**Chapter 42**

Ryan, Henry and Port stared in awe at what they were witnessing. People everywhere were working at their own desks. It was quiet, yet at the same time it felt like the noise of footsteps and finger taps were as loud as any noise could be.

“Welcome to the Department of Information.” Zordo said.

“Well, this is… interesting.” Henry said. His eyes wandered about. At first, he had been impressed but upon further inspection, the place did not seem very exciting. People walked across the room with urgency, only to show someone something on their display and head right back to their desk.

“There you are, General.” A voice came. Portia recognized the voice and became greatly excited as she saw who was approaching.

Cretere approached the group of people. Her eyes met with Portia’s and when they did, her entire body froze. Portia ran up and hugged the woman without warning.

“Mom!”

“Portia…” Cretere said, flabbergasted. “Honey, what… what are you doing here?”

“I ascended, mom.” Portia said excitedly. “My team is part of the Department of Information, now.”

“Here?” Cretere said, surprised. “What about the Department of Technology? Surely, someone with her brain…”

“…this department needs brains as well.” Zordo said. “Trust me when I say, the Stars are best suited for here.”

“The Stars?” Cretere asked.

Portia’s excitement did not die down.

“It’s what we call our team. This is Henry, he came up with the name. And this is our Captain, Ryan.”

Cretere stared down at her daughter and the team she was with. A mixture of emotions came over her. Momentarily, it stunned her and all she could do was smile. Realizing, though, that she was not herself, Cretere straightened herself up.

“If she’s ascended to soldier, than I trust your responsibilities as the general of education have concluded.”

“Yes.” Zordo said. “Starting today, this department is now my sole responsibility. Magatha is already recruiting for the next generation of students.”

“Good. Official D is waiting for you and your new team in his office.”

“Official D is here?” Ryan asked.

“What have we gotten ourselves into?” Portia panicked.

“Don’t fret, dear.” Cretere said. “True our Official can be pretty intimidating, but you’ll see soon enough that he cares for Green just as much as anyone else. Remember, dear, be confident in yourself.”

Portia smiled at Cretere. It didn’t matter what she was dealing with, words from that woman made everything feel more comfortable to her.

Zordo lead the way as the group headed towards the doors in the back. The teenagers felt themselves getting more nervous as the got closer to the office. Finally, Zordo opened the door.

The office was just as baron as the last time Zordo had came. Sitting at the desk on the other side of the room was Discrete D.

“Diablo.” Henry said.

Discrete D looked up from his Display.

“Well, there’s a name I haven’t heard in some time. Hello once again, Henry.”

Henry felt a sense of pride come over him. Vatti may not have remembered him, but Diablo certain did, and he was the most important guy in the country.

Ryan and Portia remained silent. They had never seen Official D other than from afar. This was the man who was leading their country. He was an ex-Discrete and said to be even more skilled than Zordo.

“Zordo.” D said. “This is the team you’ve assembled for missions.”

“Indeed.”

Discrete D walked up to the group of teenagers and began staring at them. That did not help Ryan and Portia overcome their nervous feelings. Even Henry was beginning to get a little uncomfortable.

“Well, then, allow me to debrief you on your first assignment.”

Diablo pulled out his display and sent files to the four people in front of him. As they pulled out their own displays, he continued speaking.

“The Discretes have been silent for the last few years. Despite what you may think, it isn’t because they can’t locate us. In fact, the Discretes have a good idea of the exact location of where many of our crucial bases are. I am currently working on methods to keep them from advancing.

While that is going on, we need to gather information on the Discretes for the inevitable end of the Silence. This Department is responsible for making best use of that information. It is your responsibility to gather it.”

“A reconnaissance team.” Portia said. Immediately after speaking, she regretted doing so.

“I mean… I… in my research… I read something similar…”

“That is exactly correct.” D said. “You will be the main recon teams for this department and thus all of Green. If you look at your Displays, you’ll see the details of your first mission. The main base of the Discretes is currently under our observation. They don’t care about hiding as they don’t consider us as a real threat. I’ve been observing their use of sync energy throughout the base. There is one particular room that has caught my eye. Your mission is to disable the power to that room and observe the reaction.”

“Observe their reaction?” Henry asked. “If we can disable their power to the whole base, we can sneak in and gather much more information.”

“That won’t be necessary.” D said. “The only thing we need from that building is knowledge about what’s in that room.”

“But…” Henry started, but before he could finish, Ryan put his hand up to signal him to be quiet.

“We understand, sir.”

Henry breathed through his nose in frustration. He had to do what Ryan said, especially with Zordo standing right there.

“In that case, you are dismissed.”

The four exited the room. As soon as they did, Portia release an enormous breath.

“I can’t believe I did that! I can’t believe you let me do that!” She accused Ryan.

“Exactly how was I supposed to stop you?” Ryan asked with a smile. “Besides, you were right, weren’t you?”

“Are you guys done?” Henry asked frustrated. “I’d like to hurry to our first missions.”

“That won’t be necessary.” Zordo said. “We’ve been briefed on the missions, but you three need to become familiar with the base before we can properly execute it. We won’t be departing for another few weeks.”

“You can do that?” Henry asked.

Zordo raised an eyebrow.

“I am the general of this department. I can do pretty much anything.”

“And Diablo doesn’t care.”

“Official D trusts my decisions. If I stray from his orders, he knows I’m not doing it out of a simple whim. All the generals are allowed to lead their departments without interference.”

Henry marveled at what he was hearing… power, trust, being able to do anything. And all the generals had this influence? Vatti must’ve been living the time of her life.

“Come.” Zordo said. He walked away from the office towards the side of the building. In the corner in front of the office and away from the desks, there were a set of stairs.

“This building… what is this place.”

“From what I can tell, it was some kind of training facility.” Zordo answered.

“I thought the place we came from was a training facility.” Ryan said.

“As did I. But this place has many more training rooms throughout it.”

“Are the rooms capable of Synchronize?” Portia asked.

“Indeed.”

“That’s weird. The Discretes of old didn’t play Sync ball. That wasn’t invented until the Firsts took over. Why would Naral build so many training rooms if he had such few people to play with.

“You’re forgetting, Port, that the Discrete’s numbers didn’t dwindle until long after the Firsts took over.” Ryan said. “That was why they stopped using the Source as a base in the first okace. Naral probably built these for the Discretes of old, not the Discretes of today.”

Portia nodded.

“That makes sense.”

Henry didn’t say anything. He knew Naral was one of the first Discretes, but anything about history didn’t interest him.

The team climbed the stairs to the second floor.

“The floors go in a specific pattern after the first floor.” Zordo said. “Here on the second we have training rooms. On the third there are meeting rooms. On the fourth and fifth, there are bedrooms. Higher than that is just more of the same. Your rooms are similar to those that you had at the Department of Education.”

The group made their way to fourth floor.

“Here are your rooms. Get yourselves comfortable but keep your displays on. I’ll need to schedule another meeting before we go on the mission.”

With that, Zordo left the three to head back downstairs.

“Wait… that’s it?” Henry asked.

Ryan and Portia looked at Henry confused.

“What do you mean?” Portia asked.

“I mean, how is this any different from the Department of Education? We’re being sent to our rooms waiting for an announcement on our displays.”

“We just got here, Henry.” Ryan assured. “Calm down.”

“Is that an order, captain?”

Ryan could hear the annoyance in his friend’s voice. He didn’t know if the question was rhetorical or not. He decided not to and instead shifted the topic.

“Why are you upset? We just got assigned an mission by the Official of Green himself.”

“Yeah, to sneak around and watch people. The way Magatha described it, it sounded like we’d be doing stuff that’s even cooler than the Department of Defense. I’ll bet Big O and the others are having the time of their lives fighting Discretes with Vatti.”

“So that’s what this is about.” Portia said. She began to head down the stairs. “You can deal with this, Ryan. I’m going to talk to my mom.”

Ryan wanted to stop her, but he couldn’t think of a good reason. He felt the issue with Henry should be resolved immediately, but it wasn’t something he knew exactly how to do. He turned back to Henry to speak with him, but he was gone as well. Ryan was able to catch the slamming of his door.

The Green sighed loudly to himself. This was not how he pictured his first day in his new Department would go.

**Chapter 42 End**