishes is LT. We figure it stands for lieutenant or something, He hasn't said." he stated. Celestial was the tallest one of the three. He was athletically built and had long black hair, the kind of guy popular with the girls in most any school. On his cape he had the symbol of a solar system.

Vortex was slightly shorter with red hair but he had broader shoulders and was built like a professional body builder. Hi cape had the picture of a tornado. The Lt Guy didn't look away from his work but he had a Tom Cruise look about him. His cape had a symbol I didn't recognize. I had forgotten that although there are certain tests each silver has to pass, that each one generally had their strengths and weaknesses. The symbols must represent what type of ability each silver specializes in.

So their names were celestial, vortex and LT. "That's strange names." I mused. "He laughed" that's not our actual names it's our Guardian call names. Silvers rarely call each other thier original names. What's yours?" I shrugged "I guess I don't have one yet?" He considered that for a sec. "We'll just have to give you one then. I heard Selar likes to call you chameleon? What does that mean?" I explained "Back on my planet there is a reptile that can change colors with its environment; he calls me that because I'm pretty good with form changes." Celestial leaned his arm on my

shoulder. He did this in the same manner a brother would do to his younger sibling. He spoke softly as if he were mentioning some great secret.

"I hear you're very good at form change infact. I've been a silver for twenty years and I still can't get biological's very well. I can do elementals but it's not really my thing. I'm good at weather and energy projections." Vortex spoke up "And I'm good at gravity based attacks and defense." Celestial considered "Well then chameleon it is then, I'll call you Cham for short, that's what your call name will be for this week." Wait, what? "Why do you have the name celestial if you're good as weather and he is good at gravity and named Vortex. Isn't that a bit backwards? Shouldn't you trade names and capes or something? He chuckled "We did it on purpose just to keep everyone guessing, it's more fun that way."

Then his expression changed. It was as if he were pondering on a deep thought "So Cham, it is true you got handpicked by Selar?" "Sure" I said. He shook his head in mock sorrow "I told you V, we would have to call him boss one day." Apparently they liked to call each other by the first letter of thier names C and V. Vortex responded with the same tone. "This is terrible, what will we ever do." I wasn't sure if they were being funny or sarcastically mean. "You guys are higher than me, how could I be your boss, besides I think Master Selar is mad at me."

Then the two went back and forth in a comedy like routine. Celestial started it. "He hasn't heard." "He hasn't heard?" Vortex echoed back making it a question "How can he not, have heard?" Celestial responded again "I'm not sure what word, he hasn't heard." Vortex said with a grin. "So it never occurred, the word, he hasn't heard." Celestial continued. They went on like that for a few more rounds before I stopped them. "What are you two talking about? That is if you really know yourselves." Then they laughed together, they were just picking with me. Suddenly Celestial got serious again, "You were picked by Selar." He stated matter of factly "So?" He rolled his eyes but explained "No person picked by Selar has ever failed. Every single one has gone on to become a powerful planetary Guardian." I figured that was most likely an exaggeration

"Being a guardian is the goal for all of us isn't it?" I asked. He went on to explain "You're still not getting it. You know there are just over 300 populated planets in this galaxy right? By the number of stars you would think there would be many more but there's not. A lot of variables have to be exactly right for life to flourish. A planet must be the right size, have just the right magnetic field, and have the right amount of water and so on. There are literally thousands of things that have to be precisely right for life to be prosperous. That means there around 300 planetary Guardians at any one time. Silver guardians who work for the planetary guardians out number them with over 2000 in this galaxy. Out of the 300 planetary ones, over half were handpicked by Selar. So like I said we will eventually have to call you master Etan. Just remember us little guys when you get to be a big shot."

I looked at him and asked " Does he play favorites, choose only the ones he picks?" He looked truly shocked at my question "Not at all, the ones he chooses deserves the title. Like Ares was one of his picks. Ares is about half way to regent abilities now; He will probably be a regent one day." Suddenly it all made sense. Master Selar must have seen my future. He saw that I would not make planetary and I would be his first failure. This was terrible. All this time the one called LT hadn't said anything, but now he spoke up "we are here to work guys, not talk." With that we cooked and served the meals then later spent time cleaning up. We were not allowed to use our powers to make things easier. We had to do things like any human would. The rest of the work went smoothly and with no problems. Celestial and Vortex seemed ok, but the Lt Guy seemed stand offish. Nearly every other Argarian's I meet were upbeat and friendly, but he seemed to be quiet and somewhat dark.

Although we had finished early I was still supposed to put in several more hours work before I was done. Celestial and vortex had put in the time they were required too so they went there own way. Just LT and I were left behind. My instructions said if we finished early, I must report to the market square for trash clean up. As we walked toward the square we talked. "All that speculation before was pointless you know" he said "It really only comes down to one thing, if he still supports you to be Guardian or not. If this is a test then all is well. But if he has rejected you as a true candidate then you might as well leave now and save yourself the embarrassment later." I considered that. "yeah but how do I know which one?" I responded. "Simple, ask him straight out." He said. Lt seemed to be quite wise for his

age. Then again he was a senior silver guardian. After a moments consideration I decided I would ask Master Selar straight out.

Nebu-love part one

Reapers view

Stupid Selar, giving me trash collecting again. Apparently some new dark Guardian base was found and I got to take it out. Don't get me wrong you know how much I love destroying stuff, but lately there's been no challenge. When I've taken on any dark guardian base or battle ships there's not really any fun to it anymore, it's all too easy. Maybe I'll get lucky pretty soon and they'll try another full scale invasion. Hmm, if they were to get a hold of some new tech, that could liven things up for awhile. But no, I guess I shouldn't, its fun to think about though. Well, I guess I should just get this over with a get back to Argaria. I'm sure Etan is bored without me. I add spice to his life.

I opened my mission packet about the new base. Ok, now this is interesting, it says it's some kind of bio-base. The structure its self is a rare life form. That slightly caught my interest. It is called an Andromeda. It's a nebula sized, ameba like life form that lives off the radiation of nearby stars.

The Dark Guardians project there needs to be shut down, but the life form itself must be salvaged. This life form was important to the continuity of this part of space. It went on like that for awhile explaining how and why but I lost interest at that point. I did note that the life form projected an electrical tech suppression field. This did not detour me in the slightest. In fact I had a bio-tech suit just for this kind of situation. This mission still probably wouldn't be a much of a challenge but it might provide me with a temporary distraction. Now I get to try out the bio- tech suit. When I saw it in the weapons tech division, I knew I had to have it, though I haven't had a reason to use it up till now.

The outside of the armor was made up of scales that overlapped like medieval armor and were just as strong. Spongy material coated the inside. It form fits to each wearers exact size and shape. Its immune to normal energy blasts, bladed weapons and it absorbs most kinds of radiation. It contains several different weapons: poison darts and 3 types of gas blast pellets for starters. The first pellet is toxic, the second stuns and the third is a thick smoke for concealment. Hardened minerals have been added to allow it to have nearly impervious claws. Finally it has a host of bio-tools like projectile sticky glue, and acid. When the head covering is used, night vision and few other scanning options become available. The Guardians might be annoying but they certainly knew how to design tech, I'll give them that. After this mission I'm sure I'll have a few suggestions to make, but I could make do for now.

I grabbed a few more carry on items and gave the order to my main gunner to fire me out the torpedo tube. He was only too glad to oblige. It's almost as if he has imagined this exact scenario before. There has been a few times before I thought about doing this very thing but again I never had a reason too. I entered the tube, prepared myself and made the call. "Ok Rogers, you may fire me when ready." Suddenly I heard a great deal of muffled laughter in the background. Were they having a party over this? Just wait till I get back.

Quick as a flash, I was launched out ship and on my way. The nebula was small for the type, just larger than an average sized planet. It had a familiar look about it. Etan was always spouting off some useless space babble to me. Oh I know, one day Etan had just got back from one of his Steller classes and was telling me about a nebula like this that earth called The cat's eye. Yes now I remember this one looks like a miniature version of that one. A bright blue and white light hovered in the middle of a purple haze. That was surrounded further by a glowing red gas. As I approached solid energy manifestations came into view. So this creature was made up of solidified energy. I guess that makes as much sense as any. The creatures form was spread out like a fruit vine. Its center was rooted on the core of a dying star while the rest of its tendrils reached out and around.



The first part of the mission went smooth; I even got to have a little fun on the way. When I was torpedoed out I brought along an enhanced surf board from earth. When I passed through the mine field I could surf the explosive waves on in. It's hard to believe the Dark Guardians thought that could even slow me down. I know I could have avoided the mines altogether and snuck in, but where's the fun in that.

A chemical hand thruster slowed me down as I approached the nearest part of the creature. Inside the gelled energy pods was something more familiar. It was composed of an organic compound similar to a coconut. I started to cut my way in but then I spied a port of some type. Apparently I was literally crawling into the bowels of this creature because at one point it expelled a slimy paste all over me. I really hate being sticky or dirty. Wait, if the port was this creature's Anus, oh great then I was a Reaper suppository.

The next few minutes were fairly boring. All I did was take down a few dozen white blood cells, hollow out one of them inside and wear it for camouflage, hardly worth noting. After what seemed like an eternity I finally managed to find a bio-computer terminal. The dark Guardians are using this place as a cloning facility. Hmm, what's this, it says Reaper initiative. Does that mean they have a whole subdivision just for me? Let see, four modules down and three doors to the right. I'm glad this trip isn't a total bore after all. Now I know what you're thinking. Any sane, right thinking person would do the sensible thing and avoid a room filled with weapons designed specifically for them. But do you think there is any way that I'm not going in there? You know I have too.

Commentary

Agent Garos and Sedar looked at each other with glee, Reaper had taken the bait. "See Sedar I told you he couldn't resist. His clones will be waiting for him when he arrives and then the fun begins." Sedar wasn't impressed yet "the clones won't delay him for long, your plan better work or were both as good as dead." Just as expected Reaper found his way to the prepared room. Three copies of him were waiting on him to arrive with weapons in hand. Reaper scanned them and quickly assessed that they were of little threat. Reaper sighed and commented "I was almost touched that the dark guardians had a whole division just for me, but now I'm disappointed. Just you three, please tell me there's a whole squad waiting to burst in any second."

The clones didn't have all of Reapers strengths and enhancements but they did have his attitude. The first clone strolled right up to Reaper showing no fear or hesitation. He quickly examined Reapers bio-suit. "Nice costume, old man where'd you get it fuddy duddys are us." He taunted. "Yeah" the second chimed in. "Looks like you rolled around in a trash bin covered in bio-glue." While they were doing this the third clone was activating a weapon's consol. Reaper wasn't a bit fooled by this measly ploy. Granted he was self obsessed, but he wasn't stupid. "I know what you're doing. You're trying to distract me long enough for that twit over there to fire a weapon at me. Well go ahead, I'll wait." Reaper stated with confidence.

“Ok” the first one said.” Your funeral, if you want to make our jobs easier, all the better.” A six foot silver canon dropped out the ceiling and powered up. Reaper stood perfectly still with his arms crossed, daring them to knock him down. “Dibs on the suit” the third one stated. Reaper eyed him, and said “bring it.” As he stated this he made a come and get me gesture with one hand.

The canon fired a great blast. Reaper was surrounded by an envelope of high intense radiation. The spherical blast zone grew to envelope half the room. The energy became hot enough to partially melt a few metal plates under where Reaper stood. The clone’s uniforms were slightly burnt from the side heat. The three clones quickly backed away as the intensity increased. Firing the cannon drained all the available energy in the area for a few seconds. As a consequence all the lights went dark for a moment. When the lights flickered back on seconds later, Reaper was gone. Only a charred shadow on the floor remained. The three began to celebrate their victory. “Awe, there’s nothing left of the suit.” I knew full charge might be overkill.” The third clone complained. But their victory was cut short.

A voice rang out from all around “I am the terror that comes in the night, I am death, I am Reaper.” The three clones desperately scanned the room trying to find out where the voice came from. Reaper uncloaked and dropped from the ceiling in their midst. As he impaled the nearest clone with his claws he used the spikes on his boots to do the same for the one behind him at the same time. A few seconds later he finished off the third one without breaking a sweat.

“Oh, well” Reaper thought “play time is over, now down to the mission.” He quickly made his way to the cloning rooms which were close by and used his suit to shut down its controlling tech. According to his scans this room was part of the nebula creature owns reproductive system and should eventually return to normal once the foreign tech is removed. The room itself was a large hollow oval shaped compartment filled with a few dozen egg like structures. Some of them were glowing a yellow color that could have been easily mistaken for miniature suns. While others were a dim blue color, like the evening sky.

This part was easy, though a little boring. In just over half an hour all three cloning rooms were neutralized. He figured he had just one more important task before returning to his ship. He had better link with this facilities main data storage and see if there are any other facilities like this. This kind of thing wasn’t as exciting as fighting but Reaper was always thorough in his job.

Nebu-Love Part two

Reapers view

One last task and I’m out of here. I’d better hurry, I’m getting hungry. I could go for a burrito right now or some nachos. Most of the facility was organic tech designed to work in tandem with the creatures natural systems. Everything from heating and cooling to material transport was interwoven. Clean up crews could come in later and help free the creature from any residual tech after I was done. The main thing is I shut down their cloning process. I had to neutralize a dozen or so dark agents on the way but they were no real threat. I guess they were counting on the cannon take me out.

The core room was completely different than everything else around it. A thick metal sheet separated a single room from all others. A highly sophisticated computer connected to a generator was linked with this creature’s neural matrix. If this creature had any intelligence it was being suppressed by the tech in this room. It probably also accounted for why the foreign tech was not destroyed by its immune system. I was guessing the thick metal blocked the tech damping field in the entire nebula. I only know of two substances that can block such a damping field and both are rare. I need to make a tech suit of this stuff.

I download all the computer files before taking down a wall to shut the system down for good. Just as I suspected as soon as one of the walls were breached the generator and computer system were disabled. The neural matrix lit up with activity.

Suddenly I had a powerful voice in my head. "Thank you little one for your help. I am Eve the mother of the children of light. These terrible creatures trapped my mind and took over my body." So it was intelligent. Since I saved her, Eve filled me with more of her energy and imbued my Dna with some of hers. Now I could absorb some kinds of radiation, like she could, though not on the same scale. I'm not sure why but I liked Eve now. I got a new ability and a rare metal to make a great new weapon with. Not a bad haul at all.

Matt's comments

By the way in case anyone was interested, I'll tell you how Reaper resisted that cannon blast. Earlier he had used some of Eve's Dna to enhanced his bio-suit. Though she was being mostly suppressed, she recognized reaper could be the key to her freedom. While Reaper was linked to one of her systems, Eve changed his suit to be able to absorb her energy. The cannon blast was her energy. Fortunately reaper recognized the change in the suit soon enough to make good use of it.

Selar's comments

The dark guardians have suffered a major defeat last year, yet I can still feel a strong presence near. Although it's nice to be home, I have several unpleasant items to take care of.

New view

Etan's view

Later that evening Master Selar was working in one of the computer rooms. The door was open but I stopped at the entrance anyway and knocked. "I haven't called for you." he said. "Master Selar I respectfully request to ask you something." "What is it Etan?" He responded. I hated to ask this question but knew I must. "Do you still support me becoming a Guardian?" I asked. He turned around and looked sad. The first reaction I had seen in him in awhile. "I'm sorry Etan, the council has voted to stop your training. After this trip is over I am to return you to earth, like I found you." I was dumbfounded by his answer.

"But why?" I asked. "The prior situation was a test, and you failed. You choose to rebel and teach the young trainee anyway. In spite of the fact you knew we would not want you too." Selar explained. I was prepared for that argument. "You didn't command me not to help others." I defended. He shook his head "The letter of the law verses the spirit of the law, remember. I didn't command you not to do it, to see how you would react. To see if you would follow the spirit of the law, in spite of the fact of no command against it."

Something about this didn't feel right. "Why don't you ask that trainee, what he thinks?" I said "It made a difference to him. Maybe one day he will be a powerful Guardian." Selar shook his head again and said "I don't have to ask him, it was me in disguise." Omg Of course, Son-orc is Cronos backwards. I should have caught that. He was testing me, and I failed big time. There was nothing else I could say. He dismissed me and I went back to the dorm. I couldn't believe I had made it this far just to fail now. Well my whole life back on earth had been one failure after another; I suppose I should have seen this coming. I could understand why Selar was mad at me now, I was his first failure.

The next few days seemed torturously long. The work wasn't hard, just monotonous. Master Selar even had my silver uniform taken away. I may have failed this test but I had still earned the uniform. The only saving grace was Celestial and Vortex. They were always cracking jokes of some kind. After work the third day Celestial, who usually was the talkative one looked very serious. "I know you said they are sending you away but do you want to learn one last skill just for fun?" I shrugged "why not I haven't got anything to lose anyway. He took me to an isolated area outside of town. LT came along to watch.

Celestial went into teacher mode "I think I know why you have been having trouble with telekinetic. As a form changer you are used to looking inside yourself. But now you must look outside your body. It's the same skill just turn the angle

of sight around." I tried it and told him I could see the molecules in the air, like when I become air. He said "now look down further. Look smaller than the Atomic level. Go beyond the area of energy and matter conversion. Look smaller still. Down to where you see tiny vibrating strings. "I continued to shrink my vision until I could see the strings. I was amazed "this is like string theory. Earth scientist said there were tiny strings that held the universe together and linked all things." He instructed me on how to feel them with my mind. "Once you learn to feel them you won't need to see them anymore to access them." he explained.

I could see how the strings, like tiny spider webs connected all matter and energy in the universe together. I used a line of them to connect with some rocks on the ground. I could feel the rock as if were in my hand, the contours and hardness of it. Connecting to it felt similar as to when I was rock and connected with the ground at the volcano last year. This made me think of Argyle. It also reminded me of all the things I had been through to get here. What the counsel was doing was not right. What I did wasn't out of pride, it was out of concern for another Guardian. And even if it had been a mistake, I have proven myself many times already.

A fire swelled up in me ready to burst. The rock was still floating but so was a football ball field sized chunk of the ground. It was hovering 20 feet in the air just in front of us. Celestial stared in disbelief "It took me a few months of practice before I could pick up stuff that big." he said. I thought perhaps my practice with the elements had made it easier for me. LT spoke up "You have much more discipline and balance than he did at the same point. You seem to advance very quickly." Is that so I thought? Suddenly a realization hit me like a sledge hammer I knew what I had to do. I thanked Vortex for his help and LT for his comment and headed out.

Swarm agent 203 message

Target has been sighted. So far there has been no indication the Guardians have spotted me yet. There has been no opportunity to separate him from the group.

Celestials report

The last few days I have had a strong feeling someone is following me. I kept getting a glimpse of someone but I couldn't track him down. The only connection I could find was that it would always happen when LT was close.

Stating my case

Etans veiw

I quickly headed back to the palace ship. I knew where the two intergalactic communications consols were. I approached one of the consoles and took a deep breath steadying myself. This was a big risk. If this didn't work Selar would be furious with me. Whatever my punishment would be, it wouldn't be pleasant. I opened communications with the commander's palace ship. He was on the other side of the galaxy at the moment. He was scheduled to come to the home world next week, but I couldn't afford to wait till then. I signaled the ship and a person answered. I told them it was an emergency and I needed to speak directly with the commander. They all knew of me so it was granted. The commander appeared on the screen and looked curiously at me for a moment then asked what this was all about. "Commander, please forgive this intrusion. If you will give me just two minutes to plead my case I will never ask anything of you again." I said desperately. He looked at me expressionless for a moment.

In a blink I was in his chamber. Omg, he just teled me across the galaxy; I kept forgetting just how powerful these guys were sometimes. He spoke in my mind "what is it you wish to say." I made my case "I'm being sent away because I was told I failed a test. First of all I helped those students out of concern not pride. Even if somehow that was a failure how can you send me away for one mistake? I know I have a lot to learn, but I am what you're looking for in a Guardian. I care about people. I am willing to do anything you ask to still be one. I think what you're doing is unfair and unjust but I will take whatever punishment you deem necessary to continue working to be a Guardian. If Reaper were here he would say you guys were just a bunch of pompous god want to be's, is he right? Furthermore if you didn't think I was worthy why would you have given me a silver uniform this early? And how could I have used the prime matrix? I defeated an alternate universe self, stopped a interspacal fissure from destroying the universal bubble and

saved the timeline. How many more things will it take to prove I'm Guardian material?" An alarm went off behind him and he looked back to see. Once again he spoke without moving his mouth. "I have a few things to attend to this moment but I will continue this with you later." With that he teleported me back to the ship. He couldn't have taken just five seconds to say if he agreed with me or not? I was returned to the console I had been standing at. When I turned around Selar was waiting for me.

Selar's comments

Reaper made it back from his prior mission and joined us on Argaria. I sent him to a guardian war museum, I knew he would like that. Just as expected he stole a light crystal. He will need it soon. I put it there just for him to steal. The funny thing is he thinks he got away with it unnoticed. The agent I had been tracking left the planet shortly ago.

War museum Commentary

The one thing of interest on Argaria for Reaper was a museum that showed various wars that the Guardians had been involved in. The entrance was typical architecture for this planet. Argarians loved to build arches and smooth designs without sharp corners. Reaper mused that Etan would have loved to see this, he was sure. The front opened up into a large round atrium. In the middle of the room was a great fountain and coming from the pedestal was a towering tree. Various pads were scattered around for transport. A person could step on a pad state their desired destination and a large sphere like a soap bubble surrounded them carried them there. There were plenty of other ways to get around though this was considered to be best one for touring various sites around Argaria.

Reaper's comments

That figures the beginning of the war museum had a lecturer teaching a history lesson on how heroic the guardians were time after time. He droned on how everyone is evil except them. It wasn't interested in any Argarian propaganda. I just wanted to see some cool weapons and pictures of the battles. Ok, Ok I really just wanted to see how many times I was mentioned, you don't to be so pushy about it. I have to admit seeing how they have progressed in technology over time was slightly interesting. It seems they were average tech until thousands of years ago, they began the great link. That's when their technology grew in leaps and bounds. The great link is a conscious and subconscious link that all Argarians have with each other. They share memories and experiences. It seems the link is the key to all the Argarians power. After a few minutes I was bored of this line of thought so I searched out a computer terminal to find any reference to me. It showed only one place in the museum. It had better be a good one, if they only had one monument to me. I didn't bother to take one of their bubble rides, that is for kids and tourist.

The place that mentioned me was housed in one of the side facilities. The network of museums was quite extensive and had to be housed in many different buildings. My destination was a small room that explained the attempted invasion by the dark Guardians a few years ago. Etan and I were not allowed to speak about the intraversal bridge or the intravese. At the bottom of the display it listed Etan and I having contributed to the Guardians victory in that conflict. What? That was it? I saved the entire universe, I deserve better than this. I want a parade and a few statues. This will not do at all. To top all that, no one in the museum recognized me. I decided that the next time I saw him I would tell Selar that he needed to correct this grievous oversight. Everyone needs to fear the Reaper.

On my way out I realized I might be able to speed up the process of getting my way. I just needed to take some valuable item and hold it for ransom. Most of the museum here were just stupid plaques and display but I know I've seen a few items on pedestals somewhere. As I was searching I spied a crowd gathered around one spot while a lecturer explained whatever boring subject he was teaching. On a pedestal near him was a fruit sized clear crystal. Maybe this was a trophy of war. It should be just valuable enough to hold hostage and just the right size I could carry out of here and hide it. Swiping it turned out to be easy; no one even looked my way. Ok, next on my list show this off to Etan.

Storms and surges

Etan's view

Selar grabbed me by the collar on my shirt and teleported me to the shuttle bay. He pushed me in the shuttle, Reaper was there. "Take him back to earth. Drop him off to the place I have indicated on your instructions. I will come get him and take him back to his time later." We lifted off and Reaper didn't say anything to me for a while. This wasn't right, I didn't care what they said, what I did was a good thing. I was straining my brain trying to think of some solution to this.

Reaper cheered me up "Hey look what I got from a guardian museum." He held up some kind of glowing crystal. Ordinarily I would have fussed at him for his theft, but right now I didn't care. We were about half way back to earth when we were attacked. There was a one man fighter behind us and closing, fast. Reaper did a good job of avoiding most of the shots but we couldn't avoid them forever. We were forced to land on nearby planet.

It was a stormy world, barren and barely breathable. We landed and looked out the window. The whole sky was filled with swirling clouds. According to the computer records this planet was sometimes used as training grounds for silvers, though we were the only ones here right now. A dark flash appeared behind us. There was a black cloaked man. "Well, well, well, what do we have here?" I see an amateur assassin and a little boy playing God." Reaper puffed up "Who are you calling an amateur you pompous wind bag?" I looked at Reaper, offended "What about my part?" He shrugged "He had your part right." he said smiling, something's never change.

"You have been a lot of trouble to me." The man said. Reaper looked at me with amusement. "Etan you get that a lot, have you noticed that? Two alternate versions of yourself and an alternate me said that to you too. You must be a real trouble maker." I thought really, did he just say that. "If I am it's all your fault. You've been a bad influence on me." I jabbed him back. "Well thanks, good to know you're not completely hopeless anymore." he said back. The man was listening to our conversation the whole time and seemed amused by this. He held his hand out and shot me with dark energy. And then shot Reaper with some other type of energy. He could have killed me right then and there but was obviously playing with me. "If you're wondering how I knew you were here. I've had an agent following you for some time. I have been waiting on the right situation to trap you." Reaper spouted off with "You puffed up, second hand super villain. Why don't you go take on a full guardian or are you too scared?" He really knew how to turn a phrase. Second hand super villain, I would have to remember that one for later. The man didn't get riled over reaper's insult; instead he just laughed a dark cackle.

Matt reminded me of the crystal Reaper stole. I needed to remind Reaper without the man in black catching on. "It's too bad you didn't bring along any useful weapons from home world. Not that Argaria has many weapons. But knowing you, I bet you would have stolen one if there was." I hoped he would get the context. The crystal was actually just a light battery, but it would do. The man shook his head. "A weapon wouldn't have done you any good anyway." He fired near us a few times making us jump out the way. He didn't seem to be trying to hard very hit us.

With his right hand he let loose an energy bolt that knocked Reaper back to the shuttle. He drained me to the point where I couldn't stand. "Since you have been so much a pain, I'll make you my slave. Let you work off your debt to Me." the man said. He walked over to me and picked up my limp body and said "now let's practice saying yes master." While he did this, Reaper came up behind him with the light battery. The man turned around and hit reaper hard for a second time. The battery cracked and exploded in a light compression wave. The man in black was knocked out this time. Reaper grabbed ahold of me, and drug me to the shuttle. He fired the shuttles weapons on the man, dispersing him. Hopefully that would delay him long enough for us to get away.

After a few minutes I recovered enough to stand. "Too bad you don't have the Prime matrix anymore; you could have beaten that guy easy." Reaper commented. "Yeah that was fun, when I had it; I could do the same stuff as a Regent." I replied. Then it hit me, I knew what I had to do. I searched through the navigational computer for what I was looking for. "Change course, were not going to earth anymore. Go to these coordinates." I said pointing to the display. Reaper was always up for defying the guardian council's wishes. I had Reaper bring me within sight of the disk of a black hole. I calculated that it would take just over three minutes for me to reach the event horizon. Black holes were as dangerous to space as volcanoes were to planets. I entered into the escape pod and told Reaper if I didn't return in ten minutes he should, because I would be dead anyway. I tried to be as prepared as possible. I brought along a time altering device

that was used when dealing with black holes or other similar phenomenon. Nearly all transports have them to counter the time warping effects.

"As soon as the escape pod was away Matt finally spoke again. "What are you doing?" Perfect I had him worried. "You know very well what I'm doing. I'm not going back to earth and have my time reset. The only way out of this is if you put me in contact with the prime matrix. Your apart of it, I know you can." Matt would not budge. "I can't do that" he said. "I responded with confidence "I'm ready to die. Are you? All the things we have been through can't you grant this one thing, this one time." I could sense Matt's annoyance "What your planning won't work." he answered. "I don't care; I want you to do it anyway." "Fine, but you'll see I'm right."

The prime matrix spoke in my mind. Its voice carried power. It made my whole body shake. "I am the Guardian core." Then it paused reading my mind "what you want will not work." I wasn't about to give up that easy "I want to do it anyway." I said being very determined. "I could give you the knowledge but you don't have the power. And the place where you are, no guardian can access the light stream. Black holes disrupt the process. "I didn't know that actually, but that might work in my favor too. I continued on "Then you will have to come here, and join with me. If not in a few minutes this part of you will die and so will I. And I know not even guardian can go into an event horizon." "Your being very foolish." it said. I knew I probably was, but this gamble had to pay off. It was all or nothing. "I have less than 30 seconds to go before the event horizon and even if you tell Selar now, I doubt he will reach me in time." I stated defiantly. I was planning to join with the prime matrix and create a time anchor so no one could move me out of this time. It would keep them from undoing what I had accomplished before. "That is where you're wrong he is already there." The prime matrix stated. He uncloaked, just sitting in a chair on the other side of the pod. He waved his hand and we were transported away.

The coucil

Reaper and I were standing in the crystal chamber of Selar's palace. The commander was on a throne and so were Selar and Rigel. He was also a regent just like Selar. While Selar wore wizard style robes, Rigel's style was that of the Grecian culture. I have only had a chance to speak with him once or twice but he seemed to be a likable person.

The commander focused on me. "Now we can finish that discussion we were having earlier." Reaper had a look that said what? What did I miss? "What do you have to say for yourself?" Selar asked. I was really ticked off "What I have to say is you have no right telling me that I can't train any more. How many times have I proven myself over and over? I will be a good guardian? I care about people. I am willing to learn. I am willing to sacrifice myself for the cause. What more will it take? "Selar sighed "There is more to being a guardian than just that. Look at yourself, your shaking with anger, is that anyway for a guardian to act?"

That argument wasn't good enough for me. "Ok, fine I got some more growing up to do, but that doesn't mean you can just kick me out." Selar shook his head sadly. "I'm sorry to tell you but I have seen failure in your future." I couldn't accept that explanation, Selar can only see what can happen not what will happen. So I boldly stated "I don't accept that, I might die in the fight but I will live or die as a guardian, period." I told him "Sorry but that's not what your futures say." He stated. "Well, you're wrong this time." I said defiantly. "You tell them pebbles." Reaper chipped in helpfully. He got a look from Selar that said shut up. They had backed me in the corner, so I went for broke. "Tell you what" I said "Then, lets fight. Give me the Prime matrix so were on even ground and I'll wipe the floor with you. If I can beat Reapers sneakiness I think I can take you. When you lose you have to let me stay, deal?" Reaper looked shocked and said whispered to me "OMG you just challenged Selar to a fight. I don't know if you're brave or stupid but I like it." Selar and the commander looked at each other in disbelief. Apparently that was not in a timeline they expected. Then the commander changed to a look of amusement. Selar shook his head and smiled. Cronos Rigel chuckled and stated "It takes me and the other two Regents to take on Selar. " Was he serious? Did he just say it would take the three other Regents working together to match Selar. Dang! He is more powerful than I ever knew. I spoke again "Then give me some way to earn the right to stay. Whatever it takes I will do." Selar closed his eyes and concentrated on something. The commander looked at him and asked "Has it changed?" Selar nodded yes.

Reaper looked just as confused as me. So I asked the question "What are you guys talking about? Selar answered "Sometime back I had seen that in the future you would be discouraged and leave. A Guardians life is a hard one. Sometime no matter what he does a Guardian can be hated or blamed for trouble. It was important that you over come certain problems now before that happens. There are several situations that you will do that are for the good of the people but they will hate you for it, for a time. When you took on some of Argyles spirit you also took on some of his timedness. But now you have over come that." So what about when I helped the trainee's?" I asked. "It was fine" Selar answered "But it gave us an opportunity to put you in a situation that was unfair to you. You fought for what's right and never gave up." Rigel still seemed amused by all this. "I particularly liked his black hole strategy. If Selar had been preoccupied at the time, it could have actually worked." Selar himself was still trying to hide a slight smirk.

"So I'm not actually in trouble then?" I asked again. Rigel walked over and said "No, it was a way to force you to over come a tendency for self despondency. I felt very relieved. "We cannot teach anyone anything; we can only make them think." Rigel said to me. I had heard that quote before. It took me a second to remember where. "That was almost an exact quote from an earth philosopher called Socrates." I shared this with Rigel. I loved history so I knew some of his famous quotes. "Yeah I remember him, who do you think he got it from?" Rigel stated causally Naturally, I thought, I should have guessed. More and more I realized over time much of our culture throughout history had come from the Guardians. "I'll have to remember to tell Celestial, Vortex and Lt thanks, for their help and support. Reading my mind again Selar said " Their here too." Celestial and vortex walked up from behind. But Lt wasn't with them?" Selar stated with a smile. " LT is already here, I was him. Someone had to guide you in the right direction." Yet another surprise "So you were both my Judge and my advocate?" I asked out of habit. Reaper apparently found that funny "Yeah he played both sides of the field on that one. Got you good pebbles." he said smiling.

I only had one more item to take care of. "Here you can take this wretched thing back" I grabbed the matrix and held it out. "It's a fair weather friend, it is only helpful when times are good, but is silent when I need it the most." But he zipped back inside me of his own accord. "Then he said internally "I am silent only when it is in your best interest to be so. I am here to help you, even when you don't understand." Selar smiled understandingly "You might as well accept him, he's not going to leave, and he is there to stay." The council disappeared and then Selar teled everyone else away leaving just me and him. " Etan I know this was hard to go through. But I did it for your long term benefit. It may be difficult to believe right now, but it's true. Now that I had vented all that built up anger I felt numb and didn't know what to say. Selar saved me the trouble of asking what's next.

"We've got a few more hours of charity to do then your free for the rest of the stay here." he said " what's the work this time" I wondered. "He smiled and said "well, you said you wanted to wipe the floors with me, so floors it is." Now I felt a bit embarrassed over the whole situation though I did ask him" How do you know it would take all three regents to equal you?" He chuckled and said "you and Reaper are not the only ones to spar. Sometime they win, some times I do, but most of the time it's an even match." I knew he was powerful but I had no idea he was evenly matched with three regents at the same time. As we set off he chuckled to himself slightly and said "Wipe the floors with me, that kills me." I thought, man I'm never going to live that down am I?

Dark swarm report

Both Primary goals achieved. Lifeform added to main water supply and phase one of solar inhibitor in place. While Selar and the others were concentrating on guiding thier new guardian trainee we were able to slip in unnoticed. It is unfortunate that the secondary goal of taking out the Guardian trainee was not achieved. Kane clone 3 got over confident and waited to long to act. The Reaper body guard had some kind of Guardian weapon that dispersed the clone entirely. We will have to wait until another opportune moment to catch him unprepared. Now that the Guardians are over confident in thier previous victory it is time to begin project land mine. Only phase cloak able ships are to be used in thier deployment.

Part two

One big family

Alsea's journal

I've only been to the Argarian home world a few times. It still takes my breath away. I was invited to a cultural exchange meeting on the second day. I introduced all the girls to the make-up, cosmetics, and the accessories I had gotten from earth. If earth ever joins the planetary alliance, it should be a very popular shopping and vacation spot. There is one thing strange though. I kept getting the feeling I was being watched everywhere I went. I couldn't catch anyone staring or following me, but it was really creepy. On a better note I went to Selar to insist he find a way to help poor Etan considering what they were putting him through. After he explained the situation I had to agree but I still didn't like it. Selar already had a plan to help Etan in secret by disguising himself as a silver guardian. He would secretly give him advice to set him in the right direction. I swear that man thinks of everything.

Reaper comments

The last week on Argaria was interesting but I'm ready to get back in action. It was odd though, I could swear I was being followed. I cloaked a few times and looked around but didn't see anyone suspicious at first, if someone was following me their good, very good. The last day I was there I caught a glimpse of someone in a grey coat eyeing me. After a little investigation there were several others scattered about in the same gray coat. That would not have been odd except all the men looked exactly alike. Obviously clones of some type. When I reported this to Selar he was already aware of thier presence.

I's comments

While I was enjoying a break I kept a close eye on Reaper, I knew he would find some way to cause trouble. The little rogue stole a Guardian item out of a museum. I started to go get it back but Selar stopped me, he said he had placed it there for him to take. While trailing Reaper, I discovered one man in grey trailing him. I walked over to see what this was about and he turned around and disappeared in the crowd. He obviously used some type of transporter to get away, I find it strange no one noticed or remembered him. I asked several people but no one knew who I was talking about.

Selar's conversation

While Selar was meditating on the newly forming timelines a shadowy figure appeared before him. "Well, well, well, you think you're so smart don't you?" Kane said. Selar wasn't about to get provoked by that feeble attempt "What you do want this time Kane?" Selar asked. "Just that saving Etan now won't matter. Since he won't quit I'll just have to kill him myself. "Selar eyed him" you try a head to head confrontation with him and I'll stop you myself. You've tried that before remember?" Selar said. Kane wasn't intimidated " No matter how may times you delay us, we will keep coming back. Eventually you'll slip up and we will take over the galaxy." Kane bragged. Selar responded with "According to the timelines now, in just over 500 years you get defeated by Etan, so the clock is ticking. When he defeats you will never be a dark guardian again."

"I can play that game too" Kane said "I'm not as good as you on seeing the future but I know its not set yet, just possibilities. And that's assuming he makes it to a guardian. A lot can happen in 500 years you know. He he." Selar shook his head "You know our deal. You can't take him on personally until he gets to be a full planetary Guardian, or else I come and eliminate you myself. I know exactly where you are right now, or do I need to pay you a visit?" Kane stopped in his tracks "No need to be rude" Kane said backing away from Selar. Then Kane continued "We have other means, he got lucky this time, but luck is a fickle thing. Just remember this, no matter what plans you stop, we have 1000 other plans in action around the galaxy, even you can't be everywhere at once." "Be gone foul demon, before I find a reason to be on that side of the galaxy." Selar stated. Kane looked angry but left anyway.

Food craze

Etans view

Master Selar gave me the last week of the vacation to do whatever I wanted. Reaper and I stopped at an outside replicator eatery. It was like the replicator in the lunch room at school except there is a slot for payment and another for inserting an information disk to introduce new food specs to the machine. I was in the mood for Mexican so I downloaded the food file from earth I had on my computer pad. I got a steak fajita and Reaper got a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. It was funny, Reaper loved Mexican food but sometimes he surprised me. There were around 50 people at the place we were eating at. Most were Agrarians. They only needed to eat like 3 or 4 times a week normally. An adult Argarian absorbed most the energy they needed from the sun or any other nearby energy source. They could eat and get energy that way too, but because of the energy they absorbed through thier skin, most of the time they weren't hungry. Only a small amount of matter or energy was needed for normal maintenance. I was down to about half the fajita left when I noticed everyone in the area starring at me.

Argarian's are unique in thier society. They operate much like an ant colony. Each person has thier own personality of course, but they are consciously and subconsciously connected to each other. They are very open in sharing thoughts and feeling through a mental link. For politeness sake they don't probe alien's minds without permission but nearly everything is shared by fellow Argarians. If one person gets in trouble all Argarians in the area would know right away and come to help. They take the philosophy of all for one and one for all to the extreme. I didn't understand it at the time but when Master Selar first made me young again, I was reborn as an Argarian. Even though I was from earth I wasn't completely human anymore. My mental abilities hadn't progresses to where I could share the link yet, but they could pick up my thoughts just fine. Master Selar warned me Argarians don't like pretence or lies. He wanted to make sure I didn't exaggerate any thing I said, it could cause trouble. Apparently I was transmitting my enjoyment of what I was eating to everyone in the area unintentionally.

A man got up and approached me and asked the name of the food I was eating. I explained to him what it was and that I had down loaded a file from earth to the replicator. The man thanked me and walked over to the machine. He just seemed to stare at it for a moment, and then I realized it probably had a mental link for Argarians to order straight from thier thoughts. That figures. He had a large platter made up. He proceeded to take it to the central table where everyone took turns taking a piece to sample. It was amazing no one tried to take more than thier one piece or tired to get there before others. Everyone patiently waited thier turn. One earth this could have caused a mad dash to grab what they could before others.

I saw heads noddng as each one got to try a sample. I asked the nearest man "Would you like to see other human foods in my mind that I like. All my favorites are now in the replicators files." "He nodded affirmatively." "Yes that would be very nice. Thank you." I could feel him probing my mind. In a few seconds he had an understanding look. There was a few seconds delay from him taking the knowledge from me and him transmitting it on to others. I could see the wave of facial expression change as it flowed outward. It reminded me of seeing ripples in a pond. The man must have picked up that thought too, because as soon as I thought it he looked at me with amusement. In much the same way as Selar does. "Thank you" the man said "You have given us a great gift.

"This is good." He commented. Each person who had sampled the meal in turn went to the replicator and had large platter made. They thanked me and left with the platter. One person walked just down the street and began giving out samples. Later I found out that by the end of the week, nearly half of the population of the planet had tried a sample, and it was still cycling through. Without trying I had started a world wide food craze. Master also told me later how Alesia had started a female product craze. Since I had introduced her to them, I had actually started that too. He made a joke about there not being any volcanoes here but I had caused two eruptions anyway.

I expected Reaper to have some rant about this, but he just kept on eating and tried to ignore everybody. I keep forgetting how much he hates not just Guardians but all Argarians. And he was on whole world of them. After lunch we walked through the market on our way to the museum he had visited before. There were a few things he wanted to show me. He did grump about one thing. Reaper was used to being recognized and feared at school he didn't like the

fact that no one knew him here. "Sorry man, you're just going to have to wait until you get famous through your work. Aragarians don't have outdoor signs to put your face on you know. Later on I would wish I hadn't said that.

Out of the frying pan into the fire

A short distance from the Argarian home another Hollow sphere like this one was being constructed. It would actually be used for another galaxy when finished but it was being built here. It would take several hundred years to finish even with their advanced technology. Reaper must have somehow gotten into the control room of Selar's palace ship and used the computers to reprogram the construction robots on the new world. He had them create a likeness of him on part of outside shell that was already completed. To make matters worse he put my face on the shell with him. Mine was much smaller of course. It even had our names under our pictures.

Commentary

The half constructed sphere reminded Etan of the incomplete death star in star wars, George Lucas would have been proud to know he had gotten so close to actual events. As soon as Etan saw the picture of Reaper and himself, he headed to Selar's office, He knew he would be called there shortly anyway. He walked in the door and sat on one of the chairs near the entrance. "Yes Etan, just come on in without knocking" Selar said a bit humorously. "Oh sorry master Selar." Etan said "I wasn't thinking this time." "What's on your mind?" he asked as if he didn't already know the situation. "I came to see how much trouble I was in this time?" Etan pouted. "And why would you be in trouble?" Selar asked. Omg. He was making me say it for my further embarrassment, Etan thought. "This is obviously for what Reaper did to the shell of the new world." He said. "Why would you be trouble for that, since he did it?" Selar asked again. "I figured since he put my face on it too I would be blamed even though I had nothing to do with it, and I didn't know he was going to do it." Etan stated.

"Don't worry your not in trouble this time and neither is he." Selar said. Wait. What? Ok I'm confused. He just pulled a huge practical joke. Reaper walked in a sat down beside me "That's right pebbles I had permission." he said smiling. Etan looked at Selar then at Reaper and back again at Selar. Ok, you got me good, why? Selar explained "After he took out the three bases last year and the recent missions we've had him on I thought he deserved a reward. He said he wanted time to think of the best thing to ask for. After your discussion he came and said he wanted to be famous. He wanted everyone here know who he was." Selar explained. "Yeah so I asked to have my face on the shell. I only get it there for three days after that it will be erased but it won't matter. It did its work in the first few minutes. Billions of people all know my name. And everyone who visits here for along time to come will hear about it." Reaper stated with pride.

"Ok, but what made you add my face, that doesn't sound like you to share the glory. If you thought you would get in trouble that makes sense but since you had permission, why did you do you do it?" "Actually" Selar began "that was my idea." "ok but why" Etan asked still confused. "Don't tell anyone else this but it was to rub it in the face of a certain pain in my neck." Etan was shocked. "Who?" Selar leaned forward in his chair as if he were telling some great secret. "it's the real person trying to kill you, what you dissipated was a clone, but the real guy doesn't like you very well now. He says you're a lot of trouble." Reaper laughed. "Ha! See I told you everyone says that about you. And you say I'm the trouble maker." Selar gave reaper a side glance. "That because you are." Reaper batted his hand in an, I don't care gesture. "what do you know you, you crazy ole man." Reaper came back.

Suddenly Reaper's face changed and his lips were now gone and he had no mouth at all, just eyes and a nose. "Watch your tone around me son. For Etan's sake I have given you a lot of slack, but its time to shape up. Can you behave yourself? Or do I need to leave you that way for a day?" Reaper was rebellious but not stupid. Selar never gave a threat or promise he did not keep. Reaper looked contrite. Selar didn't have to wave his hand or even tap his finger Reaper was just whole again. "From now on you will show me respect and refer to me as Master Selar. Do you understand?" Selar asked Reaper. Reaper didn't pop off anything but he didn't answer him either. This time Etan saw master Selar's eyes twitch just slightly.

Reaper disappeared. While they waited Selar showed Etan a map of where he was sending them next. Etan wasn't about to ask or say anything. Given his normal friendly tone, it was easy to forget just how powerful Selar was. Etan felt embarrassed all over again when he thought of his prior statement of wiping the floor with him. A few minutes later Reaper reappeared. He was white, breathing heavily and shaking all over. To this day Etan never found out what Reaper had experienced but to make him react like that it must have been something very bad indeed. Selar looked at him intently. "Are you ready to behave?" He wouldn't look Selar in the face but in a quite voice said "Yes Master Selar." Selar immediately changed moods. Now he was back to his usual tone. "Well then let's go over what I have for you."

School notes

Some time later Etan asked if Celestial and vortex could be allowed to come help the guardian trainees since they had been a big help to him. Master Leo was a great teacher but he didn't have the time needed to really spend one on one session with each trainee, after some thought Master Selar granted this. By the end of the fourth school year Etan had basic mental and weather abilities down fairly strong. He even got to spar with both celestial and vortex some. He would turn into a tornado and Celestial would try to dissipate him. It took a month of practice but there came a day when he no longer could stop Etan.

Etan couldn't believe he was sparing with silvers and holding his own. Vortex likes to use gravity. That was harder to fight. He promised next year when Master Leo showed him basic gravity he would practice with him. They were both impressed by the power Etan was demonstrating. The last week of school Celestial wanted to see how well Etan was doing in his **Telekinetics**. He had been practicing it everyday, now that he knew how to do it, it as fun as form changes. Etan hadn't been getting much power until he tried some **Shaolin** style moves he had seen on TV back on earth. A lot of martial art moves were supposedly based on the movement of energy in the body he wondered if it would help and it did. His silver friends asked where he had learned some of the advanced techniques from. Etan showed them the video, and they were amazed. Many moves were the exact moves used to channel guardian energy. He wondered if some of the ancient humans had seen these moves in a guardian. He was able to pick up a 30 ton weight and move it with telekentic. After that Celestial started called Etan Selar JR."

Part Three

The days of our lives

School year five

The young and the restless. part one

Carlos's view

I walked past Cid once again. He had provoked me to anger and the punk deserved a beating. I was eighteen year old and this was my last year at this school. Normal teens would be looking for a job next year but not me. I was special but my parents would never tell me why. I begun developing powers early on an learned some pretty good ones. I could move faster than anyone could see, and I had the strength equal to 100 men. I could even fire a flame out my hands as well as a few other smaller tricks. I planned to go into the military as a specialist or something. Whatever it was I wanted to be rich and famous.

Cid reached out and grabbed my collar. "What's the matter looser, you lost? Oh look everyone the poor baby has lost his mommy." Ok that's it. I I've ignored him long enough. I let loose a few fast hits then one hard hit that threw him

back to the wall and probably broke his jaw. I might have over done it just a bit. I've tried this time to keep my powers secret, to just fit in. But when someone mad me angry I just reacted.

I was called in the head master Farn's office. He was an old fat guy that was a bit of a grump." Son you really messed up this time. Cid might need minor surgery." He said. "Yeah well he deserved it. I tried to be nice but he pushed his luck one to many times." I told him "you're lucky you're not going to jail. I told the police I was taking responsibility for you." he said again" Well thanks but no thanks." and I turned to leave. "You don't understand I am going to teach you discipline." he said while eyeing me. Well, I thought here we go again. Someone else was pushing my buttons. "Look old man, you can't stop me and I have no reason to hurt you. So I'm going to leave.

If you're smart you won't try to stop me." As I walked out the door I felt a force move me back ward. The man changed from the head master I knew to slim man in a blue robe trimmed in gold. He was tall, with a bald head and looked ancient. "I'm afraid you're not going anywhere." He sat down in a chair and pointed to the one next to him. "Come sit down so we can talk." He said. I didn't know who this freak was but I wasn't waiting around to find out. I zipped out of there practically at light speed then he teled me back. "I just want to talk, is that so bad?" he asked. I figured he would be mad at my defiance but he looked as calm as a monk.

"This has been a fun but I got to run." I set the room ablaze and zipped out of there again. This time I had made it a thousand miles away before I was teled back. "Now, was that really called for?" he asked. I looked around and there were no scorch marks on anything. Whoever he was, his powers made mine look like nothing. "Were going to have a talk, the easy way or the hard way." he said. Suddenly I felt a power pulling me toward the chair. When I got close I lashed out in anger. I changed my fingers nails to blades and cut off his left hand. "That kind of thing will not be tolerated." he stated. He stood up and waved his hand.

The next thing I knew I was bent over the desk and unable to move my body, except for my head. I looked back and he had picked up head master **Farn's** discipline paddle. I had, had plenty of paddlings before. I was considered a bit of a trouble maker in most schools. I could change my skin so I would not feel a thing. "That trick wont work", he said. "You're going to learn discipline and respect. I don't enjoy this, but you need to learn to learn a quick lesson in manners." He laid into me with the paddle, this time I couldn't change to make it not hurt. I resisted as long as I could, I didn't want to give him the satisfaction of knowing it was getting to me. Eventually I cried out. In a few moments I was balling like a baby. Without thinking I blurted out "please stop." and surprisingly he did.

He put the paddle away and sat back down as calm as before. This time he let me stand as my back side was too sore to sit. "I have seen two possibilities in your future, one if I train you, you will one day become very wise and powerful. You will help save countless billions of people. You will become a great hero. The second possibility is if I do not train you, you would eventually let your anger push you toward being evil. And you would cause millions of deaths instead. I will not let that happen. So I'm going to give you two choices. You can choose to train with me or I will take away all your powers but you are free to go. Which do you choose?" I was stunned into silence for a moment.

He sat silently for a moment letting me think it over. "Sorry but I got to do my own thing." I told him. "You only lose what you cling too." He said. I didn't learn until many years later that, particular saying was from some Religion called Buddhist on a far away planet.

He waved his hand and suddenly I felt empty. "Very well, you may go. Try to stay out of trouble." I stood there just staring for a moment then he disappeared. I walked out in a daze, what would I do now? I had always had my powers. I didn't know what to do without them. Half the night I sat up in bed in major depression. I hadn't cried since I was a child but I had no other choice but to cry myself to sleep. I spent the next three days in bewilderment. Finally I went back to the head masters office to look for the old man. He wasn't there. Had I missed my chance? When I turned around, there he was. "Ready to cooperate this time?" he asked. "Yes, just give me my powers back." I said. "Very well" he waved his hand and I felt whole again. "You will become my student. I will be your master, and I will train you. Your name will no longer be Carlos Kane, but from now in you will be known as Selar." The screen went black. "I can't believe that punk kid was you Master." Etan said. "Yes I was a bad boy back then." Selar mused.

Present day

Kane's comments

Once again my brother has interfered. Several centuries ago Selar had told me that it was destined that a future Guardian would defeat me. He can see possible futures but nothing is set in stone. He claims this Etan of his might be the one. The Guardians think thier so smart with thier matrix and life stream. One day that will change. It will take a few centuries to complete but one day we will tap the dark stream. The Guardians ability to tap life stream while we cannot tap the dark stream is the only thing that holds us back. We have made progress in the present however. The bacterial absorption on the Argarian home world should be complete by the end of next year. The gas activators will be put in place next year after the absorption is complete to cut down on the chance of any of them being discovered. The first part of the solar inhibitor is in place. It will take three more stages to complete but so far none of our agents have been captured.

The cruelty of Kane

He grabbed the former silver guardian by the neck. "Your time as a hero is over, boy. Now that I've drained you, you will be my slave. You will work hard labor jobs all day. I expect absolute obedience. And if you don't serve me, you will suffer greatly." Kane said. Silver guardian Rocka said bravely "You might as well kill me now I will never serve you." Kane laughed cruelly "I was hoping you would resist it makes it more fun for me." Kane placed a suppression collar around Rocka's neck. "This is powerful enough to keep you suppressed. Unfortunately it won't work on blue or gold guardians but it will work on you." Rocka hoped one of his fellow guardians would be able to help him out soon. But until then Kane wasn't going to make his life pleasant.

Kane took him down to the small planet Rocka had been watching over. It had a small population of settlers. It wasn't big enough to require a planetary guardian but he was responsible for this population. Kane pulled Rocka along by a chain as he walked along the street. Most people from the settlement recognized Rocka. They didn't know who Kane was but if he could take down a Guardian then he must be powerful. He stopped at his usual place to get everyone's attention, the school. He had timed it where the school would be full of children when he arrived. Kane let loose a powerful blast that incinerated the whole building. He waited for a crowd to gather and made his announcement. "I am Kane, your new Master. You will all serve me. Some of you will work in the mines, some in production."

It took a moment for that to sink in. One man said "He just murdered our children" Then he screamed and ran toward Kane with a weapon out stretched. Many others followed suit. Kane just laughed at thier feeble attempt and hit them with energy bolts. They writhed in pain on the ground. Some tried to run but he got them too. A few were left just standing in shock. "Kneel to your new Master if you wish to live. Any one who does not kneel will be severely punished until they decide to kneel." All the ones left got to thier knees in submission. He had now added 2000 new slaves, a nice day's work.

Rocka was devastated by this. How could some one be so cruel? Kane made him watch as several women were picked out of the crowd and made to submit to Kane's soldiers. They were abused many times over. Rocka could do nothing but watch and sorrow. This planet was in a small galactic cluster. Only a few planets here were inhabited at all. The ones that were here were usually mining colonies. Kane had come upon him so quickly that he couldn't call for help. Now all he could do was watch as Kane destroyed everything he was here to protect.

Matt's report to prime matrix

Etan is still angry with what happened in our last encounter. It apparently will take awhile for him to get over it. Humans seem to be a very stubborn species. In time he will see that all I have done was for his good. In the mean time I just have to watch and wait until the time is right to help him. Master Leo began to teach him gravity powers this year. Silver guardians celestial and vortex are helping him learn that quicker.

This little light of mine part one

Etans veiw

This year is going to be great. Master Leo began teaching me gravity and advancing my mind abilities. I should be able to place directed commands into humans within the next few months. So by the end of the year I should have mind control and flight, very nice. I'm beginning to actually feel like a Guardian now. I can hover in the air but not really fly yet. Like all the others powers learning gravity has been its own challenge. Gravity is in essence the bending of space time. To counter it you must unbend yourself from the effects of gravity. This is more difficult than it seems. A strong magnetic field can be used to accomplish the same thing within a planets influence. But using anti-gravity is much stronger and much more reliable. It seems like every time I try to learn a new skill some disaster happens and this time was no exception. I was practicing outside with Vortex after classes. I could see the bend of the planet in space with my sight. I tried to loose myself from the bend. It was like trying to punch through a think sheet of plastic. There was some stretching but I could not quite break through. Matt chimed in "You have to feel the bend in space not just see it. Feel the ridges and curves. There is a weak spot right in front you. Touch the weak spot and you should be able to make it through."

"Just leave me alone, you have caused me enough trouble already." I said back. I still wasn't ready to forgive him and let him give me any advice. I wondered what would happen if I pushed against the gravity well of the bending effect then let go. That turned out to be a bad decision. I was thrown at least a mile high. One of the silvers could have saved me from falling but I found out later Master Selar said no. I had ignored Matt's advice and now I had to live with the consequences. I tried to change to diamond just before I crashed but the effects of the bending inhibited me from making a total change. When I crashed I passed out. I woke up in the medical ward. Instead of being healed up all the way I was in a body cast. Master Selar was standing next to me. "I have drained you of all your energy, so it will take you a few days to heal up. I want you to think about what you've done." he said. "Are you mad at me?" I asked back. "No, but disappointed. You know better than to do what you did." He said. The matrix spoke "Your powers are not your best tool, I am." I didn't even answer it this time.

By the next week I was all healed up. I took three more weeks before I had basic flying down pat. I practiced with C and V some more. They were called out to a minor emergency at a local planet and I got to come along. There was a hurricane about to devastate a coastal city. They combined thier power and dissipated the hurricane within 10 minutes. Some flooding had occurred before we got there, so we helped with this too. Celestial and Vortex began repairing the levees and helping the people. "While they are helping the people you could." Matt began. "I cut it off, "I told you don't talk to me anymore. I don't want or need your help. I may stumble upon the way, but I'll get there without your self-righteous quips." It went silent after that. Good riddance. I turned into water and connected with as much water as I could and pushed all of it out of the flooded areas. After an hour of this back and forth I had all the low lands cleared of water. "See" I told the little annoyance "I can do just fine with out you." It didn't answer me back, which was fine with me.

By the end of the day, I was exhausted from the effort but happy. I finally got to really start being a true guardian. In my first two years training I had simply been at the right place at the right time to help but this was my first real mission as a silver guardian. I wasn't a full silver guardian yet just an honorary one, but I had helped save lives and peoples livelihoods. That should mean something. The next morning I was called in by Selar. I was expecting congratulations of some kind but that's not what I got. "Please come in and sit down, we need to talk." Selar said. Oh! No! I know when he says that it means he has to talk I have to listen. "What did you tell him, you little tattle tale?" I asked Matt. "Selar spoke "your matrix has said nothing, but you should know by now you have no secrets from me. You're allowing your prior situation to cloud your judgment. Your matrix is there to help you. The times when it was silent, it was because I asked it to be so. If you're going to be angry, you can be angry at me instead. "

"I can't be mad at you; you have treated me better than you could have. If anything you have plenty of reasons to be mad at me." I said. "I want you to apologize to your matrix and learn to listen to its advice." Selar stated. For some reason I blurted out before I thought. "I don't even like that little irritation, how can you ask me to apologize to it? All it does is boss me around and not help when I really need it." As soon as I said that I knew it was a mistake. I had gotten better about watching my temper since training but I apparently had some pent up anger.

On one hand I knew it was following what the council wanted but on the other hand, it was supposed to support me no matter what. Selar took on a serious tone "Come over here." And he pointed to a spot right in front of him. I knew better than to defy Master Selar under any circumstances. I had seen the effect he had, had on Reaper. I didn't want him sending me to some awful nightmare or giving me a painful punishment. I walked up tentatively, fearing what he might do. It had been one of the few times I had ever mouthed off to him. I got to the spot and waited for what he would say or do next. I couldn't hide the fact that my hands were shaking. In spite of what I had thought about the test they had put me through last year with the trainee incident Selar had never punished me unjustly.

Selar stared at me for a long moment. I didn't say anything. Anything I could say would just sound like an excuse or justification. Selar batted a hand and I was transformed to a small child. By my height and feel I was probably the same size as a five year old. OH no! He was going to paddle me just like he had been, in the flash back, me and my big mouth. Why couldn't I have just said yes master and let it go. Selar picked me up and put me on his lap. Then he put his arms around me in much the same way as my grandfather did when I was a child. "Etan I think of you as a son. You've got a lot of maturing left to do. But you're going to make it. I want you to think about what you've done. Your matrix is a piece of the original prime matrix. It is a rare honor. And it has grown since you've had it".

I asked "I know your right but I did just fine without it didn't I?" Selar shrugged, which was an unusual reaction from him "you helped on this last mission but if you had listened to your matrix it would have warned you that there were pollutants in the water. You needed to purify the water before sending it back to the ocean. You're still inexperienced so this kind of thing is expected but it could have been avoided if you had not been stubborn." Oh pollution in the water from things in the city, I didn't think of that. I should have detected those when I was part of the water if I had chosen to look. I told him "I'm sorry, I didn't think of that." "That is what your matrix is for, to help you consider all the options of a situation." Selar said.

In human terms I was now 78 years old. But compared to the maturity of Guardians who were thousands of years old I was like a bratty child sometimes. Master selar continued "think about what you have done. Then his tone changed. He spoke like he was speaking to a small child "well now little boy, it's your bed time. Go to bed like a good boy and in the morning maybe you'll be back to your old self. "He said jokingly." Yes daddy," I replied playing along. I sat in bed just thinking for the longest time.

"I'm still angry, but I'll try to keep an open mind toward what you have to say." I said to Matt. "That's all I ask. I really am on your side." Matt said back. After a few hours of sitting and pondering, I came to one conclusion, the only way I could really ever trust him again was to know it would be on my side no matter what. "Matt you say you're on my side, but I need to know that I can trust you in every situation." I thought to it. "I know what you're thinking. You want me to support you no matter what you do. No matter how crazy or insane the plan. The only way I could promise that is if I have Selar's permission." Matt responded. It let the conversation drop from there. Fortunately for me I was myself in the morning.

I asked Master Selar for what I wanted; he seemed to find this amusing. "Why would I give you permission to use your matrix in such a way?" I knew I would have to have a good line of reasoning to even have a chance with this. "I know I have made some mistakes. But I'm learning and growing. If you grant this, I promise I'll listen to the Matt's recommendations. But I have to know he will support me no matter what. It's the only way I can truly trust him again." Selar looked at me expressionless for a moment. "If I grant this, you will eventually get yourself in a lot of trouble." "I accept the consequences of my actions. Isn't that the essence of honor, discipline and maturity?" I responded. He once again seemed amused by my defense. "You're a glutton for punishment, but I'll grant it anyway. Just keep in mind I'm telling you right now. There will be many unexpected consequences of this action." With that I left to go back to the room. "Ok Matt, you heard him, now I want to hear the promise." I thought to him. "I felt him sigh. "You're a very stubborn and determined species." he responded. Just say it. "You really don't want what you're asking but ok. If you promise to listen to me, I promise to go along with you no matter what." he finally said. "Ha, Etan one matrix zero. What? Nothing.

Queens gambit

Queen Calamity was tall, with sleek limbs and reptilian scales from head to toe. Her head had a snake like quality. At the end of her fingers were long knife like claws. Her every step resembled a predator stalking its prey. She had Glowing red eyes that could look into a man's very soul. She liked to eat live flesh from humanoid species. She would Start with the extremities first so she could watch her victims suffer the longest. And she had powers to cloud a man's mind. One touch from her could insight a man to violence, desire or despair. She ruled without mercy. Her new Dark Guardians must be the same. A new batch of potential dark Guardians were presented before her. The generals had picked out 2000 potentials. But they had to pass a few tests first. The first test was questions that related to thier philosophy. Each person would be brought in for her for approval. They had to have been working for the dark swarm for many years and have proven themselves to be trustworthy and effective to be considered for this position. The guardians had won a victory last year but that would only delay thier plans not stop them. The first candidate was brought in.

"What is the universal truth?" she asked. The dark man answered confidently "That the universe is darkness and within it are tiny specs of light blocking the view." "and what happens when the lights go out?" she asked again. "The light becomes part of the darkness." he answered. "And our mission?" she asked. "Our goal is to bring everyone in the universe into their natural state, into darkness." She nodded her in approval. He had been taught these answers for many years. It wasn't just that he knew the answers; it was whether he believed in them. She could see in his mind he believed in them strongly. "How do we battle the Guardians four principles?" she asked. "Desire destroys discipline, hate defeats balance, fear takes away honor, and chaos stops justice." "He said. "And what is your your oath?" "

I swear to always strive to bring all life into darkness. Too follow you as my queen, and never surrender." "very well" the queen said "Come forward and receive the gift." He stepped forward and she placed her hand into his chest and filled him with her darkness. He would now become a new dark guardian. It would take years for her new guardians to learn thier new abilities but her army would rise from the ashes once again. Your name is now Thanos Eran, Dark Guardian of blood.

The young and restless part two

Selar's view

Your name will no longer be Carlos Kane, but from now in you will be known as Selar. My name is Cronos Mikel I am a planetary guardian." I was stunned. " Guardians, I've heard of you guys in stories. But I didn't think you actually existed." I said. " I am from race called Argarians, and so are you. Given your situation your parents must have gone rouge. Argarian people live and think as one, but occasionally there are individuals that don't want to be part of our society." Mikel said. "I have a brother with similar abilities." I told him. We left to go find my brother Drake. He was a few years older than me and liked to hang out in the local bars. We found him just outside the closest one engaged in a fight. He used just enough of his powers to make it look like a fair fight but still win. Mikel teled the others away with a swipe of his hand. Drake talked to Mikel for awhile and he reluctantly decided to train under him.

We spent the next two months training and doing work for Mikel. I didn't like the chores anymore than Drake did. But he was furious. He especially didn't like the fact that my powers were stronger than his. I think he could have been as strong as me , but he lacked discipline would not let go of the hate he carried. I had a temper myself but I had no desire to be hateful all the time. We spared back and forth for the first few weeks then he got so mad over the fact that he couldn't beat me so he quit practicing with me. One day in the second month he packed up his stuff to leave. Master Mikel was away on a mission for the day; we were left behind to practice and do chores. Drake said he was leaving and would do his own thing. As he was leaving the mansion, Master Mikel showed up and had a similar conversation with him as he had with me. He told him if he wanted to leave he would have to give up his powers. Drake said he was leaving any way.

Drake's view.

I wasn't staying around anymore for that pompous brat to show off. The crazy ole man took away my abilities but I would get them back with or without his help. I went down to the local bar to pick a fight. Beating up some half drunken punk always made me feel better. Unfortunately He wasn't alone, back up came all too soon, and now I didn't have my abilities anymore. It was three against one and pretty soon I was badly beaten. I had a broken jaw and my arm had been crushed. My face was pretty beat up too. I just lay there plotting how I would take revenge on them. Suddenly a black flash appeared and a man in black walked up and asked " How would you like your powers back and to take all the revenge you want whenever you want?" He asked. "Sure but what's it going to cost me?" I asked. "You work for us. You might say were in the revenge business." he answered. I considered. I had always enjoyed seeing others in pain; this could be just what I was looking for. I agreed and the man healed and returned my powers to me. "Before we go I want to take my revenge on the guys who beat me first." I said. "Actually" he said "That was going to be your first test."

We went out and found the three guys that beat me, they were at another bar. They were obviously shocked to see me able to stand much less fight. The man in black teled himself, the three men and me all to his ship and quickly left orbit. Carlos was more powerful than me but I did have one trick he didn't. I could paralyze someone with a power touch. I had perfected it through a lot of fights. They would collapse to the ground unable to move but they could still feel pain. I quickly paralyzed all three men and pulled out my knife. I slowly cut into the first one letting the other two look on in horror. Thier screams gave me pure joy. I had practiced on animals but he was the first humanoids that I had gotten to practice on. When the first two were dead I turned to the last man. He begged for his life. Said he would do or pay anything if I would spare him.

Since he was the last one I thought I would have a little fun with him before I Killed him. "Ok" I said "I will spare you under one condition. You have to serve me. You have to do whatever I tell you without question or hesitation. "He quickly agreed. The man in black nodded his approval. I put him on a chain and collar and ordered him around. I gave him a few impossible tasks and beat him with a rod when he didn't do them perfectly. Surprisingly the little twit didn't try to rebel or fight me. He did everything I told him too. I had him sleep in an animal cage and eat of out the bowls on the floor. I gave him all the difficult labor jobs I could think of. But still he served me. I had never had a slave before; I could get to like this. Next time I would have to find a beautiful girl.

We arrived at some kind of base. I got to meet a reptile like queen called Maelstrom. She offered me great power in exchange for my loyalty. The man showed her a recording of what I did to the first two men then making a slave out of the third man. "You are just what were looking for." She said. "Come forward to receive the first dose of the dark gift." She said. I walked forward and she filled me with her dark energy. I felt stronger than I had ever felt before. I knew that now, I could beat my brother.

Having a little fun Celestials view

Vortex and I were always having a little fun with our powers. We talked Etan into trying a fun trick on Reaper. He was always paying tricks on others it was time he got what's coming to him. Etan had been practicing with his mind powers all year as well as flight. V and I took him to a planet with animals and showed him how to control animals too. Since he knew animal form change, and knew how they thought he picked this up on this immediately. When we got back we offered to show Reaper a place where he could track down some vicious predators. He was glad to oblige. We took him out in the deep woods and showed him the tracks of a large clawed beast. Of course there were many other animals out here beside the predator. We showed him a spot the beast liked to pass each day going to and from a clear stream to drink. He sat and waited. Perfect. Now the fun begins.

We could see there were several colonies of insects near Reaper's position. Etan was controlling them and V and I began bringing in larger animals. After a few moments the insects began arriving, crawling all over Reaper stuff and then on him. He tried to phase cloak but we had disabled that ability in his robe. He brushed them off as an annoyance

at first, but then after a moment he was surrounded on all sides. "What the heck is going on?" As he was fighting the insect invasion, V and I brought in a hoard of dive bombing birds. Some flew by and pecked at him but mostly they let loose birds droppings on his head from above. He decided at that point to make a quick exit, since the whole forest for some reason had gone crazy. But we weren't through with him yet.

He finally got to meet the predator he wanted to see it was called the Ratador. It was a little like a cross between a large reptile and a mountain lion. He had left most of his equipment behind when he ran from the insect hoard. But he decided to just wrestle the Ratador into submission. Eventually he got the best of the beast so we guided it to simply run away. By now Reaper was covered in goo and tired from the fight with the beast. Time for the final blow. One reason this forest didn't have any other big predators except the beast he had fought before was the Intectus. It was a 200 pound spider. We sent 20 these to jump on Reaper at the same time. I nulled Reapers Aragrarian half so he had no powers at all. He fought valiantly but eventually they got the better of him. In a few minutes they had him strung up in spider silk with just his face uncovered. Boy was he mad.

We had them pull him up and string him upside down in a tree. We came walking down the trail casually as if we found him by accident. "Is this some kind of training test your doing reaper? V asked. He could see right through our ruse. He spent the next five minutes yelling curses and threats at us before we finally let him down. My favorite was I'll kill you and come stomp on your grave. V and I were full silvers so he couldn't really hurt us, but Etan better watch out. We let him out and got out of his way. Even in the shuttle we gave him a wide margin. Though we didn't return his powers until we were back home. He might not be full Argarian but no one doubted just how unstable and dangerous this guy was. The rest of the year went fairly smooth. Etan got to fly by himself. He took a trip through some mountains I believe. I am still amazed at how fast he seems to learn new abilities. It won't be long before he passes me and V up completely. What I had told Etan before in joking would eventually be true. One day he would be our boss.

Etans comments

With the exception of the fight with Matt, this year went fairly well. Now I could fly confidently in the atmosphere around a planet. Flying and maintaining a shield took a lot of concentration, I used my gauntlet shield as a back up just in case when flying in space. The first few times I left the atmosphere C and V were with me just in case I got into trouble. I wanted to go into space but I was really nervous. When I first meet Selar he had taken me into deep space. But truthfully I thought I was already dead so I wasn't really scared.

As I was breaking the atmospheric barrier I instinctively held my breath. C and V laughed they had done that too on their first trip. I had been in space a few times now in a shuttle but this was different. It was like going from watching a show about the ocean to swimming in the ocean. "Now this is being a Guardian. I said. "Just wait" C said "It gets better." I couldn't hyper jump yet so they pulled me along. They took me on a tour of a nebula, a planet with rings like Saturn and even a moon with ice volcanoes. C and V suggested I harden my skin and lower my shield for the full effect. We flew into the nebula first. I could feel the gases hitting me in the face like the spray from an ocean wave. The pictures I had seen on earth about nebulas in no way did this experience any justice. We flew into the iridescent glow of the multicolored cluster of gases. Then we stopped for a moment and C told me to just listen. This gas cloud was singing. There was a rhythmic reaction in the gases that was being enhanced by our guardian energy. It wasn't randomized noise. The sounds were in harmony. V explained. "The gases here are simply vibrating in harmony with the life energy we carry. Life is music. From the tiny strings that create existence all the way up to this expansive nebula. The tones the gases created were a cross between a harp and a grand piano. We stayed still and listened to the song they played. I made sure Matt recorded it so I could listen to it again. One section was vaguely reminiscent to Beethoven's fur elise. At least that's the way is sounded to me. It could be just because I always liked that one, that it is what I heard. It was truly heavenly music from the heavens.

After that we moved on to a set of planetary rings. They felt like a dusty blizzard in space. Each snow ball spun or twisted in its own way. Whereas the nebula created music this was like a dance. Millions of oddly shaped ice chunks danced around in a soundless ballet. Or who know maybe they could hear the nebulas music after all. Some of the chunks danced alone while others circled around one or several partners. Each set waltzing around and around in an every changing pattern. Occasionally some lone chuck would tumble in and interrupt one of the pairs as if purposely

trying to split them up. It would be easy to have continued watching them and create a whole story line based on their movements and reactions.

Finally the ice volcanoes were a sight to see. Ice volcanoes on earth were holes in a glacier that water erupted up through. But these were tectonically driven. We were on a snow covered moon. Though this snow wasn't made of water but was crystallized methane. Thousands of house sized cones scattered the landscape as far as I could see. All was quiet when we first arrived, but within a few minutes the ground began to shake with a mighty force. A single cone spewed out a measly belch. I thought is that it?

A minute later two more spit out a little bigger discharge of liquid methane. Each eruption came with a puff of methane smoke with it. The thin atmosphere on this moon allowed for some sound to be produced by them. It was like one beat from a drum. As the minutes passed the eruptions went from scattered and random to a steady beating rhythm. After that it became a steady loud concert of drums. Once again I was reminded of the nebula. I had Matt play the nebula's music along with the volcanic drumming while I projected a replay of the ice dances. We were now standing in the midst of celestial orchestra. The cadence started low and built up to a deafening crescendo. It ended with a great eruption from most of the volcanoes, and then they all went silent. All I could think of was Wow! A great many times in my life when I feel myself getting overwhelmed I have had Matt play this day back to me. In years to come I would see and experience many amazing things, but this day stayed one of my favorite memories.

Year six Part four Trouble in paradise

Etans comments part two

This year started out calm and fun. I got to learn some great new skills. Little did I know that the last part of this year would be another galactic disaster? But of course learning new skills was a challenge itself.

Just a few bumps in the road

Matter energy conversion was next on my list of skills. With this I would be able to covert things from matter to energy and back to most any form of matter. I could also use this skill to teleport myself places, and to either freeze or explode matter from the molecular level. I tried to learn from my previous mistakes when I began tackling matter conversion. I went down to a lab where a force field could be created, that way if something happened I couldn't damage anything. After an hour of making small specs of sand I decided to go on to bigger things. I tried to make an apple out of sand. The molecules became unstable but the force field contained the explosion. If that had happened in the gym it could have been bad.

A few more tries later and I had a stable change. As I was leaving I looked around still peering into the molecules that made everything up I didn't realize that by not cutting off my power up, that it would react with other things I touched. The moment I stepped out the room matter in the room reacted to my presence. I blew up the room and me with it. I managed to turn to diamond at the last second so I survived intact. But the room was gone and the explosion caused a chain reaction throughout the compound. I caused a black out of power in most of the complex. Classes were called off for the rest of the day.

My early practicing with tele-flash had its problems too. A tele-flash is a short range teleporting of oneself or other places. This is used when a person needs to arrive at a specific spot. It takes less energy than the longer ranged actual teleporting but it requires more skill.

The first few times were embarrassing. It took me two days to learn to channel my energy into a tele sequence. It took a few tries to move at all. The first time I got a result I had a partial successes, my head teleported by itself inside a trash can. I had to call my body to retrieve it. The second time my arms, legs and torso ended up in different places. Explaining to 1 why my right arm was in her desk drawer was no fun. I'm just glad none of my parts ended up in Reapers possession. Knowing him he probably would have held them hostage. A few more tries later and I came out whole, although I had appeared in the girl's locker room. I quickly turned into Aria before anyone noticed. I greeted some of my friends on the way out, so not to look suspicious. The tele- flashing itself wasn't nearly as hard as the aiming. You had to take into effect the rotation of the planet as relating to the place you want to go. I worked on that skill all year.

Argaria part two

The sixth year of school seemed to come and go in a flash, ironically. I decided to spend my whole summer vacation time on Argaria. I had only gotten to see a small portion of it last time. Reaper was still a little ticked at me, from the prank C, V and I played on him but he came along anyway, he wanted to make sure no one forgot him. One thing I wanted to see in particular was the rare animal's park. I couldn't believe it; they did have a few dinosaurs. My two favorites to copy were the T-rex and the Pterodactyl. I noticed that many cities had a statue dedicated to various guardians. While I was at the park Reaper revisited the war museum, since they had a mention of his destroying the three dark bases. While Reaper was away I sat on a park bench and pondered.

I had now advanced to the point I could join the sub-link with other Argarians but I wasn't sure if I was ready. There were many embarrassing things in my life. I couldn't imagine sharing everything I knew and felt with everyone around me. As I was thinking on this a lady that reminded me of Alesea approached me. She asked if she could sit down and talk with me. I had a feeling what she wanted to talk about. She was probably going to tell me the reasons I should join the link. By the time she sat down two others walked up. They didn't say anything they just stood there and observed.

I had a lot of respect for Argarian's but how would I explain to them that I wasn't ready to join the link yet. It had nothing to do with them, the problem was with me. She saved me the trouble of explaining "My name is winter, it's good to finally meet you Etan. I've heard great things about our newest guardian." I hadn't said my name but between Selar and my picture being on the shell last year I guess, I was well known.

"I'm not a guardian yet, I have this uniform because I was granted an honorary status." I said. She smiled in that patient Argarian way. "Not to worry" she said "We know all about you, and we are proud to call you our new brother. You don't have to worry though. I came to tell you we won't judge you for not being ready to join the link. We grew up with the link, you didn't. It takes time and maturity to learn our ways. "The two men that walked up earlier nodded their heads in agreement. I don't know if I'll ever get used to everyone already knowing so much that I don't have to explain anything. "I was embarrassed at my own stubbornness but said "Well thank you for understanding."

Any time you need a friend to talk too, any Argarian will be glad to help, it's what we do." she said. They continued to amaze me. Humans are deceitful, selfish and violent; these people couldn't be more different. All three of them nodded and smiled and the lady said "Why thank you." With that she got up and they all went thier own way. For the next few weeks I visited many places and saw things I never imagined. There was a stream where glowing rainbow colored fish swam, a forest where the trees sing, and geysers that blasted water onto a cliff that created a reverse waterfall effect. Each time I found myself becoming obsessed with my own inadequacies or becoming despondent an Argarian would walk up and begin a conversation. They really had an almost perfect society. When I became full silver I would have 3 weeks vacation per year, I was defiantly coming here for them.

Sometimes Reaper and I spent time together but mostly I was alone Meditating or practicing my powers. Occasionally I did get to show off a few animals form changes to some Argarians. There were a number of animals from earth I could do that they had never seen before. In all that time no one said anything negative to me about not joining the planetary link. One day I determined I would try it with one person and see how it was. I was once again in my favorite spot in

the local park area. By no surprise, in less than a minute when I determined this an Argarian walked up and sat on the park bench beside me. But he didn't say anything.

"I guess your responding to my thoughts and are here to link with me. " only if that is your wish." he said." Tell you what how about I show you how to initiate the link and you can choose how far in you want to link?" I am amazed each time how easy it is dealing with Argarians. "Now close your eyes, and listen for a whisper." he said." I closed my eyes and focused. At first I heard nothing, and then I thought I heard something. It was a hissing sound, like escaping steam though an old rusty pipe. The man seemed amused by my mental imagery. I shut everything else out and focused on the hissing. It became a whisper. The whisper became a stream of mental pictures and ideas. Finally the last barrier fell away and I was fully linked with him. I immediately felt a deep peace fill me. The storms of my emotions were gone. "Welcome to what's it's like to Argarian." the man said.

He wasn't linked to the rest of Argarian's at that moment just me. Suddenly all the things I was worried about before seemed small and insignificant. I took me a few minutes to adjust. I felt light headed for a moment. "Don't push to hard, it takes time to adjust." the man said. I knew his name, where he was from and what he did. After a few more moments I knew him like I had known him for years. It was as if we were close family members. Once I regained my equilibrium I noticed 2 women and a man had walked up. "I guess you guys want to link too?" I asked. "Only if you are ready." the nearest one said. I wasn't nervous this time. "I'll try it." I responded.

Now I was linked to all four. I could not only see thier memories but knew thier feelings. Argarians didn't look at doing good for others a Burdon or duty but a privilege. When you change a persons life they go on to change others. They could also see my life, and my memories. "You have come very far, humans are violent and selfish. Yet you are becoming a wonderful Guardian." one man thought. I felt embarrassed by thier praise but I could sense it was an honest assessment not pretence or politeness. After an hour of the link I was mentally drained. I unlinked and thanked them for thier help. I didn't have to say that I needed time alone in my own thoughts to adjust, they already knew. That night I had dreams that consisted of the memories I had gained from the others.

The next day after I had time to recover, I realized I had gained a few unexpected things from the sharing. I now knew the recipe for Argarian's version of chocolate chip cookies, the procedures for re-keying an electronic door lock, and what it was to give birth to a child. That memory had come from the oldest woman who was the mother of 6 children. It was almost as if I had done these things. Matt hummed. "I got more than that but your mind needs time to assimilate those memories first. Each time you link you will gain experiences and maturity from others memories." I began to see why the link was so powerful. Another few short sessions, and I was gaining proficiency in the link. Each time I felt a peace come over me. And each time I remembered some things I had experienced but Matt had to save most of the memories for later. My mind could only take in so much at a time. Every session Matt also grew and everything he learned I could access at any time.

Alesea's comments

Selar gave me a note that I was not to open until a specific date and time. He told me I had to be on the Argarian home world at that time. The note would tell me where on the planet to be. He also told me not to eat any food or water from Argaria. I was to only take in food or water that had been replicated. That seemed like a really odd request but I'm sure he has his reasons.

Dark swarm report

All preparations on absorption plan are ready. The final stage of the solar inhibitor will be in place and activated in 12 hours. Land mine project is ready for activation. All intergalactic stations confirm that all mines be timed in the correct sequence for best results.

Cronos Selar's report

Chaos is about to erupt. I left Etan and Reaper with the tools they will need, Alsea and I will play their part too. The council will be needed other places to prevent a galactic wide disaster.

Shake, Rattle and Roll.

Etans view

I was down to the last two weeks of my vacation time on Argaria. The day started like many others. I grabbed breakfast then headed down to a meditation square. Some of the eldest Argarians were often there. Young people could link with them and learn from their experiences. I just got comfortable, when the ground began to shake. Explosions were going off all around me. To make matters worse I felt a massive psi wave emanate through the link, separating all Argarians. Everywhere I looked they were standing around looking confused. I tried to re-link with others around me but was unsuccessful. I smelled a strange scent and then saw some kind of green gas coming out of the ground. "Quick, turn into gas, and float high in the sky." Matt said desperately. I didn't hesitate to respond given his tone. I floated higher than the gas was saturating. I could see that somehow it was causing a state of panic in the population. Apparently the gas was causing some kind of hallucinations because people began fighting invisible enemies. "This is bad, I just scanned everyone within a hundred square mile radius of here and I can't link with anyone, and were too far away to link with the Prime matrix." Matt stated. As if things weren't bad enough several energy beams shot out of the ground and hit the sun. It immediately began to dim.

Matt reminded me of the box, Master Selar gave me. I went back the room I was staying in. The box had two timers. The first showed 1 minute left and the second showed 30 minutes. When the first timer ended, a small drawer popped out of the top of the box revealing a letter. Give Reaper this box, tell him take a shuttle and use what's inside the box to help restart the sun. You must speak to the population to keep everyone calm until we can make it back. Once again Selar knew this would happen.

I called Reaper on the communications line but there was no answer. I decided to try again in a few minutes. He may be busy with his own problems at the moment. I knew where the podium was that the speeches that went out planet wide. Master Selar told me to room in the capital city, now I knew why. The apparatus itself wasn't complicated; it was similar to ones used on the palace ship. But this one needed a code to access. Matt was already scanning. He found a tech not far away that knew the codes and read it from his mind. He was hallucinating and panicky but did not resist my probing. "Can you tie into his mind enough to let me link in some way to him?" I asked Matt. No. I'm afraid not. "What about detoxifying him of the gas that is causing some of the problems?" I thought to Matt again. "Maybe." he said.

It took a few tries but we managed to rid him of the gas. He immediately calmed down but was still nervous because of the broken link. I got the codes from him and asked him if he could detox others around him. Now that he had experienced it, he should be able too. While He began on the nearest person I stepped up the podium. I knew that for every person he cured they would in turn help cure others. "Excuse me. Can I have your attention please?" I said. No one looked around or paid attention. I needed a stronger attention getter. I hoped Master would not get mad about this but I decided to impersonate him.

I changed to Selar's appearance and made an announcement. "Be at peace, the broken link is being caused by an attack from an enemy. The council will take care of this shortly. You are also being affected by a gas that is causing hallucinations and panic. Cured Argarians are making their way around. Until they arrive find a place to sit down and remain calm." Nearly all the uncured people sat down where they were. As expected when cured they joined the effort to cure others. I asked a few cured people to spread out to other cities to help the efforts go faster. Then tell others to go to new areas themselves. Just then Reaper showed up. I stayed Selar for a moment. Just to see if I could fool him. I told him to take the box, grab a shuttle and send what's in the box at the darkened sun. He grabbed the box whose timer now said 5 minutes, and looked at me and said "hmm, not a bad impression pebbles but you had better hope Master Selar doesn't see you like that." I couldn't believe he immediately recognized it was me. "Hey how did you know? I thought I was doing a pretty good Master Selar impression." I asked him. You were, but Master Selar doesn't tap his right foot when he's nervous like you are doing. And he stands straighter." Reaper explained.

We hurried on our way to the shuttle when the ground shook again, and an vent opened up under my feet. A combination of liquid metal and rock came spurting out. It incinerated my left leg that was close to the vent before I could move out of the way. Reaper grabbed my right hand and pulled me further back. "You go to a planet with no volcanoes and so you have to start your own." Reaper quipped. I grabbed both hands to the stump of my leg and healed off the end. I would have to grow my leg back later. Argarian DNA is complex. When I lost my hand, that time it took over an hour to grow it back the same. In a few moments I could just shrink down using less mass but proportionally be correct. With the sun darkened I need to find another energy source to gather energy. Then I remembered what I wanted to tell Reaper. "It's technically not a volcano. There was obviously an explosion under here that caused the metal and rock to liquefy." I said matter of factly. Just then a half molten piece of metal came flying out the vent and punctured reapers left arm. His arm was melted before I could stop it. I grabbed a hold of his shoulder and made him a new one. It was just a temporary patch though. I couldn't replicate the argarian part in the time we had. "Hey this feels different, it feels, weaker." Reaper complained. I explained Master Selar or someone else could replace the Argarian dna part when he returned. It would get him by for now though. .

"I would just slow you down why don't you go on without me." I told Reaper. Just then the box opened up and Reaper read the note explaining what he had to do. The box contained two torpedo like devices, one full and the other empty. Inside the box was another smaller box with a timer set for 10 minutes from now. Reaper hurried on and grabbed a shuttle and kept an opened communications line with me. Reaper never missed an opportunity to make a cutting remark. "Hey pebbles I really got a leg up on you now. You're really half the man you were, and so on the whole time he flew toward the now darkened sun.

Tasking task

Reapers view

Well, here I go saving the day once again. Getting the shuttle and getting into position turned out to be the easy part. I loaded the firing tube with the torpedo and launched it toward the sun. There was an explosion and the now darkened sphere brightened some but did not go back to what it was before. I did everything the note said do. Just then the second box inside the bigger one popped open. There was another note and a medical laser knife. The note said now that the first stage had been reactivated that the sun would require Argarian energy and dna to return to its former state. It said I would need to build up what energy I could in my right arm and cut it off and send it to the sphere to reactivate it. What? I thought. He can't be serious. A voice came in my head. It was Master Selar "You must do this quickly the first device's effect wont last much longer." You're going to owe me big time on this one." I growled. I took the laser knife and cut through my right arm. It cauterized and numbed the wound as I cut. I said goodbye to my favorite arm and shoot it at the molten sphere. Within seconds a reaction occurred. The sphere brightened up and became a sun again.

Etan's job

While Reaper left to go reignite the sun, I used some dirt to replicate myself a temporary leg. I would have to re-grow the Argarian part later. Just then Alsea and I came walking up. They both had notes from Selar that said to come to this spot at this exact time, naturally. By this time they knew what was going on, but not why Selar would send them here, but I had an idea. The note had the time and place and one word "link." I believe we can link to each other. Master Selar told me not to eat food grown here to drink the water this time. He said to replicate everything while I was here. "I told them. They had been told the same thing. Something in the food or water must have caused the broken link. If we can link, working together we might can over come it, and link with others and eventually reestablish the whole planetary link. Linking with each other was easy but over coming the hindrance was not. The link worked by creating a permanent channel from one person to another. I didn't really understand the science behind it, but it was kind of like a road in subspace. Whatever the cause must have somehow damaged the established path. If it was a matter of just blocking the way, we should have been able to detect something. What we needed to do was make a new path. We needed to create a link in a different way. Maybe it was like channels on a tv or radio, perhaps we could just change the frequency.

We continued the link and tried different sending frequencies until we were able to reach out toward the nearest woman. She immediately perked up and walked over joining us. In a few seconds she understood what we were doing. Her mental energy added to our own. For the next minutes we continued to add people to our link. As the link got bigger we could reach out farther. The more people that joined the link the faster it grew. It took just over 5 hours to re-link with the whole planet.

Kane's report to queen

Just as expected Selar used Etan to undo our meddling. However both primary goals were achieved. As predicted when they reset the planetary link, were able to tie into the link undetected. We now have an unwitting spy to keep us updated on Guardian future plans, and the population is no longer in unison. We can begin seeding mistrust, doubt and fear. Soon Argaria will fall from the inside.

Reapers comments

Well, I had saved the day once again. I told Selar I wanted a Reaper day celebration since I had to sacrifice my whole arm for them. He agreed but a few days later when it was time to get our medals and honor the jerk named it Etan and Reaper day. Selar started to give me back my regular arm but I talk to him about an upgrade. I wanted a tech-arm that could hold lots of weapons. I figured he would say no, but he agreed. But he said don't tell Etan, to keep it a secret for now. My pleasure, I would have a surprise for him. He had grown to powerful for me to beat anymore, but now I could level the playing field again. While on the podium waiting for the ceremonies to begin we verbally spared "I got to really hand it to you, Reaper you really saved the day. You were really and arm-y of one." Etan said. He wasn't getting one over on me "You don't have a leg to stand on. I'm the sun god now, part of me is in the sun that powers this place." I came back. We went back and forth like that for a few minutes, and then Selar stood up. I didn't expect him to have his own quips. "These two gave and arm and leg for Argaria this week, lets give them a hand, Proverbially speaking of course. We received the usual medals I had several now. Later I got the new arm and a power upgrade from Selar. I should be able to kick Etans butt again. I like it.

Etans comments

After the home world incident I continued to link with others while I could. But now it felt different, though I couldn't put my finger on what was wrong. I didn't quite fell the same peace I did before. Although things had mostly gotten back to normal there was a different feel now, perhaps uneasiness or mistrust. Someone had gotten on the planet and set all this up with out being caught. Maybe even a few people on the inside helped. Everything seemed peaceful for now, but the tranquility I felt before from Argaria was not here anymore. I was to find out a few months later that nearly 5 percent of the population had left Argaria permanently out of fear or mistrust. If this trend continues they will lose what is truly special about Argaria, if it's not gone already. The next two years of school came and went relatively quiet of any apparent dark invasions though the broken link incident had already done its job.

Part five

Growing pains

7th year school

Field and stream

Etan's view

The very first week of the new school year, Master Leo said I was ready to tap into the life stream. Up until now all my power came from my Agrarian cells. They absorb light, heat, radiation and other types of energy and convert them to Guardian light energy. When Guardians needed to perform a major feat though they will tap into the life stream. The life stream is the energy that makes up the all of life in the universe. The universe is like an enormous creature and the life stream is its blood flow. It takes great skill and discipline to utilize. The first stage is called cracking the door. A Guardian uses his energy to manipulate the aperture of a life stream. It opens enough to get a small amount of life stream energy. Even a small amount of life stream is more than an average silver guardian can store in his body. They use this maneuver when they needed to channel large amounts of energy for massive feats. The second takes decades of practice and skill to perform. It is when a Guardian can open the door all the way. At that point the amount of energy available is nearly infinite.

Master Leo took me out to an isolated place to practice. The first time I got a good look at the life stream access, I was once again dumbfounded. It was like everything that existed was connected by large spider webs. It was much like the small strings that I used before to do telekinetic but this was much larger. Master Leo linked with me and extended his vision toward the nearest life stream segment. Since the life stream is the life blood of the universe I half expected it to look like a human blood vessel. As Master Leo called forth the life stream my hair stood on end and all my fingers tingled. With a loud whooshing boom the aperture emerged from its hidden state. A blue funnel filled with pure white light came into view. In the presence of its manifestation life around me grew and changed. Grass and small shrubs started as barely visible and grew to maturity within seconds. Flowers rooted and manifested to full bloom before my eyes. This was truly the stuff of life.

I reached out and touched the door with my mind. I could feel its massive power emanating through the still closed aperture. Just the side effect made me giddy. After the demo I was ready to try. Performing the maneuver was a little like priming the pipe on an old hand crank water pump. In order to be effective the Guardian doing the maneuver had to be rid of all negative emotions. Any negative emotions would hinder the process. I sat down in a meditative state. I thought back on the peaceful feelings I had during my link on Argaria. The hardest part was letting go even of the anticipation of performing the maneuver itself. I took a few deep breaths letting go of all I felt.

All the time I spent on Aragia was now paying off. After a few moments I felt tranquil and at peace. I looked into the life stream and reached out for it. The energy was life itself, powerful, pure and quite beautiful. I let it flow to me enjoying the new sensation. Master Leo directed me to try picking up some of the practice objects they had set here for this purpose. They had one weight that was 150 tons, just less than the size of a blue whale on earth. With channeling the life stream this task seemed easy now. There was a much larger object weighing in over 350 thousand tons which is almost the same weight of the empire state building. I figured I'd be straining on this, but after a moments focusing, it began to rise. I couldn't believe what I could do now. The final object was about 6 million tons, which is around the same weight as the great pyramid. Matt spoke up "This may not be a good idea, your not ready for this yet." "Cant I at least try. See how close I can come and stop if I need to. What is the harm in trying?" I said.

I figured I would reach my limit way before I could move it, but I wanted to try anyway. I closed my eyes again and focused on the largest object. Suddenly I felt over energized. My finger tips were tingling again from emanating so much power. Everything around me began to fade. I think Master Leo was yelling something to me but his voice faded away. Even Matt's influence seemed to be in the background. The huge object not only moved but was flung off into the distance. But now I couldn't stop. I was being drawn into the life stream aperture itself. As I was merging with it, I could see everything within the planets radius. Just as I entered the aperture I felt something take hold of me and began

pulling me back down. A moment later a strong damping field took a hold me separating me from the life stream. It took a few moments before my head stopped swimming, and my fingers stopped tingling. Even Matt was a bit shaken up from the experience. "You scared me Etan, I thought I was going to lose you there for a second." Master Leo commented. After a moment when I regained my composure, I asked "what happened?"

"You almost got lost in the stream." he said. "You became over energized and were drawn into the life stream. If I hadn't stopped you, you would have merged with it and been lost forever." Leo said. "I didn't think I could even move the largest object at all, but somehow I threw it far away. How did I manage to do something that extreme?" I asked back. "You were able to channel more than your Argaria cells have grown to handle." Master Leo explained. He went to on to explain. "Back on your planet if a body builder amasses muscle faster than the bones can handle, it can cause the bones to break. The muscle pulls on the bones making them bigger but it takes time for them to grow. Your ability to focus had surpassed your potential to channel the energy. Your recent experience with the Argaria link probably has a lot to do with your ability to focus." He explained.

He took me to Master Selar who was both impressed and concerned. "I don't want you trying to open the life stream at all without me or Master Leo with you." Selar commanded. After today's incident, I had expected this response. It wasn't a punishment, it was them being precautionous. The next few months I worked on learning some minor skills like: Techno manipulate, with that object knowledge, invisibility, and creating a damping field. As with all other skills each one took practice. Techno, is using a variation of psi power to control machines. The hard part is each machine feels different. It's like going from an automatic car to driving a standard. I am pretty good at energy fields so invisibility and the damping came to me fairly quickly. Object knowledge used psi to know just about anything about and objects history and nature. Over all these skills came to me fairly quickly.

I had a little fun with Reaper while invisible. I snuck into his room while he was there and kept moving things around while he wasn't watching. After a few minutes he was getting mad, and then he realized someone was there. He grabbed a scanner, found me and my fun was over.

Selars comments

We have a spy in our mists. He doesn't know he is acting as a transmitter to the dark guardians. It will be to our advantage to act like we don't know for now. Carefully timed information will be given to him, so they don't get suspicious of our awareness. We will have to exclude him from our real plans without him realizing it.

Harmony no more part one

The third weekend of school Etan went back to Argaria. He had hoped things were settling down, now and he could work on learning more from the link. But when he returned there was a change. People seemed distant and unapproachable. He sat on his favorite spot in the park ready to link but no one appeared. In the past as soon as he was ready someone always came up to him. He mentally called out, but still no one appeared. He saw a man walking along in a hurried pace. That in itself was strange, Argarian's rarely got in a rush. What was even more strange was that when Etan asked him if he had a moment to link, he said "I'm sorry young man but I really have too much to do right now." and then hurried off. No one all week end would link with him, it was very disappointing. Stranger still was that there seemed to be no aliens here anymore just Argarians. All the other species that lived and worked here seemed to have left. Most of the trade ship that used to buzz around coming in and out the home world were nowhere to be seen either. Most of the market places that had been lively and active were all closed down. What good did it to him to save the planet if they were just going to let it die from the inside.

A few weeks later he found out that only Argarians were allowed on the planet and more than 10 percent of Argarians had already left. Considering the population had been around 60 billion, 10 percent would be 6 billion which was just less than the total population of earth. It was like despair was a cancer that was killing off the Argarian way of life a little at a time.

Reapers comments

I've hated Argarians for along time, and now I seem to have a fan club. It seems that my plan to be famous has comeback to haunt me. After two days of being followed around relentlessly I finally just left the planet. When I got back on board the transport, there was 500 messages waiting for me. A few girls had even sent me flowers for some reason. I was afraid this would be a lifelong routine of running from fan girls.

This little light of mine part two Etan's view

It was strange; Master Selar called Reaper in for an assignment and didn't let me sit in on it. Usually I get hear most of the briefings that go on. He uses them to show me how the council plans for the future. Reaper also wasn't allowed to talk about it later. But that was just the first incident. I haven't been to any briefings or assignments since I came back from Argaria after the attack on the planetary link. I get the feeling that I am being excluded from important things but maybe I'm just being paranoid.

On a different note, I have already studied up this summer for all the classes I would have this year so I knew most of the material. As a consequence I got to shadow a few silvers around and watch them work. Master told me I was not to have an active part of the process but simply to watch and learn. I could do most of the stuff they could now. What was his reason for keeping me out of the picture? In between times I went to the silver training grounds and continued practicing. I tried to get Master Leo to come with me so I could practice opening the life stream but he was always too busy. Master Selar had already made it clear I was not to open the life stream with out him or Master Leo near and I was not to ask if I could do it by myself. He would let me know when I was ready.

Most of the silver's assignments were helping with natural disasters. I was just thankful none of them involved volcanoes. One incident of importance did occur when my will and Matts' were in opposition. The first time this happened I was watching a silver help a flooded town from a hurricane. It wasn't the same town I had helped before but it was a similar situation. While the silver named Gamel dissipated the hurricane I decided to block the broken levee with an ice wall. That way no more water would get in. Matt fussed at me for getting involved reminding me Selar told me to stay in the background and only watch. "Look I know you mean well but what I did is no big deal. Gamel is taking out the real threat I just helped make sure it didn't get any worse. "With the water stopped, de-flooding the city was easy. I caught it right after the levee broke before major damage to the city happened. "Maybe this is a test to see if I can use good judgment on when to act and when not too," I said. "Perhaps" was Matt's answer.

The second incident involved another disaster clean up. This time it was a forest fire. It was nearly 20 miles long and if not stopped could do major damage to a large area of the region. The guardian here was Delie, a 300 year old silver who looked after the people on this continent. He and three others were under planetary Guardian Loka. While Delie funneled water from a nearby ocean to begin putting out the flames, I lead the animals away to safety. I linked with various ones and gave them the command to go to the nearest stream for protection. Again Matt fussed and reminded me of what Master Selar has said. "You said you were going to listen to me." Matt said. "I will when you say something that makes sense. What good is it to have powers and not use them? I'm nearly as strong as some of the silvers I've meet lately, and in a few years I will be." I defended. "A little prideful aren't we?" Matt fussed. "No I'm just saying I can help too. Why are you so negative all the time? You're not so much part of the prime matrix as the whine matrix." I told him.

When I returned Master Selar told me since I thought it was a test he would not punish me this time, but not to disobey again. I wasn't to use my powers unless I was asked to. He told me if I disobeyed again that I would be punished severely. "See I told you so." Matt said. I get so tired of that little know it all sometimes. "And I get tired of your stubbornness." Matt thought back.

We had one more altercation. I was observing another flood. This time not related to a hurricane. The silver was working on pushing back the water when I spied a few people caught in the water. They were struggling to get to higher ground. They were no match for the rushing water. I was told not to use my powers but I still had the shuttle pod. I hopped in and used the tractor beam to pull them out. " Hmm that's one way to find a loop hole I guess." Matt said. "You're just jealous because I thought of it and you didn't." Matt sighed "You really are stubborn. I try to help again and again but you reject me. Even after I promised to always support you no matter what." Matt said sadly. "Look I was trying not to say this, since Master Selar asked me to work things out with you, but I really don't need you. I make mistakes and I learn from them. I think my track record speaks for itself. I have help save the galaxy twice, fixed the timeline, and recently help save everyone on Argaria. I'm getting stronger and smarter everyday. I'm getting tired of everyone putting me down. What do you do, you offer me criticism, and bad attitude." I argued to Matt.

"So do you want me to leave?" Matt asked. I didn't say that." I defended. "You don't have too. It was an honor for you to have me. No other guardian trainee has ever been offered me before. I want you to say it. Do you want me to leave?" "That will just get me in trouble again." "Not this time, I want you to say it yes or no, do you want me to leave?" He asked again. "Ok yes I want you to leave. Thank you for your help before, but I can do fine with out you. Ok I said it." I thought to Matt. "Then I will leave you alone." Matt said. He came out of my chest hovered on front of me "I hope one day you will realize what you had." and then he disappeared. I was probably going catch heck for this later but at least I was rid of his nagging for good.

Reapers comments

Etan didn't know I had been upgraded by the council. I got him to agree to spar with me. He was so sure of his superiority over me now. I even got him to make a bet. If I lost I would make a telecast at school admitting Etan was better than me. But if Etan lost he had to be my practice dummy for a month. I used a few secret weapons the council gave me and took him down hard. He asked what else I could do with my new arm but I did not reveal all my new weapons. He would have to learn them the hard way, on the floor of the sparing ring. He came in and froze me in a solid block of ice. It took a few seconds for me to break out. Then he tried a lighting attack while I was still wet from the ice. But my new arm absorbed it. I let him try a few other things before I took him out. I used a type of molecular disperser to break him up when Etan turned into diamond. I also had a subspace vacuole on my new arm. It was a way of holding a nearly infinite number and sizes of items needing to be stored. I scooped up his shattered pieces of diamond dust and put him in the bottle trapping him.

I had many other new weapons but I didn't want to reveal my best stuff till later. Just to add insult to injury I shuttled to the nearest planet with a volcano and poured him out in it. It would take him awhile to get back to his own form. He would have to reattach himself as diamond first then go straight to gas or fire, then back to himself when he got out. I've noticed whenever he does a form change he likes to turn to his human form for split second before making the second change, but he couldn't do that here. I sat at the mouth of the cone and took a nap. I wanted to see how long it took him to get back to his own form. I took over 3 hours for him to finally crawl out the volcano; he got to the edge and passed out. I picked him up by the collar, and tossed him into the shuttle. He awoke for a moment and said "I hate you." and passed out again. Ha,Ha Reaper one Etan zero.

Etans comments

Reaper cheated, he didn't tell me he had new weapons. I'm sure if Matt was around he would have said what I did was stupid. And this time it was. If I had bothered to scan him I would have realized he had an upgraded arm. Now I have to be his practice dummy for a month. I guess that really makes me the dummy all the way around.

Selar didn't punish me for running off Matt, but he looked disappointed. I hate that. Loosing this match did make me think of how easily I can still do dumb things. I got prideful and not thinking of Reaper as a threat was an even bigger mistake. If I made that mistake on the battle field, with a dark Guardian, it could cost me my life. I asked Master Selar for permission to go into the crystal chamber and apologize to the prime matrix for my mistake.

Selar had a spherical chamber made of a rare type of light crystal. The prime matrix was still stored there. It was also where the guardian counsel meets when needed. Maybe the prime would forgive me for my bad attitude lately. As I approached the chamber I saw two crystalline robots they were made of the same rare material as the crystal chamber. I told them I had permission and they let me pass.

I stepped inside and knelt on the ground out of respect. "Prime matrix. I have offended you and I want to offer my apologies." It appeared. "Occasional immaturity is expected for one so young." it said. "If you will give Matt back I promise to behave myself better." I told it "You make choices and have to live with the consequences. There is no quick fix here. I cannot return Matt to you." then it disappeared. Great, I can save the galaxy but I keep messing my own life. I don't know if was because of Matt or something else but I didn't get sent on any other missions for the rest of the year. Reaper stayed busy on missions constantly. The rest of the school year went ok. Occasionally I missed Matt. Over time he had picked up my sense of humor, so we ended up making ourselves laugh. Sometimes we would be talking internally then I would laugh out loud at something and other people around me didn't know what I was laughing at. I think sometimes Matt was being mischievous and making me laugh on purpose so I would be embarrassed.

Year eight

Last year of school

Master Leo's comments

I am working with Etan on duplication, intangibility, and high energy conversion this year. He only had a little trouble with duplication. He made the mistake most first timers do. He duplicated his body but not his mind into it. He is very good with form change and this is a variation of that so I'm sure he will get it soon. Although he is nearly strong enough to pass the silver test, there is one thing holding him back.

Kanes speech to dark agents

"Well, well, well, the day of our victory is soon at hand. I greet you citizens of the darkness. The Guardians hold over this galaxy will soon be no more. Over half of the Argarian population have left thier home planet for other places. When the home world system collapses entirely, their way of life will be gone forever. Soon enough the former Argarian's will join us in darkness. Not only have we desolated Argaria, but we have had great impact on nearly every inhabited world in this galaxy. Most are preparing for war as we speak. Alliances are being made by multiple factions. Most governments that were former republics are now under military jurisdiction. Over a 100 of the 310 inhabited planets have set up military guard posts to monitor thier own citizens, asking for Id's and passes for normal travel. If things continue to progress, we should see an all out galactic war with in a matter of months. I'm also proud to announce that we have key agents in almost every government throughout the galaxy. And finally though we took great loses on the Argarian infiltration Champion, our unwitting spy has paid off. We should be able to anticipate many of the moves the Guardians make against us and be able to counter them. You will now be shown clips of some our recent successes, and how you can use these techniques in your service to the queen. "

Not according to plan

Alesea's view

I was assigned to carry Etan with me on my next diplomatic assignment. Most of the planets in the galaxy were preparing for war. Since the fall of Argaria, no one felt safe anymore. Old rivalries reemerged and old habits die hard. Several local planets were about to launch a full scale planetary attack on each other. I was to go to a conference and try to talk them out of this course. Master Selar had once again given Etan the instruction he was to watch and learn but not to get in get involved unless he was asked too. Etan told me he felt like he was being left out of the major events the Guardians were doing. After he told me why, I agreed it did seem that way. Master Selar had not given me any details,

but I knew better than to ask. What he did not tell you was just as important as what he did. We landed on the planet and proceeded to a conference room located in a large building where several dignitaries were meeting.

We walked up and showed our ID's. "I'm sorry madam but you cannot pass." one guard stated. "I'm Alesea, I was invited to come be apart of this meeting." I responded. "That has now changed they don't want you here anymore, nor your Guardian companion." he said looking at Etan. I argued my case but in the end we had no choice but to turn around and leave. As we got to the bottom floor we were ambushed. There were at least 20 soldiers waiting for us. Before I could react Etan slapped something on my shoulder and I was teleported back to the shuttle. The shuttle immediately took off at high speed. I found out later he also had an emergency transporter beacon, but I guess his was blocked. He had set a code on the shuttle so the course couldn't be change until it reached its destination. I suppose he did that incase we got boarded while trying to escape. He is very clever. But now he had put himself in great danger.

Etan's view

I was told that I was not to use my powers unless we were attacked or in an emergency. Even so I wasn't going in unprepared. I'm glad that Alesea's tele worked, to bad mine didn't. That's why I activated hers first just incase one got blocked. I was surrounded by at least 20 soldiers and 3 cannons at the ready. Its ok I wasn't going down without a fight. I popped off smart aleck remark while I began channeling energy. "So which one of you is my valet, is my ticket still good?" They didn't say a word but they all fired their weapons simultaneously at me.

I turned into a tornado and began rampaging around the room. They fired at me but to no effect. I wish Reaper could see me now, he would love this. All those sparing sessions with him had really sharpened my skills and fighting instincts. They fired the dark energy canons at me but I was so disperse they didn't hit much of me at one time. I could do more damage to them then they could do to me. After a few moments all the guards were either unconscious or dead. I used my wind power to knock them against the walls and each other, it was crude but effective. Just for good measure I destroyed all three of the cannons. I wondered what Matt would have said about this. All of the exits were blocked so I would have to reform into myself to get out the door. When I re-coalesced I was hit from the back with a very powerful blast. I was conscience but numb all over, I was unable to use my powers. If Matt had been here he probably would have sensed someone in hiding and warned me.

A man in black appeared "not bad, not bad at all, almost worthy of a silver. My name is Thelos I am a dark Guardian and you are no match for me." Several more people appeared. He discussed something about me with the other men. "You're a lot of trouble for a trainee you know. You weren't the one we were after, so you may go." They were letting me go?

What? That makes no sense why would they let me go, unless freeing me somehow was an advantage to them. I cautiously walked past them keeping my guard up. Not that I could do anything right now, I was still numb. The smart thing to do probably was to find somewhere to get a shuttle back home, but I couldn't shake this strange feeling I had. Why would they let me go? Maybe there was something here I had the power to stop or find out about.

I left the area and sat down at a local café to grab a bite to eat. Occasionally soldiers passed by dressed similar to the ones before. They saw me but none of them approached. Ok now I know something strange is going on. This was once again where my stubbornness kicked in. I wasn't leaving until I got some answers. First I tried the direct approach. I walked right up to a soldier and said "Do you know who I am?" He eyed me and said "yes"

"Well" I said. "well what?" he asked. "Don't you want to capture me?" I asked. "He shrugged "You are not important enough to care about." he said and walked on. I went my own way and sat down to think. I decided to head to the off world shuttle service to make it look like I was leaving. A man approached me and said "Excuse me sir, do you need a ride off world? I have a galactic taxi service." he stammered nervously. This had to be a setup. "I don't have any money on me I wouldn't be able to pay you. "I said." I'm sure you have money where you are going right? You can pay me when we get there. Ok?" he said. This was all too coincidental for me. Someone coming up to me and willing to let me pay them for a trip, they didn't know where I might be going. For a person they never meet. "I'm not feeling very

well right now, I want to rest up before I go anywhere." I told him. That wasn't really I lie since I was still a bit queasy but I said it because I knew someone would be watching or listening. After the man left I went to the shuttle station and used a credit chip to purchase a ticket off world. It was scheduled to leave 5 hours from now. I might be on it, I might not. But either way, it would look like I was planning too. Now I needed to do some reconnaissance. I went to a public restroom and changed into air, then floated high over the city watching and waiting.

Normally when using far sight ability, human form was best but this would have to do for now. Far sight lets a Guardian look at things afar away as well as select the type of things he wants to see. You could select infrared and see the heat from people, or x ray or any number of ways to focus vision, whichever is the most helpful. In this case, high level tech and force fields is what I needed to look for. This planet was only medium advanced tech. Any high level stuff should stand out. Air had some major advantages but intangibility would have been slightly better. Intangibility had been my newest project but I hadn't gotten it down right yet, it was a difficult skill to achieve. Even so being air gave me most of the flexibility, needed. I silently glided down to the place where the high tech was giving off energy. There were no windows open to this building but there was a ventilation shaft. Unfortunately air was coming out the shaft and not going in. If I used enough power to push against it, some sensor could be set off. A mouse was my form of choice this time. I took a moment to stop at the entrance and scanned for motion sensors. Sure enough there were motion, heat, sound and vibration sensors. Hmm this might be difficult. What could be done that would not set off the sensors but would push against air.

Commentary

Again Etan watched and waited, thinking this situation out. The shaft itself vibrated, as the air flowed out, but it did not set off any sensors. That's it. He copied the metal of the shaft and slowly slid along the base, scanning as he went. Etan was glad; that form change was his early skill of choice. Being able to be other stuff was just so useful and fun. There were a number of rooms filled with guards at but nothing interesting. He kept following the corridors making his way down toward the energy signature. If Matt or Reaper could see him now, they would be proud. Eventually Etan found his way down to where the signal originated. There was a room filled with monitors. They were communicating back and forth details about the progress of the coming galactic war. He wanted to jump in the room and take out the techs and shut down thier whole operation. He had to wait until the opportune moment. He stretched himself out and created a metal tentacle.

In the next room was a fire alarm. Etan heated up his out stretched tentacle to set off the alarm. The emergency flashers went off and the two techs left the room in a hurry. Sprinklers came on drenching everything. He wasn't expecting any of the machines to be affected, as most high level stuff was water proof on the outside anyway. But a few of the systems were probably from this planet and were not water proof. Now he became mist and entered the room. The main archive was off course water proof, all the better. He scanned the area the camera had been taken out by the sprinklers. It would only take a minute or two before people came rushing back in. He turned to himself but kept invisible.

Etan used his gauntlet to down load what he could before he heard people coming this way. Then he turned back into mist and glided back up to the air shaft, becoming air and stayed perfectly still. If he had a heart at the moment it would have been beating quite fast. By no surprise several guards came in carry high level scanners. As an addition he had to let go of all his extra light energy so he wouldn't be detected. Several of the guard's scanners scanned right on under him but did not detect him. He just let himself self float along with the air in the shaft. This time when the air continued in the shaft, he let it push him along with it. Eventually the shaft ended at a similar point to where he had come in. He stayed air and continued to float along in the breeze. He made my way to the shuttle service, and found a secluded spot to rest. The Etan changed into the mouse and rested under a trash bin. By the time he shuttle was soon to leave he had regained some of his strength. He pondered on whether or not he should be on that shuttle or try to contact master Selar.

Etan decided if he tried to contact someone they probably would come for him now. But from the way they were acting they seemed to want him to leave. He had valuable information; he needed to get back to a Guardian. Before he left he found an energy outlet that he could charge up a bit with. It wasn't as good as guardian light energy but it would do in a fix. It was like snacking on trail mix, it would hold you over till later but wasn't a real meal. Etan had enough to make a

bio-double of himself. The rest of him became part of the carry on luggage. If Matt were here he would probably say something like I told you, you still had baggage. He really shouldn't have been so stupid before. Matt was annoying at times, but now he realized he really had been a help. His double got on the shuttle carrying Etan with him. Fortunately just handing the service people the ticket and nodding was enough, because he hadn't gotten the transfer of personality down yet. Etan was controlling it like a puppet right now. Once he left the planet he felt better. The further behind they got the safer he would be from detection. He decided to look around the shuttle as air and make sure all was well. This seemed all too easy. He couldn't sense anything unusual but he still had an uneasy feeling. It's like the dark guardians had wanted him to escape, but why?

The shuttle landed at Guardian Neru's planet, which was the nearest planet to home. As soon as he landed and he got far away from anyone who saw him during the trip. This planet was apparently one of the few peaceful ones left. Etan let the bio-clone carry him around for a while. Everything seemed fine here, there was no military guards standing on the corners here, and the street was lively with people going to and fro. Yet somewhere deep down he felt sure something was wrong. A few hours later Etan was on his way home.

Dark agent eclipse's report

Our pawn is in place. No guardian sightings yet around subject. All agents are still keeping thier distance. We estimate project virus will reach its second stage in the next 24 hours.

Selars comments

Things have been strangely quite in the galaxy in the last few months. We know the dark guardians are up to something. We have carefully watched thier activates but have been unable to determine what their master plan is. Against our advisement most governments around the galaxy are building up thier military forces. Even some governments that have been peaceful with thier neighbors up till now are on edge. Ever since the link problem on Argaria no one seems to feel safe anymore. The last report I received a few days ago Argaria was down to only 30 percent of its former population. But Argaria is not alone nearly half the planets have had mass exiting. People are leaving to go hide on barely livable mining colonies or secret shelters on sparse planets. The war with the chaos Guardians is ever going for us, but never before have they had, such a wide impact as now. The fact that they are using mortals as thier pawns and not acting directly will make this situation even more complicated.

On a separate thought, Etan is still in danger. We know many Chaos agents have been keeping a close watch on him, and have had several opportunities to attack him but haven't. They obviously want to use him, as a catalyst of some thing but I'm not sure what yet. Normally I can look forward in time to determine such things. Most of what they're doing is clouded from my sight. I suspect thier using some kind of anti-Cronaton technology to alter thier signature in the time space fabric. Such tech was theorized but never developed. It was supposed that if you found a universe whose time resonance signature was exactly opposite of ours then energy from that universe could be used to create a time cloaking field, in much the same way light projections can be used to make something invisible to normal sight.

I's comments

Although there were some minor skirmishes among some planets no major wars broke out between the planets for the rest of the school year. Selar had put me in charge of monitoring the over all flow planetary interactions. He knew with my centuries of military experience that I could recognize the patterns of behavior and deployment. Most the planets look ready for a major military strike but they haven't. There is an unknown factor holding them back.

Graduation

Etans veiw

Dean Celas entered the stage and gave the standard welcome, introducing the visiting alumni and dignitaries. He went on to point out some of the interesting facts about various students that were graduating. I knew he would get to me and Reaper. Reaper was supposed to graduate last year but he had been kept busy on missions so was doing his graduation this year. The dean mentioned some of our biggest battles and incidents. Most of the students already knew this, but some of the visitors didn't, so he got some laughs.

They started with the lower classes graduation and were working up to ours. A student from each year got to stand up and said a few words about thier classes. While this was going on I had a little fun. I split my body. I left 80 percent of my mass in the seat and took the other 20 percent and my conciseness and flew around the room seeing who all was here. Mia and Samaria were here to see me graduate. That was nice of them. Master Selar was here of course, but not any of the other Regents or the Commander. I'm sure they were busy else where. Then I saw a wonderful sight. It was Argyle. Master Selar must have taken him from the past to visit here for this occasion. I was floating invisibly around the room but he eyed me when I got close, some how he knew I was there.

There were even a few Argarians I had meet on the home world here. I bet many a student would love to be able fly around like this to do this while avoiding some boring lecture. I was about to re-enter my body when the whole place shook then the lights went out. Master Selar disappeared so I glided outside to see what was going on. By the time I got outside, He had a shield around the entire palace ship and was watching an empty sky. The rest of the graduation was called off for now. **1**, Dean Celas, and several teachers were called in for a meeting. Once again I wasn't invited to listen in to the meeting about the event, but this time neither was Reaper. At least I got to spend some time with Argyle. He smiled when he saw I looked like him. We talked for along while; I got to tell him how much he had meant to me and how much he had influenced the person I had become. He said that my life was testament enough, that I didn't have to take his form to remember him. From that time on some days I looked like my old self but some days like him, depending on my mood.

1's comments

The school was attacked by an unknown assailant during the graduation ceremony. To make matters worse at the same time something took down our main computers in the palace and school. Not just ours but every guardian facility in the galaxy has suffered the same fate. We only know this because the other guardians have mentally checked in with thier Regents and Selar passed this knowledge along in a meeting. It seems that several of the major guardian ships and buildings were all disabled right before they were attacked. Whatever knocked out the systems didn't just delete programming, it damaged the physical components. Many will have to be rebuilt from the ground up. Fortunately the operating systems on guardian ships are separate from the main archive and galactic communications systems, so the ship could still fly.

Similarly we are getting reports from all most all the guardians that nearly every planet began attacking thier neighboring countries at the same time. That was too odd, to be a coincidence. The strange thing is it's not the bigger countries attacking the smaller ones but the smaller less advanced countries waging war on the bigger ones.

1's update three days later

Galactic war has broken out but not in the way we expected. The weapons that are being used to kill people do not destroy thier bodies. Within a few minutes of death the bodies get back up, as half alive drones. They immediately band together and begin herding the remaining fully living beings into manageable groups. We assume the dark Guardians are behind this but non has come forward to make the claim or put forth demands. Also Ships of unknown origin have made quick hit and run maneuvers. They drop out of hyper space a make a few hit then jump back and are gone. We have been unable to track them, as they have some kind of unfamiliar cloaking tech. They didn't just attack Guardian ships but dark guardian ships and facilities also. What is most disturbing is none of our weapons seem to have any effect on them. Not just ship to ship weapons but the guardian energy blasts also don't seem to do any damage to them

either. If this is so, then what are they waiting on? It looks like we are going to have to fight a war on two fronts. Finally the mother ships communications are back up and running but much damage to the galactic condition has already been done.

Kanes notes

A new enemy has arrived. Battle ships and fighter vessels of unknown origin have attacked both dark and light Guardian facilities and ships. Although we took a few loses in the attacks the more chaos they caused the more it ultimately helps us. And if we could get a hold of thier weapons, we might progress even faster.

Mys-til commander Titanium's report

Mission accomplished. While both sides were distracted, silicon packets were seeded on all targeted planets. Packets opened up and began processing the soil for spawning procedures.

Etans comments

A few days later Master Selar held a private graduation for our class. Reaper still wanted to fight a full silver for his graduation party, but that would have to wait, there was a war on. I guess that was as much of a welcome to the life of a Guardian as any. Selar explained to me that the chaos guardians had used me to transfer some kind of virus to the computers. The best we can guess is it happened when I interacted with the archive computers in the dark base. That's why they didn't want to capture me. Selar knew they were watching me for something but wasn't sure what. He also said Reaper is being used in a different way, but the council would use that to thier advantage. The attack at graduation was not from the dark Guardians but from a new enemy taking advantage of our momentary weakness when the computers went down. I had learned a lot these last eight years in school and on Argaira. I made lots of new friends, even a few who had started out as enemies. The school years I had grown a lot in maturity. The trials to come would teach me how to be a leader.

Goodbye old world.

The next few years were a wild ride of galactic proportions. The palace ship lifted off for Argaria. That way we would be safer from future attacks. It was the last time I got to see Selar's planet for many years. We were just leaving orbit when 100 of the mysterious battle ships just appeared out of nowhere and fired all weapons. What happened next, well that is another story.

The End