Chapter 10

“Okay everyone, the task is simple.” Savvi said pacing across the front of the room. “Before you is a simple Handheld. Simply take it apart and put it back together in working order.”

“Geeze, do you think this is simple?” Henry whispered

“You have one hour. Begin.”

Henry set out to work. Technology… it was the only subject he hated more than history. Atleast Savvi was right about this being simple. They had done this so many times, an hour was being generous.

“Can you believe this? The guy in charge of all our technology, and he tests us on this? And he’s giving us an hour to do it? If Zordo was testing us, he’d make us do it in fifteen minutes.”

“It’s the hour part I’m worried about.” Ryan took loose the top of the nozzle. “We still have five hours to go after this before today’s lesson is over. This is probably just a warm up for something really hard.”

“Well, if we do, at least we have Port. She can rebuild any weapon with her eyes closed.”

Henry expected some king of response, but when he turned to his friend he saw that she was deep in her work. Her sync weapon was almost completely disassembled already.

“Port, slow down, I know tech is your thing but we’ve got a whole hour.”

The look Henry received from Portia was not expected. A glare, and a hateful one at that.

“Oh, so now technology is my thing? You didn’t mention that when you were talking with the general. Instead you went to… them.”

The team glanced at the three sitting behind them. Wrapped up in their own conversation, all three of them had almost completely disassembled their weapons as well. Seeing this, Portia continued to speedily work on her weapon.

“Wait, why are you mad at me again?” Henry raised an eyebrow

Ryan could see where this was going. Henry was too oblivious to know what he did and Portia was too angry to properly tell him.

“Uh, guys, maybe this should wait until after today’s lesson.”

“You called them, ‘the best.’” Portia said, almost shaking when she quoted him. Ryan sighed. His advice had been completely in vain.

Henry was confused, but moreso he was angry.

“But, they are the best. You even said so yourself that they do better than you when they work together.”

“Yeah, but I didn’t say it to General Savvi!”

“You’re missing the point, Henry.” Ryan said, putting a hand on Portia’s shoulder. “Portia wants us to get into the Department of Technology and Weaponry. You could’ve helped her by introducing her to Savvi. Instead, you helped out Gia’s team.”

Henry got even angrier.

“I didn’t do anything wrong, all I did was tell the truth. You can’t condemn me for that.”

Portia rolled her eyes and shook her head, which made Henry even angrier. He was about to start yelling, when he remembered Zordo was in the room. He went back to disassembling his weapon and spoke low.

“You can’t get mad at me for something like that Portia, it’s stupid. Besides, you know full well I DON’T want to go to the Technology department. Why would I help something happen that I don’t want, just because you want it!?!”

Portia slammed her weapon onto the table. Everyone in the room looked up at her though none could see her face. She held her head down, grinding her teeth.

“Sirs, I’m done.” Portia said with a shaky voice. “May I be excused to use the restroom?”

“Granted.” Zordo said.

“Thank you.”

Everyone watched as she slowly made her way to the door.

“Who was that?” Savvi spoke lowly to the others.

“Portia. Teammates to Ryan and Henry.” Chrysanthemum answered.

“Does she usually have a temper like that?”

“No. In fact, that was quite unusual. She’s usually quiet and avoids attention.”

Savvi walked to the desk Portia departed from and retrieved her reconstructed weapon. Coming back, he held the gun up to his ear.

“Well, she managed to disassemble and reassemble this weapon in just over ten minutes. She seems to work very well under pressure.”

Time passed as more and more weapons were finished. Henry heard the final click of Ryan’s nozzle after twenty-five minutes had passed. Immediately after, Ryan walked up to the front of the class and spoke to Zordo. Ryan was the only one who could do this. Everyone knew that Zordo secretly trained Ryan, just another reason why it was easier to be him. Zordo nodded simply back at Ryan and Ryan left the classroom. Now where was he going? It was bad enough that Portia stormed out of the room to deal with her anger issues, now Ryan was going to do some secret training? Whatever. Henry couldn’t worry about that. He had finally finished taking apart his sync weapon. Now came the hard part... putting it back together. More time passed, and neither of his teammates returned. But as Henry reached for the sync capsule, his ears noticed something else. The sound of clicking had ceased from everyone’s desk except his. His eyes took a quick glance around. With the exception of himself, everyone had finished their weapons. His argument with Portia had made him the last one to be working. This was embarrassing.

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This is embarrassing. Portia continued to dab the paper towels over her eyes, but the tears wouldn’t stop coming. A sudden knock on the door almost made her jump.

“Portia?”

It was Ryan. Certainly a better choice than Henry but still she didn’t want to see anyone right now. The performance she just displayed was too humiliating for her to see anyone right now.

“Go away.”

“No. I don’t think so.”

That was Ryan for you. He only did what you said if he didn’t care.

“Ryan, I’ll be fine, just... just go away.”

“Well, I could go away. Or, we could talk about it and help you deal with it.”

“I don’t want help dealing with it. I’ll get over it eventually.”

“Yeah, I know you will. You’re a tough Green. But if ‘eventually’ isn’t in half an hour, you won’t be able to do General Savvi’s next test. That could be a major set back to impressing him.”

Ryan made sure to emphasize the joking tone in his voice. What he said was true, but if he said it factually, that would only increase his teammate’s stubbornness. He had to make sure she knew he was still here friend.

After a few seconds of waiting, the door unlocked. Portia slowly opened the door to see her softly grinning teammate.

“I messed up, didn’t I?” She said, sniffing.

“Well, I wouldn’t so much as say…”

“EC, Ryan.”

Ryan stopped himself. “Okay, yeah, you messed up.”

“Oh.” Portia walked up to wall and put her head against it. “I’m sorry. It’s just... I know you don’t care about what section we get sent to, but I really want to be in the Technology. And when that little brat said that…”

Ryan took one arm and wrapped it around Portia’s shoulder.

“I know.”

“After everything we’ve done for him...”

“I know.”

“Making sure he’s gotten up on time, helping him with all his work… does he even know what team means? Ever since we’ve met, we’ve looked out for him and asking nothing in return, like good teammates should, and he has the nerve to tell me he’s not going to help me when it requires sacrifice from him?”

“Yeah.”

“We’ve kept our cool. Dealt with him. But when he just looked at me and basically said he doesn’t care about me… I just couldn’t take it.”

“Mmh hmm.”

Portia chuckled.

“Is that all you going to do, Ryan? Agree with everything I say?”

“Well, I wasn’t so much agreeing as I was letting you talk.”

“So you don’t agree with me?”

“I didn’t say that, I...”

Ryan stopped and observed the chuckles coming from his friend. She was exploiting his fast paced mind, knowing he’d try to rush out his thoughts. He grew silent for a moment, thinking about his words before he said them. Something the Green had to force himself to do.

“It’s just like General Zordo says. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and we need to adapt to each other’s. This is just another side of Henry we need to adapt to.”

“A weakness.” Portia finished. “It seems like we’re the ones doing all the adapting, and that Henry’s full of nothing but weaknesses.”

“Everyone has strengths, Port. Take you for example, you’re smart, pretty and you smell like a tool kit.”

Portia found herself chuckling again. The smell wasn’t exactly a strength, but it was true.

“Well, I’m going to have a hard time convincing General Savvi to let me in the department now. I just showed him how easily I can become EC.”

“Some added pressure. Well then it’s a good thing you’re Portia, because another one of her strengths is that she works well under pressure.”

Portia pushed her hair aside in embarrassment.

“You ready to show up Gia and the others?”

“Your lessons with Zordo are really paying off. You really know how to motivate a girl.”

Chapter 10 end